

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, January 20, 2018
Approved Minutes

Members present: Andrew Anderson, Penny Colgan-Davis (*ex-officio*, PYM Clerk), Suzanne Day, Bruce Haines (clerk), Linda Lotz (co-recording clerk, taking minutes), Richard Morse (co-recording clerk), Terri Whiteford, Roy Zatcoff (on phone).

Regrets: Julian Brelsford, Harry Bryans, Ventina Hershey, tonya thames taylor.

Staff present: Christie Duncan-Tessmer (*ex-officio*) and Linell McCurry.

Following worship and a presentation by the Christie Duncan-Tessmer, General Secretary, with the three Councils, the Administrative Council meeting started about 11:30 AM.

1. **Agenda** – The draft agenda was reviewed and approved. Minutes from the December 9, 2017, meeting were **approved** as circulated.

2. Participation in National Council of Churches (NCC) – ACT Now! Unite to End Racism.

Christie Duncan-Tessmer, General Secretary, is working with the NCC committee that is engaging congregations in ending racism, beginning with a launching rally on the Mall in Washington DC. (Members of a World Council of Churches delegation were horrified by the level of racism in the USA.) Christie was asked to join the Steering Committee of this new project, in part because she has been raising concerns about racism during NCC meetings.

The event will be held April 4 on the Mall in Washington DC to launch a new program asking churches to engage their congregation members in discussions about racism. Information about the project can be found at: <http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/actnow/>. The project will include a platform addressing five key areas: Criminal, economic and social justice; media; education; immigration; and civil and human rights. Congregation members will be encouraged to tell their stories – their truth – about their experience and history related to racism and to envision what the world will look like without racism.

Christie plans to provide office space and funding to NCC for mobilizing Delaware Valley region faith groups, including Friends, to participate in the April 4 event. Council members agreed it is important for PYM to support this NCC project, recognizing the short-term financial contribution falls within the scope of the General Secretary's work.

3. Finance Report

a. Revised Version of PYM Policy for Unrestricted Bequests

In December, the Administrative Council approved a policy laying out how unrestricted bequests would be managed. Following that meeting, the language was slightly revised to make it clearer and more precise; no substantive changes were made. The Council **approved** the revised language, with **thanks** to Cliessa Nagle, Richard Morse, and Harry Bryans for the revised text.

Policy for Unrestricted Bequests

Revised version approved by the Administrative Council, January 20, 2018

The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) receives gifts from the estates of members and others from time to time. Those bequests that are given to PYM without any restriction as to the program, use or timing of expenditure are considered unrestricted bequests.

The below policy is designed to guide the management of unrestricted bequests to best provide for the future endowment of PYM.

- A. Within 90 days of the close of each fiscal year, individual unrestricted bequests of less than \$250,000 shall be invested and managed as follows by the Accounting Department:
 - 1. A quarter (25%) of the value of each bequest shall be set aside and placed in the Membership Development Support Fund held at Friends Fiduciary Corporation for the benefit of PYM subject to the following limitations:
 - The combined funding from unrestricted bequests shall not exceed \$25,000 per fiscal year, AND,
 - The combined value of all Membership Development Support Funds both at Friends Fiduciary Corporation and in PYM's cash accounts, is not intended to exceed \$75,000 in total at any fiscal year end.
 - 2. All amounts of each individual unrestricted bequest of less than \$250,000 that are not placed in the Membership Development Fund pursuant to A.1 above shall be placed in the General Unrestricted Endowment Fund held at Friends Fiduciary Corporation for the benefit of PYM.
 - 3. If the combined value of all Membership Development Support Funds both at Friends Fiduciary Corporation and in PYM's cash accounts exceeds \$75,000 in total at any fiscal year end, the entirety (100%) of individual unrestricted bequests of less than \$250,000 shall be placed in the General Unrestricted Endowment Fund held at Friends Fiduciary Corporation for the benefit of PYM.
- B. Administrative Council shall address individual unrestricted bequests greater than \$250,000 on a case by case basis.

b. FY 2017 Audited Financial Statements

Andrew Anderson, Treasurer, reported that audited financial statements were accepted by the Finance Committee and issued on January 19. It was a clean, unmodified audit, meaning it represented a fair presentation of the facts. Linell reviewed the financial statements, lifting up changes from prior years as well as pending changes in GAAP requirements (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles). She noted that staff expenses were a bit lower than FY 2016, due mainly to

unfilled positions. Other operating costs were similar to last year. The statements also recorded the assignment of BMH, Inc., which conveyed property and funds associated with Burlington Meeting House from PYM to Burlington Quarter. Following a few questions and answers, the Council offered continuing appreciation for Linell McCurry, Cliessa Nagle and Celestine Richardson for their careful handling of PYM's finances. The Council also expressed appreciation to volunteer Fred Melroy, of Medford MM, who reviews the reconciliation of PYM's monthly bank statements as part of PYM's internal controls.

The Council noted the careful work of PYM staff and volunteers over several years to reduce annual property costs in the general fund budget, including the fundraising efforts of the Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust, which was organized to preserve, operate and interpret the historic Arch Street Meeting House, and the Burlington Meeting House conveyance.

4. **Governance Committee Report** – Bruce Haines, Council clerk, presented a revised description for the Granting Committee, which incorporated suggestions offered during the Council's December meeting. The Council **approved** the revised charge and outline of the committee's duties. It was noted that the handbook explaining the new structure should be revised to reflect the creation of committees, adoption of charges, and various procedures. The current version is available on pym.org.

5. **PYM "Minutes" Sprint Update** – Terri Whiteford updated the Council on the work of the "Minutes" Sprint. Members included Terry, Penny Colgan-Davis, Suzanne Day, Jim Herr, and John Lavin, and was staffed by Linell McCurry. After reviewing the current process – a planned experiment in which minutes were circulated for comment following the conclusion of Sessions – and reviewing the concerns arising from this approach, Sprint members agreed that the experiment was not successful. Instead, they recommended (1) minutes be read aloud and approved at the end of each business session at Annual and Continuing Sessions and (2) various steps be taken to assure effective pre-planning and review, including developing guidelines and providing training for all stakeholders. Since many people are new to Quaker practices, it will be important to stress that typos and wordsmithing should be addressed outside of a session.

Council members concurred that minutes should not be a transcript of a discussion, but rather lift up the key points shared. The guidelines will help lay out how the minutes are prepared to assure they are productive, clear, and timely, as well as how much time to set aside to provide for careful review of minutes. Following a suggestion that some attention be given to drafting minutes when there is a tension or conflict, the Council noted that the Epistle provides some color and flavor of what happened during the meeting.

Council **approved** asking the body at Continuing Sessions in March to hear and approve Terri Whiteford's report and immediately begin using the new approach.

6. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** to offer comments for the annual evaluation of the General Secretary.

7. The meeting ended well after 1 PM, with closing Worship.