



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

4.17.21 Quaker Life Council Minutes

Fourth Month 17, 2021 (using Zoom format)

JOINT SESSION OF THE PYM QUAKER LIFE, ADMINISTRATION, AND NOMINATING COUNCILS

The three Councils (29 participants) completed the self-assessment exercise started on January 30. Lots of great suggestions were made, and facilitator Sue Petrocelli will document and organize them. Then PYM Co-Clerk Frank Barch made some brief announcements, including the resolution of the \$15,000 gift to Ujima Friends Peace Center and the new PYM policy addressing when decisions cannot be carried out as directed. A brief discussion followed.

QUAKER LIFE COUNCIL, by Zoom, 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

Follow-up actions and decisions **are shown in bold**.

PARTICIPANTS – Marge Dawson, Sue Dietz, Steve Elkinton (recording clerk), Robert Greene, Bryn Hammarstrom, and Anthony Stover (clerk). Absent -- Kate Bregman, Susan Kight, and Tom Hughes.
EX OFFICIO GUESTS – Andrew Anderson (PYM Treasurer), Christie Duncan-Tessmer (General Secretary), and Melissa Rycroft (rising PYM Clerk).

We started this session with centering worship.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP – We recently lost Melanie Douty-Snipes, making us four members short. Bryn and Kate will cycle off the council this summer. Bryn is willing to extend his term of service if requested. We should have as many as 15 members.

What factors do we want the Nominating Council to consider in bringing this Council back to full capacity? QLC currently oversees five committees -- Governance, Sessions Coordinating, Youth Program Advisory, Ministry and Care, and Program (and its 9 collaboratives) -- plus the Friends Counseling Service Advisory Panel and programs not otherwise assigned. This is a large span of responsibility. It is hard to recruit people who focus on and have passion for specific ministries, but not this full span.

QLC is an umbrella, and its committees contain lots of folks who are not on QLC. When they are strong, we are strong. These are two different levels of commitment. Maybe we should distinguish that those on QLC do not necessarily have to serve on other committees (but such links are extremely valuable). We might also recruit QLC members from some of our committees.



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Robert suggested that the Administrative Council suspend term limits until QLC's numbers are restored. We approved this.

He has also suggested various folks for QLC to the Nominating Council and hopes we can make suggestions to them, too.

It is not clear who Nominating is responsible for naming and who we are. Melissa clarified that Nominating Committee only names people to the councils, each council then finds people for its own committees.

We suggest to Nominating Committee to consider young people, people of color, people familiar with the YM's operations, people who have the time (for either just QLC or QLC plus serving as a Committee liaison), experience in racial justice work, and experience in facilitation and community organizing. We would also like Nominating Council to looking ahead to succession for people to replace us.

Our structure of Council and collaboratives only works with open and frequent communications.

We ask that Nominating Council, in the course of their work, refer people with specific subject-matter interests to us so that they may be considered for the relevant committee or collaborative.

UJIMA GIFT – Anthony noted that the \$15,000 gift approved last year for Ujima Friends Peace Center has been made, as well as follow-up policy as announced earlier by co-clerk Frank Barch. The third-party epistle will be addressed for closure.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 2/20 MINUTES – **These minutes were read, slightly revised, and approved.**

RECENT CONTINUING SESSIONS – Sue felt these sessions were spiritually centered and good decisions were made. Good clerking helped. Although it was a long day, these sessions were delightful, stimulating, and positive. Merion Meeting is especially interested in learning how to do hybrid meetings with Zoom as the pandemic ends. Anthony heard especially, “we miss our Friends of color.”

ECO-JUSTICE SPRINT – We are responsible for populating this sprint. **So we named Robert Greene as clerk and asked his ideas of who should be on it.** Christie offered a list of possible names to supplement those on the Eco-Justice Collaborative. She suggested Elizabeth Piersol-Schmidt as co-clerk. **We approved Elizabeth, Ruth Darlington, and William Cozzens as additional members of the sprint (or alternatives).** We suggest that at least three from the Eco-Justice Collaborative plus additional folks make up the sprint to nine people. Bryn urged that people knowledgeable in Environmental Justice be especially involved, such as O



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

from Central Philadelphia MM (suggested by Andrew). Someone associated with EQAT should also be invited.

Will there be conflict having both a sprint and a collaborative on the same topic? Christie clarified that this will not be duplicative, since the sprint will lift up specific actions for the YM to consider and embark on. **The two groups should consult closely with one another to foster communication.**

We will approve the actual list for this sprint at our meeting in May or by consent agenda between then and now. Ideally, this sprint should have recommendations to make to Annual Sessions in July. **Robert and Christie will work together to confirm these nominations, including Anthony reaching out to O and Bill Cozzens. Sue will reach out to Ruth Darlington.**

FULFILLING OUR MISSION AS A COUNCIL – Anthony suggested that we have a session, perhaps in a retreat format, to review our mission and more fully understand our Council’s full responsibilities. **We approved this action.**

FRIENDS COUNSELING SERVICE (FCS) – Robert reported that this panel is fully re-populated and had a good meeting recently. More mental health counselors are needed. They plan to discuss whether or not non-Friends also be tapped for service. **He asked that QLC request a way to feature the Counseling Service on the PYM website offering mental health services during this current pandemic crisis – and we approved.** Christie encouraged that FCS craft articles about their services for the PYM e-newsletters.

These QLC minutes were read, revised, and approved on April 17, 2021.