

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, May 20, 2023
Approved Minutes

Biddle Room at Arch Street Meeting House with Remote Friends

Attending: Jim Waddington (Clerk), Andrew Anderson (Treasurer), Christie Duncan-Tesmer (General Secretary), Melissa Rycroft (Presiding Clerk), Linell McCurry (Chief Financial Officer), Jeanne Elberfeld, Chuck Devers, Kruskal Hewitt, Neil Holzman, Carter Nash and Tom Zemaitis

1. Welcome and Worship

Jim Waddington opened the meeting with worship at 9:10 a.m.

2. Review and approval of minutes

a. Identify Recording Clerk for May

Tom Zemaitis agreed to serve as recording clerk for this meeting.

b. Review and approve April minutes

A friend suggested that the draft minutes for April be amended to include the text of the minute of appreciation for JoAnn Seaver which was read at the meeting. **As so amended, the minutes of the April 15 meeting were approved.**

3. Minutes of Appreciation

Presentation of the minutes of appreciation for tonya thames taylor and Roy Zatcoff was deferred until the June meeting.

4. Admin Council Report to Annual Sessions

In past years, Admin Council has prepared a written report that was included in the sessions materials. Clerks often used the report as the basis for their presentations during the meeting for worship with attention to business. Jim posed the query as to how we can better engage the assembled body during the meeting. Christie Duncan-Tessmer suggested this meant: that Admin Council be guided in its presentation by the matters in which the body is engaged; that there be greater transparency regarding Admin Council's work; that Admin Council explore how to work better with the body going forward; and that, as a result, there will be better inclusion among the body in Admin Council's work.

This led to a full discussion among those attending about how best to achieve these goals. Friends noted that reading or summarizing a report is off-putting to the body and does not invite participation. Melissa Rycroft noted that her review of evaluations of sessions suggested that participants do not like hearing about what has happened but rather would appreciate forward looking presentations. The sense of the meeting was

that Admin Council should prepare a written report for inclusion in the sessions materials, but it would merely be referenced. The bulk of the presentation could then be devoted to an in-depth exploration of one or two topics on which Admin Council is currently engaged. One topic of interest would be the work of the Property Committee, particularly as it relates to dealing with property that monthly meetings are no longer able to maintain. We also need to develop a format that will allow for meaningful participation by the body. Christie noted that there are plans for a thread gathering in the fall to address the monthly meeting property issue for which the annual sessions presentation could serve as a precursor. **Jim and Tom will prepare a draft written presentation for Admin Council's June meeting, during which the topics and format for the discussion segment will be decided upon.**

5. Finance Committee Report

- a. Financial results. The written financial report through March 31, 2023 (first six months of the fiscal year) was included in the meeting materials. Linell McCurry noted that the revenue for meeting covenants is no longer accrued, as has been the case in the past. This resulted in an apparent drop-off in year-over-year revenue in this category, but the effect of the change has dissipated by the end of April and will not affect year-end results. Linell also noted that this report contains more information about the finances of Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust than in the past. Christie noted that since 2012 PYM has been rigorous in maintaining cash in separate unrestricted and restricted bank accounts and providing more transparency in reporting.
- b. Willits restricted fund. A written report providing history of the fund and the current problems with its administration was included in the meeting materials. Due to restrictions placed on distributions from the fund by the donor in 1885 and changes in circumstances since that time, the fund is unable to make distributions at this time. In order to allow for future distributions, Christie and Linell are working with our attorney to prepare an application to the PA Attorney General to permit a modification to the fund's stated purpose.

6. **Nominations to Admin Council committees.** Jim reminded us that Admin Council is responsible for appointing members to its committees, and he solicited suggestions from council members for committee membership. A list of current committee members, with expiring terms highlighted, was included in the meeting materials. There are only three instances in which a committee member's second term will expire. It was noted that the list for the Property Committee is incorrect. Neil Holzman and Carter Nash should be listed as members. Mike Lane is not a member.

7. **Combined Baker Trust report and appointment.** A report detailing the trust and its activities was included in the meeting materials. Baker is an independent trust at BNY Mellon Bank. Its board includes five church-appointed trustees: four Presbyterian appointees and one PYM appointee. Linell reported that her three-year term as a trustee is coming to an end. She recommended that Andrew be appointed as her successor. **The Administrative Council approved the appointment of Andrew Anderson to serve as the Quaker trustee for the Combined Baker Trust. A minute of appointment will be included with the minutes of this meeting and a copy will be provided to the Trust.**

8. **Adjourn**
The meeting closed with worship at 10:20 a.m.

Faithfully submitted,
Tom Zemaitis