

**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council**  
**Saturday, November 18, 2017**  
**Approved Minutes**

**Members present:** Julian Brelsford, Harry Bryans, Suzanne Day, Bruce Haines (clerk), Linda Lotz (co-recording clerk taking minutes), Richard Morse (co-recording clerk, by phone), tonya thames taylor (by phone), Terri Whiteford, Roy Zatcoff (by phone), Andrew Anderson, Penny Colgan-Davis. **Regrets:** Ventina Hershey. **Staff present:** Christie Duncan-Tessmer and Linell McCurry.

We began with Worship at 10 AM.

1. The Agenda was amended and approved.
2. The minutes for October 21 were approved with appreciation.
3. Finance Committee Report – Andrew Anderson, Treasurer, introduced several action items.

a) PYM's Administrative Fee on Restricted Funds

Lacking a quorum at the November Finance Committee meeting, Andrew brought the administrative fee schedule to Admin Council for approval. The administrative fee is what PYM charges its restricted funds (both program and granting funds) to cover the costs of administration.

For many years, PYM has charged a 1% administrative fee on its restricted funds. In July, Granting Committee Clerk Ken Park wrote to Finance, asking whether smaller granting funds, in particular, could be charged a lower fee.

Finance considered tiered fee schedules at its September, October and November meetings and recommended a schedule for all PYM's restricted funds:

- The 24 restricted funds above \$400,000 in value at June 30, 2017, would continue with a 1% fee (100 basis points).
- The 16 funds below \$400,000 in value would pay a slightly lower fee of 75 basis points, a rate that looks like a sustainable reduction.

In response to questions, Andrew and Christie Duncan-Tessmer noted that PYM is not a bank or investment company where fee schedules favor large accounts over small accounts. Our restricted funds are largely granting funds and PYM follows foundation best practices in viewing administrative costs as shared in the aggregate. Council **approved** the administrative fee schedule as presented.

b) Finance Committee to Recommend Annual Distribution Rate to Admin Council

Friends Fiduciary sets the distribution rate on funds where it is trustee. For funds where PYM is trustee, PYM has the right to choose a distribution rate within the guidelines of Pennsylvania's total return law.

At its November meeting, Finance Committee discussed whether it was the most appropriate body under PYM's new structure to fix the annual rate of distribution from funds where PYM is trustee. Harry Bryans researched the relevant section of the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Code.

Based on Harry's research, it would seem appropriate for Finance Committee to recommend a distribution rate each year to the Administrative Council for approval.

The Council **accepted** the responsibility of approving a distribution rate each year.

- c) Recommendation of 4% Distribution Rate on Funds Where PYM is Trustee for FY 2018  
Council **approved** Finance Committee's recommendation that PYM take a 4% distribution rate for FY 2018 on funds at Friends Fiduciary where it is trustee.
- d) Harry Bryant appointed to Finance Committee  
As additional members are needed for the Finance Committee and Harry Bryans has participated in its meetings as the representative of Property Committee, the Administrative Council **approved** the appointment of Harry Bryans to the Finance Committee, with gratitude for his contributions. The Governance Committee was **asked** to review and augment the membership of the Finance Committee.
- e) September 30, 2017 (Year-End) Draft Financial Statements  
Linell McCurry presented the FY 2017 unaudited financials and explanatory notes. (Draft financials do not include Burlington.) In summary, expenses were slightly lower than budgeted. Net assets for FY 2017 were higher from good investment performance. There will be significant non-cash charges in the audited financial statements due to the transfer of Burlington Meeting House, Inc., and a 2017 pension fund accrual. The audit has been completed with audited financial statements scheduled for January.

#### 4. General Secretary's Report to the Council

- a) Christie Duncan-Tessmer reported that her report to the Councils will be posted on the PYM website each month. She drew attention to the hiring of Melinda Wenner Bradley as the Youth Engagement Coordinator and Aurora Denson as the Office Administrator; both are slated to begin December 1. The position of Associate Secretary for Advancement and Relationship was posted, as well as the Executive Assistant. Cierra Saunders will be leaving PYM for a new position.

The job description for the Director of Staffing and Inclusion has been drafted. In addition to review by other staff and the Personnel Committee, Christie shared it with a dozen people in the field, primarily People of Color, asking for their suggestions.

Staff is working on grievance, social media and staff voice policies. The need for an updated grievance policy was raised during annual sessions. Staff research regarding grievance policies at other Quaker organizations, as well as best practices relating to anti-racism and inclusivity, has been used in developing the draft policy.

- b) The policy on staff voice is designed to provide guidance in an organization in which everyone is encouraged to bring forward their professional insights and experience of Divine Truth – however the staff structure is a hierarchy and decisions are made at different levels. Previously, staff members were not supposed to speak during business meetings unless called upon for their expertise. Recently, tensions arose due to different perspectives on when staff should speak publicly. The purpose of this policy is to open things up but provide

very clear guidance and boundaries so everyone works well as a community. The social media policy will refer to this policy, and the language will be reviewed by an attorney.

Christie thanked tonya thames taylor for helping to season the draft as presented to both the Administrative and Quaker Life Councils. Several suggestions were offered, including using very precise language, what should be done if someone feels they are unable to go to the General Secretary, and what a person should do if they are not in agreement with a decision. (The latter will be addressed in the grievance policy.)

Staff was encouraged to review individual job descriptions to clarify what the person is authorized to say in public, thus reinforcing what is in the staff voice policy. Next steps: after the text is fleshed out further, a draft will be shared with staff and Personnel Committee.

- c) An announcement regarding Resource Friends was circulated. Resource Friends are people who have experience and can discuss best practices, and are willing to share this with other Friends. The group has held one meeting and will meet again prior to continuing sessions in the Spring.

#### 5. *Faith and Practice* Publication Sprint

Bruce reported that the Sprint members are soliciting bids from vendors and printers. The \$17,500 budgeted should cover printing books and posting an electronic version on line. Print copies should be ready for Annual Sessions.

#### 6. Governance Committee

##### a) Proposal to Change the Council meeting format

Bruce brought a proposal that starting in January, the three councils – Administrative, Quaker Life, and Nominating – begin together at 10 AM on the third Saturday of each month, for extended worship. The General Secretary will present her report to all three groups; afterwards the councils will move into separate business sessions. The goal is to facilitate better coordination, shared energy and shared travel. The Council's response was positive, although some concern was raised about participation by phone during the combined meeting and the loss of a more intimate setting with the General Secretary. Bruce noted that experimentation may be needed to assure this arrangement will work well.

##### b) Carrying a Minute of Concern to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Community

Andrew and Amy Taylor Brooks introduced the updated draft on how a Minute of Concern should be brought to the Yearly Meeting. This draft provides for substantial seasoning of a concern, starting in a monthly meeting and then approval by the quarter. The Council approved the document, appreciating its brevity and clarity. Following final approval by both the Administrative and Quaker Life Councils, the document will be presented to the PYM community. (The reference to page 218-19 in the revised *Faith and Practice* may need to be changed when the new edition is printed.)

- c) The Governance Committee recommended Pat Wilus for service on the Personnel Committee. After hearing about Pat's professional expertise, the Council **approved** the nomination of Pat Wilus to the Personnel Committee.

7. Personnel Committee Annual Report  
Linda Lotz, co-clerk of the Personnel Committee with Paula Cell, noted the committee's work over the past year included reviewing job descriptions, seasoning proposed policies, and acting as a sounding board for the General Secretary. In December, the committee will begin reviewing a revised draft of the staff handbook.
  
8. Feedback from and discussion of November Sessions  
Several Council members shared their impressions, including an acknowledgement of the frustrations arising from efforts by a committee of the Quaker Life Council to address the situation between Avis Wanda McClinton and Upper Dublin Meeting. Many Friends present at sessions were uncomfortable with aspects of the discussion, however, it led some people to do important soul searching. Council members recognized the need for accountability, but noted that since individual membership is held at the monthly meeting level, PYM does not have the authority, let alone a system, to settle such matters.
  
9. Council members were reminded to submit an updated Conflict of Interest Form for 2018. The meeting ended with worship.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Lotz, Co-Recording Clerk