

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Called Session
May 22, 2003
Fourth and Arch Street Meeting House, Philadelphia

Fifth-day evening, Fifth Month 22, 2003

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends convened for a Called Session to act on the budget for the next fiscal year on Fifth-day evening, Fifth Month 22, 2003, and settled into worship. Clerk was Gretchen Castle, Alternate Clerks Henry Beck and Dudley (Sandy) Heath, and Recording Clerk Susan White.

Minute 1: Clerk's Welcome

Clerk welcomed Friends and introduced the alternate and recording clerks. Clerk stated the importance of participation by all Friends called to the Session this evening. In addition to the stated purpose of this Called Session to deal with the budget for the upcoming year, we will also deal with the following items: Report on the National Interfaith Summit; Minute on Nuclear Weapons Development; and a Nominating Committee report.

Minute 2: Budget for the Coming Year

Clerk stated that not approving the proposed budget at Annual Session in March was not a failure, but rather a Spirit-led working out of our process. Clerk then called on Jackie Bowers, clerk of the Financial Stewardship Committee, to present the revised proposed budget for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for Seventh Month 2003 through Sixth Month 2004. Jackie asked members present from the Financial Stewardship Committee who were seated on the facing bench to introduce themselves, and state their Standing Committee affiliation when they also serve on those committees.

Jackie reported that after the Yearly Meeting session in March, at the request of the Financial Stewardship Committee, each Standing Committee had prepared a list of priorities for added programmatic support if additional funds became available for the coming year. Additional funding has become available since the March session, with some \$95,000 in total committed to the Yearly Meeting. Twenty-eight Monthly Meetings are making contributions, and 58 individuals also are giving additional funds. Gifts range from \$200 to \$30,000 for Meetings, and from \$5 to \$500 for individuals. Twelve Monthly Meetings seriously considered whether they could contribute more, but could not and so communicated to the Financial Stewardship Committee. Almost all of the contributions are unrestricted. This shows a great trust in the Yearly Meeting to best decide how our budget should be structured.

This evening an informational sheet was distributed to all present, showing a spreadsheet for summary details of our proposed budget and some back year information for comparison. Jackie highlighted changes in the proposed budget, including the following uses of additional gifts since Annual Sessions in March:

- * Funding was completely restored for the Interpreter's position at the Arch Street Meeting House.

* \$11,500 has been added to Support and Outreach for the Yearly Meeting Library. This funding will keep the library in its present space for the upcoming year, and also enable the library to purchase new books.

* \$4,000 to the Education Standing Committee to restore the paid assistant for Middle School Friends gatherings, on an as-needed basis.

* \$34,000 to General Services Standing Committee for current maintenance at Arch Street Meeting House. This has been seriously underfunded. Since we are supporting the Interpreter's position, certainly we need to support the building as well.

Jackie then guided Friends through the spreadsheet budget, showing where the additional \$95,000 in funds are proposed to be used within the budget of our next fiscal year.

Friends present offered the following questions in thinking about the proposed budget.

Do these new funds correct the annual budget shortfall?

Thomas Jeavons, General Secretary, replied that they do not. These funds are for the next fiscal year. \$122,000 for the Annual Fund is still needed for the current year.

Could we get an information sheet out for what is being cut?

This has been done. Two such mailings have gone out in recent months.

Why do some lines on the budget spreadsheet not add correctly?

Kathy Reilly, staff member working directly in preparing the budget sheet under discussion, reported that funding for affiliated organizations had been moved from the Peace and Concerns Standing Committee and the Support and Outreach Standing Committee to Interim Meeting for Fiscal Year 04. This does not represent new budget items for the Yearly Meeting. The present Fiscal Year 03 began July 2002 and will end June 2003, while the upcoming Fiscal Year 04 will be July 2003 through June 2004.

These changes were made in the General Fund column for Fiscal Year 03 in order to more accurately compare the General Fund expenses for Fiscal Year 04 with Fiscal Year 03. However, they were not made in the total Budgeted Activity column for Fiscal Year 03 because Interim Meeting had not yet approved the changes for Fiscal Year 03. These shifts were made to better reflect where the funds for affiliated organizations are decided. The spreadsheet as distributed needs to be revised to show the Proposed Revised Budget for Fiscal Year 03 instead of the Approved Budget for Fiscal Year 03 which does not show these changes clearly. This revised spreadsheet will be presented to Interim Meeting in June 2003 for review.

A Friend suggested that a revised sheet be created to show exactly the changes that will be proposed to Interim Meeting in June 2003 so that the 03 budget can be more easily compared to the 04 budget. Kathy will prepare this new spreadsheet.

What will happen to other additional funds if such comes into the Yearly Meeting? Jackie reported that it is the intention of the Financial Stewardship Committee to add any new monies to the maintenance budget for the Arch Street Meeting House.

Do we carry a deficit forward year after year?

No. Our Yearly Meeting books are closed on June 30 of each year, and a report of the closing amounts is made to Interim Meeting. We can draw on reserve funds, so that we are blessed with not having a cash flow problem. Although with a deficit, we do have an income problem.

How can we increase income in future years? We are so minuscule in funding our religious concerns. This is not 1940 or even 1960. We need to get under the weight of better supporting our Yearly Meeting.

Friends of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in Called Session approved the proposed budget for 2003-2004.

A Friend noted a sense of peace and support in how we have come together to consider and approve this budget.

Jackie Bowers cautioned Friends that approving this budget does not solve our financial problems. It is very important for each Monthly Meeting to complete and return the Financial Stewardship survey which has recently been sent to them. Jackie noted that while we have balanced the budget for the coming year, we still have a critical need to find significant additional funding to support our work and witness. Otherwise, in planning future budgets, we will again face painful choices of reducing programs. It will take courage to face and solve our financial problems.

Friends settled into a period of worship.

Minute 3: Nominating Committee Report

Henry Beck, Alternate Clerk of the Yearly Meeting, presented a report from the Nominating Committee in the absence of the clerk of that committee.

<u>Nominations</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Panel Year</u>
Education Standing Committee			
Caroline Cunningham*	Haverford	Haverford	2006
Carol Beaton*	Abington	Abington	2006
Worship and Care Standing Committee			
John Gallery*	Chestnut Hill	Philadelphia	2006
Friends General Conference Central Committee			
Andrew Esser-Haines	Central Philadelphia	Philadelphia	2006
David Geliebter*	Arch Street	Philadelphia	2006
Philip Gilbert	London Grove	Western	2006
Deborah Haines	Swarthmore	Chester	2006
Patricia Horrocks*	London Grove	Western	2006
David Miller*	Byberry	Abington	2006

Terry O'Hara Stark Harrisburg Caln 2006

American Friends Service Committee Corporation

William Carrigan* Mickleton Salem 2006

Resignation

Standing Committee Evaluation Working Group

Joe Wray

Friends approved the nominations and accepted the resignation.

Minute 4: Minute on Nuclear Weapons Development

Howard Cell, clerk of the Peace and Concerns Standing Committee, presented a minute from that committee. The minute opposes the development of nuclear weapons by the U.S. government and states in part:

The Bush Administration supports the development of two new types of nuclear arms: the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator and Low-Yield Nuclear Weapons.

Friends have consistently opposed the development and use of all nuclear weapons.

Accordingly, we urge the Administration to adopt a policy of nuclear disarmament instead of seeking new uses for nuclear weapons.

Action steps recommended by Peace and Concerns Standing Committee include sending this minute to the Senators from the four states represented by our membership with the signatures of our General Secretary and the Clerk of Yearly Meeting. Also to the U.S. President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense. Peace and Concerns would also be authorized to contact Monthly Meetings and individual Friends to encourage them to send appropriate letters of concern.

In considering this minute, Friends offered the following:

A delegation of four Friends from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting led by Ted Brinton recently traveled to Washington to visit senators from Pennsylvania to present our opposition to nuclear weapons. These Friends were Ted Brinton, Howard Cell, Arlene Kelly and Hollister Knowlton. Delegations from other states within our Yearly Meeting will be visiting their senators later for this purpose.

When we send Minutes to officials representing states other than Pennsylvania, a statement should be included to explain how many congregations of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting are located in the areas they represent.

It would be rightly ordered for Peace and Concerns to be sure we are accurate in our use of the terms *development* and *study* of proposed nuclear weapons. The wording of bills recently passed by the U.S. House and Senate can be checked to determine the appropriate wording.

Could we send this minute to Representatives in the area of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as well as Senators? Friends approved doing so. Could the minute be sent to all Senators and Representative, not just those from our area? Friends did not approve.

Each and every Meeting within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting should be in communication with their Senators and Representative whenever there are actions which relate to our testimonies. The action of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in sending this minute should not replace action by individual Monthly Meetings.

A Friend stated that he is conflicted about the minute as stated. He hopes that when we speak, we speak from our spiritual roots and not from a purely political position. This minute as currently written does not reflect our spiritual basis. Several other Friends spoke in support of this concern.

Friends have always stated strong opposition to nuclear weapons based on the awful destruction wrought on lives and the environment from their use. Words could be found from their writings over the years to clearly state our faith-based opposition to nuclear arms.

This minute could be strengthened by more positive language.

Clerk asked if Friends would approve having the Standing Committee rework the minute to include more spiritual language and reflect other concerns raised by Friends here tonight.

Friends approved the minute with this provision.

Clerk recognized the members of the Peace and Concerns Standing Committee for their work on this minute and throughout the year in support of our work and witness.

Minute 5: National Interfaith Summit

Thomas Jeavons, General Secretary of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, reported on his attendance at a National Interfaith Summit held on April 29-30, 2003, in Chicago. This meeting was organized by Bob Edgar, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches. Seventy religious leaders attended, including heads of denominations, ecumenical officers, leaders of prominent congregations - from all over the United States. There were 18 Muslims, 8 Jews, 40 Christians of wide variety (Catholic, Orthodox, various Protestants), as well as a few Hindus and a Buddhist. They came together to accept President Bush's challenge to religious leaders to be the voice of conscience in this nation. Thom reported that they came together as religious leaders to ask all people of faith and all the people of this nation to join in reflecting on what kind of future we all want for ourselves and our children.

At the end of the meeting, there was an open letter which those present drafted together, which stated that our nation has arrived at "an urgent moment of choice. ... We face choices between hope and courage or fear and violence; between a future characterized by global solidarity, international cooperation and multilateral action, or one characterized by unilateralism, wars by

choice rather than necessity, continuing terrorism, unfettered efforts to extend U.S. power, and the exploitation of fear.”

Thom concluded in his report:

“We came together believing that our nation should see this present moment not so much as a time to celebrate a military victory - the real outcomes of which are not yet known - but rather a time for reflection on the costs of wars our government has been waging and the policies it seems bent on pursuing.” The most obvious of these costs in our nation and our whole human family include: many human lives lost, the loss of resources for critical human and social needs in our communities, and the erosion of civil liberties.

Friends offered the following on the General Secretary's report:

Were there doctrinal differences that caused some present not to be able to sign the letter? No -- rather there was not time to refine the wording to be acceptable to all congregations. Gathering seventy diverse religious leaders was a powerful testimony to the Light. Also, reporters were present and paying attention. We are talking to each other across the boundaries of our faith communities, and we are getting the message out to the broader world. This is a beginning.

Friends should put forth support for our testimonies such as peace. Could we hire a public relations firm to help us get the message out? We could try this and see if their work was in the Light.

Will a report on Thom's attendance be in Friends Journal? Yes, it will be.

Clerk noted that through the work of the General Secretary, all of us in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting can have a greater voice. His work on our behalf is powerful. Clerk stated our gratitude to Thom for everything he does for all of us.

The minutes were then read, amended, and approved.

Clerk reminded Friends that there will be a Called Session of Yearly Meeting on Saturday, October 11, 2003, at the Arch Street Meeting House to receive and act on the report of the Structure Evaluation Project Group.

A Friend asked if these minutes will be published with those from Yearly Meeting in session in March of this year. Yes, they will be. A Friend asked whether the General Secretary's full report on the Interfaith Summit, a four-page separate document distributed to those present, would be included in the historical record of this meeting? Yes, a set is assembled of all handouts from Yearly Meeting in Session and in Called Sessions, and is included in the historical record in the Yearly Meeting archives.

After a brief period of closing worship, the Meeting adjourned, purposing to meet again on Seventh-day, Tenth Month 11, 2003, God willing.

Gretchen Castle, clerk

Susan White, Recording Clerk