

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council

Saturday, December 11, 2015

Minutes

PRESENT: Andrew Anderson, Julian Brelsford, Harry Bryans, Pat Finley, Evan Draper, Suzanne Day, Bruce Haines (clerk), Ventina Hershey, Linda Lotz, Joyce Moore, Tom Peterson, Susan Petrocelli and Ron Ploeg (member and Treasurer).

REGRETS: Fred Melroy and Richard Morse.

STAFF: Christie Duncan-Tessmer (Ex Officio) and Linell McCurry.

1. **Opening Worship** - The Meeting opened with worship.
2. **Welcome** - Bruce welcomed those present and reviewed the Agenda, which was then approved by the Council.
3. **Review and Approval of the Minutes** - One change was requested for the November minutes. In the last section, the covenant letter was for 2016. The minutes were approved with this change. The November minutes will be revised and distributed.

Review of the minutes stimulated a discussion regarding PYM's communications about the budget and covenants with individual meetings. PYM staff members have a deeper awareness of the need to explain the annual budget; the special newsletter-format explanation of the FY2016 budget was one of several new approaches to making the case for the proposed budget. Council members noted there was sufficient interest on the topic of PYM-meeting communications, particularly related to the budget, and it should be added to a future agenda for further discussion.

The co-Recording Clerk and Council Clerk will finalize the October and November minutes and submit them to staff for posting on the PYM website.

4. **Clerk's Report** – PYM has a longstanding relationship with the School of the Spirit (SoS). Subject to a written Memorandum of Understanding PYM manages SoS's finance and HR functions, at no cost, and SoS operates and raises funds under PYM's 501(c)(3) status with the IRS. Every three years, the memorandum of understanding is reviewed. All is in good order. SoS has an independent board, Executive Director, does its own fundraising and has a positive bank balance. The School's income and expenses go through the PYM books at a cost to PYM of approximately \$9,000 per year and it is clear that SoS is well launched and

in good shape to become an independent organization managing its own books and having its own 501(c)(3) status.

During a recent conference call, Bruce Haines, Christie Duncan-Tessmer and Cliessa Nagle for PYM encouraged representatives from the School to begin a process of establishing their own non-profit status with the IRS. It was agreed that starting April 1, 2016, the School will begin to make partial payment for PYM services, increasing in gradual increments until paying the full cost of PYM services. At the same time a schedule will be developed for the School to “graduate” – i.e. become fully independent – which may take up to 2 years. Among other things, this will provide time for SoS to request and receive IRS approval for its 501(c)(3) status. It is hoped that launching SoS will create space in case PYM wishes to support other worthy undertakings consistent with PYM faith and values.

5. **Nominations** – Bruce reported that there are 5-6 at-large spots on the Nominating Committee, as of the end of FY 15. Several current members are prepared to continue on a nominating “sprint” working under the auspices of this Council including Penny Colgan-Davis, Jada Jackson and Eric Peterson. The Council agreed these three should continue and be joined by Suzanne Day (convener), Patricia Findley, and Julian Brielsford. They are charged with nominating new members – and increasing the diversity - on the Nominating, Administrative, and Quaker Life Councils. Nominations will be presented at the Continuing Sessions in March.
6. **Treasurer Job Description Sprint** – In January, the Sprint participants will present a draft job description for the Treasurer for seasoning by the Council.
7. **“Mapping” Sprint** - Ron Ploeg and Christie presented a draft “map” of responsibilities for the Administrative Council (AC), which included the time frame and the group or individuals responsible for initiating or completing tasks. Feedback was provided on the 33 tasks listed and follow-up activities outlined. The various processes are expected to be in place by the end of 2016. Ron and Christie agreed to revise the map and bring it back for further review.

Add to the chart:

- Review the Bylaws annually to see if any changes are needed.
- Send recommendations for Treasurer to the Nominating Committee.
- Make reports to the Yearly Meeting.
- Name the Nominating Committee clerk.
- NOTED: The Quaker Life Council (QLC) is responsible for relationships with FGC and other Yearly Meetings.

Follow-up:

- Bridge contact to the Quaker Life Council – Bruce has performed this function informally so far, and will bring forward a recommended name of a council member to take on the role in January.
 - The School of the Spirit, as well as Arch Street and Burlington meetings, have PYM permission to do independent fundraising. Future requests from groups within PYM to do independent fundraising will come to the AC. Suggestion: Schedule a training/discussion on fundraising policies as they affect various PYM groups.
 - Reports should be requested from all the existing groups falling under the AC. In particular: request reports from the Arch Street and Burlington boards, including progress made in their transition processes, developing goals, etc.
 - Evaluation of the General Secretary has been conducted by a small committee; this group could be called upon until a replacement group is named. That group includes PYM presiding clerk, the clerk of the Personnel Committee, and one additional person (Nancy DeMis). Their reports have been presented in May.
 - The Faith and Practice Committee is almost finished with its work and will be laid down at Annual Sessions. The AC has the responsibility to initiate the next revision process - including naming the committee – within three to five years; this should be done in consultation with the Quaker Life Council (QLC).
 - The Yearly Meeting agenda is developed by an already formed committee that should also include the Treasurer as well as Council clerks, etc.
 - The AC can form committees as needed, and is responsible for naming the members, monitoring terms, etc. Recommended: Hold a discussion to lay out guidelines/policies re AC nominations. For now, any such group can include people who are not members of the AC but there should be at least one person from the AC, and the clerk should be an AC member.
 - Personnel Committee – by law, there needs to be a direct connection between this committee and the AC. Someone needs to be appointed to the Personnel Committee from the AC.
 - It was suggested that the various groups falling under the AC be reviewed and appointments made from the AC; this would enable AC members to learn about the work of these groups and be able to bring information from them to the AC. Concern was expressed that the AC should not move too rapidly given the amount of work already underway.
8. **General Secretary’s report** - Supplementing her written report (attached), Christie Duncan-Tessmer encouraged Council members to review the booklet, “A Brief Invitation to the Governance Structures and Strategic Directions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.” A council member noted the inherent tension between decision-making at the monthly meeting level with the governance roles of the Councils and PYM members meeting during annual and continuing sessions. **The Administrative Council affirmed that the booklet and the listing of tasks for the Council provide helpful guidelines for its work.**

Also noted:

- Christie’s recent article about climate change in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.
- The General Secretary (GenSec) is working with staff, auditors and the Audit Committee on the 2015 Audit.
- A gathering of monthly meeting clerks was held with about 1/3 present. It was very successful and the group agreed to meet twice each year, with phone calls in-between.
- Continuing sessions – Following discussion about ways that PYM could address racism, 17 groups and a “midwife” were identified for action.
- Tricia Coscia became the new Community Engagement Coordinator effective December 1; the new role expands her previous roles in planning annual sessions, supporting volunteers, etc.
- The staff has been working to refresh the PYM website and make it more accessible. There will be a private space for the Administrative Council (AC) to post and share with each other draft and confidential documents. Development of a new PYM Contact Relationship Management (CRM) database is also underway. It is expected to offer features that may be directly useful to monthly meetings.
- Christie is visiting two meetings each month, talking about various topics including the budget and that meeting’s contributions.

9. **January 2016 AC agenda** will include:

- a. Treasurer’s job description
- b. Conflict of interest policy
- c. Bridge contact to QLC
- d. Audit
- e. Finances (Linell’s “numberless budget” held over from December)
- f. Fundraising expectations for the new year

10. Closing

- ▶ AC members were invited to attend the 4 PM, January 13, 2016, Audit Committee meeting. RSVP to Bruce if you plan to attend and for additional details. Written audit materials will be distributed to the AC for the January meeting.
- ▶ PYM Annual Sessions will be held at Muhlenberg College (for the last time); this is the same time as the Democratic National Convention is held in Philadelphia.
- ▶ Business was finished about 12:45 PM following closing worship.

Respectively Submitted
Linda Lotz – Co-Recording Clerk

Appendix

PYM Administrative Council

Calendar of Meeting Dates December 2015 - December 2016

All meetings currently set for 10 AM – 12:30 PM at Arch St. Meeting House

(Conference call participation will be available each month, but personal presence is strongly encouraged.)

- December 12, 2015 (2nd Sat.)
- January 16, 2016
- February 20, 2016
- March 12, 2016 (2nd Sat.)
- April 9, 2016
- May 21, 2016
- June 18, 2016
- July 16, 2016
- No meeting scheduled (August 20, 2016, *hold-only* for “called” meeting or conference call if needed.)
- September 17, 2016
- October 15, 2016
- November 19, 2016
- December 10, 2016 (2nd Sat.)

Adopted 11/21/2015