

Report to Sessions, July 26, 2012

Another year has come and gone and I am happy to again to report on the work of the Nominating Committee during 2011 and 2012. The work was done very ably by the following members of the Nominating Committee: Carlos Moreno, Abington; Elizabeth Bayardi and Richard Friar, Wrightstown; Doug Meaker, Quakertown; David Smith, Solebury; Ed Dreby, Mt. Holly; Suzanne Day, Westfield; Lynne Shivers, Central Philadelphia; Dana Houghton, Woodstown; Phil Gilbert, London Grove; Wade Wright, Millville; Gabbreell James, Green Street; Margery Rubin, Medford; DeeDee Roberts, Haddonfield; Joan Broadfield, Chester, Ed Dunlop, Concord, and Peter Lane, Westtown. I am so very grateful for their service, and look forward to continuing the work we began together.

Our work this year began with a significant task officially given to us by Interim Meeting in October. We found a broad array of talented individuals from across the Yearly Meeting to serve on the Long Range Planning Committee. That committee began its work in mid-November clerked by Tom Hardy of Green Street Meeting.

The Nominating Committee has worked all year to strengthen our procedures so that we can keep up with its work. The scope of our work includes nominating Friends to serve on six Standing Committees -- Arch Street, Education, General Services, Peace and Concerns, Support and Outreach, Worship and Care; two Stewardship Committees -- Advisory Committee and Financial Stewardship; and 15 external organizations, to which we nominate or re-nominate between 50 and 60 people throughout the year. We also nominate from 3 to 10 officers for PYM each year.

In the past, appointments were made with terms beginning at various times of the year, depending on when a person was appointed but ending in July. Therefore an individual's term could be anything from a little more than 2 years to a little less than 3 years depending on when, in relation to July 31st, the term began. This lack of precision made it difficult to regularize our work, and to keep the data base accurate. Therefore, this year we worked with the committee clerks to verify membership, and length of service, and shifted all members into overlapping panels with dates of service beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30. We now have a system that has 3 to 4 people in one of three panels that represents three - 3 year terms. We can now identify what the needs are and plan to fill positions throughout the year. Though individuals may be appointed anytime during the year, they will be assigned to a panel that begins on August 1 and ends on July 31st.

The Committee spent considerable time developing a proposal for term limits of PYM's officers. This issue arose out of last summer's Sessions when the body approved a Rising Clerk position for one year only. The questions arising from that decision are these: is the Rising Clerk a position to be continued; if so, what is a reasonable term; how does the term for a Rising Clerk affect the term for the Clerk; and with these questions clarified, what is the relationship between the Clerk and the other officers?

This proposal was considered at Interim Meeting in May and sent to Annual Sessions for a final decision.

We did two other things of note. We agreed to sponsor the “We Can Do It Day” activities which occurred in October and April. They were very successful events that brought between 50 and 100 people into Friends Center for each event, to participate in activities related to the management of Monthly Meeting affairs. Though next year will be very different because we have fewer staff, the Nominating Committee will continue to sponsor at least one day per year related to identifying, mentoring and nurturing leaders in our midst. This activity is already scheduled for Saturday, September 29th. We also finished the complete revision of the [Nominating Handbook](#) that we began in 2010.

Our plans for next year include some of the same -- finding able volunteers for our many committees and external organizations, and responding to specific requests from Interim Meeting. But we will also begin to consider two big questions: 1) Should Nominating Committee be charged with the responsibility of finding clerks for Standing Committees? If so, what would the search process look like? And, 2) given the increasing importance of strong leadership within our committees -- so vital to the running of an organization with fewer paid staff -- should the Nominating Committee’s charge be enlarged to include matters of governance, eg. training for leaders, or evaluation of committee effectiveness? This is a discussion that we will start but intend to take to the Yearly Meeting before the end of 2013.

Respectfully submitted to Annual Sessions by
Paula Cell, Clerk
Nominating Committee
July 4, 2012