

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, July 15, 2023
Approved Minutes

Biddle Room at Arch Street Meeting House with Remote Friends

Attending: Jim Waddington (Clerk), Andrew Anderson (Treasurer), Christie Duncan-Tessmer (General Secretary), Melissa Rycroft (Presiding Clerk), Nikki Mosgrove (Rising Clerk), Linell McCurry (CFO), Kruskal Hewit, Neil Holzman, Carter Nash, and Tom Zemaitis

1. Welcome and Worship

Jim Waddington opened the meeting with worship at 9:05 a.m.

2. Review and approval of minutes

a) Tom Zemaitis agreed to serve as recording clerk for this meeting.

b) **The minutes of the June 17 meeting were approved as submitted.**

3. Minutes of Appreciation

a) Andrew Anderson presented a minute of appreciation for tonya thames taylor. **The minute, which was approved with gratitude to Andrew, states:**

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION FOR TONYA THAMES TAYLOR

tonya thames taylor has generously shared her talents with the greater family of Friends in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting through her service on the Administrative Council. The Council benefitted enormously from the precision of tonya's strategic mind, the felicity of her remarkable eloquence, and the warmth of her servant's heart. tonya modeled, by prophetic word and good-humored example, how to show up to a Council meeting with both sides of the brain and unreserved devotion: We are grateful for her example, and she will be missed. Friends like tonya, who give of themselves in passionate service, expand the capacity of our yearly meeting to hold beloved community. The members of the Administrative Council minute their gratitude for tonya's unstinting and steadfast service and extend to her our best wishes in her continuing journey.

b) Andrew also presented a minute of appreciation for Roy Zatcoff. **The minute, which was approved with gratitude to Andrew, states:**

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION FOR ROY ZATCOFF

Roy Zatcoff has generously shared his talents with the greater family of Friends in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting through his service on the Administrative Council. The Council benefitted enormously from Roy's insights, judgment, and experience. We have also benefitted from his hard work, Governance expertise, patience, persistence, and sense of humor. His faithfulness among us, running the race set before him, more closely resembles a marathon than a Sprint -- and we are grateful. Friends like Roy, who give so generously of themselves in committee service, expand the capacity of our yearly meeting. In Roy's case, we are simply better people when he is in the room. The members of the Administrative Council minute their gratitude for Roy's unstinting and steadfast service and extend to him our best wishes in his continuing journey.

4. Annual Sessions

Council members were urged to become informed about the agenda and published materials for annual sessions. Christie Duncan-Tessmer noted that 55% of council members had registered to attend in person or by Zoom. Those who have not yet registered have been sent a reminder. This is the first time that we will be able to meet in person since the pandemic, and annual sessions are central to our fellowship and community.

Melissa Rycroft remarked that we need to find a way for everyone to be included in sessions as they are able. There is no perfect way to accomplish this, but she is excited about the prospect of in-person sessions. This year's annual sessions will be quite different from 2019. The College of New Jersey is being very helpful in the planning process. Melissa and several others will be on campus for the full five days, even though the sessions on Wednesday and Thursday will be on Zoom.

Jim reported that there will be a new format for the verbal report this year. The written report summarizing the year's activities will be distributed as part of the advance materials. The verbal report will focus on the work of the Property Committee with respect to the stewardship of property owned by monthly meetings.

Carter Nash observed that we need to be in a listening posture at sessions. Christie agreed that this idea resonated with the clerks, and an effort to do so was under consideration. There was some conversation about how to accomplish this.

5. Climate Witness Stewards

Jackie Bonomo, Clerk of the Climate Witness Stewards (CWS), and Robert Greene, member, joined the meeting by Zoom. It was noted that Andrew is also a member. Jackie presented a Carbon Neutral Ad Hoc Planning Proposal:

“that the Administrative Council authorize the CWS to establish the Carbon Neutral Ad Hoc Planning Group. We ask to establish this one-year ad hoc planning group to be tasked with identifying the means to make PYM *operations, gatherings, and facilities* (not meetinghouses or monthly and quarterly meetings) carbon net neutral by 2025. The assessment will establish the definition of a carbon neutral footprint for PYM operations. The aim would be to have a firmly established plan, with accountability standards, in place within one year, with the objective of accomplishing the plan goals by the end of the following year.” The proposal acknowledges that PYM offices are in a LEED Platinum building.

Jackie expressed thanks to Christie for her input on the proposal. The stewards recognize that the proposal will not be a complete solution, but it can be model for other meetings on how to become more carbon neutral in meetings, gatherings, etc. Andrew said the proposal provides a chance to raise consciousness and to promote motivation and involvement. Jackie noted that the stewards are concerned that many in our community do not know how bad things are.

The proposal contemplates the hiring of a consultant. Christie reported that structures and a contract policy are in place to manage the process, that potential financial resources exist, and that we have an existing process to retain consultants which includes equity, inclusion and belonging considerations. **After further discussion, the Admin Council approved the presentation of the proposal, by the Climate Witness Stewards to annual sessions.** Jim excused the stewards from the meeting and expressed our gratitude for their work.

6. Personnel Committee Report

Nikki Mosgrove presented the highlights of the Personnel Committee report, which was included with the advance materials. Nikki noted that PYM invests in people; we did so with Oskar Castro, who has departed for a new position with a national organization, and we are doing so now with Ashanta Washington's promotion to Director of HR and Inclusion. Nikki said this is what should be doing. Andrew concurred, noting that such an investment has practical and spiritual worth.

Personnel is also recommending some minor changes to its charge to better reflect its work. Admin Council's consideration will be held over until the Fall.

7. Finance Committee

Linell McCurry reported that there has been no change to the FY 2024 Proposed Budget since our last meeting, but Admin Council still needs to release it to annual sessions for approval. Linell reported that the Finance Committee held a listening session that was sparsely attended and at which no concerns were expressed. **Admin Council approved the release of FY 2024 Proposed Budget to annual sessions.**

8. Update on Advocacy Policy

This item was deferred due to a lack of time.

9. Adjourn

The meeting closed with worship at 10:36 a.m.

Faithfully submitted,
Tom Zemaitis