



**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, December 9, 2023
Approved Minutes**

Arch Street Meeting House and remote via Zoom

Attending: Tom Zemaitis (Clerk), Andrew Anderson, Chuck Devers, Christie Duncan-Tessmer (General Secretary), Jeanne Elberfeld, Cecilia Filauro (Executive Administrator), Kruskal Hewitt, Neil Holzman, John Marquette (Recording Clerk), Linell McCurry (Chief Financial Officer), Nikki Mosgrove (Rising Clerk), Carter Nash, Salvador Orellana (Deputy General Secretary), Melissa Rycroft (Presiding Clerk), Cathy Toner

Regrets: Jean-Marie Prestwich-Barch (Quaker Life Council Clerk), Jim Waddington

1. Welcome & Worship

Clerk Tom Zemaitis welcomed attendees and opened the meeting with worship at 9:03 am.

2. Review & approval of minutes

The minutes of December 9, 2023, were approved as presented. John Marquette agreed to serve as recording clerk for January.

3. Clerk's Update on Committees

Tom reported there will be work done soon to reconstitute the Property Committee.

The Climate Stewards will report during the Joint Council meeting. Tom urged all council members to read the report, stating that it serves as a model for how reports should be presented. It follows the suggested model format.

4. Policy on PYM Email Addresses

General Secretary Christie Duncan-Tessmer presented the proposed policy and said it was intended to codify current practice. Finance Committee reviewed it at their December meeting. **Administrative Council approved the policy as presented.** The policy reads:

Approved Policy on PYM Email Addresses

At its meeting of December 9, 2023, Administrative Council approved this policy on PYM email addresses.

Email addresses are public facing tools of community engagement serving Philadelphia Yearly, in the same way as the PYM website, news stories, weekly emails and publications. PYM groups, including committees, granting groups, and collaboratives, may have their own email addresses when it supports the efficacy and ease of managing their responsibilities.

Email addresses need to be approved by the group's supervisory body. For example, a collaborative's request for an email address would be approved by the Program Committee, which cares for collaboratives.

All new email addresses will be reported to the appropriate council – in the example of an email address for a collaborative, the Program Committee is under the care of Quaker Life Council (QLC) and therefore would notify QLC. These approval and notification practices ensure that all relevant bodies have the same understanding and knowledge of the communications structures that support their work.

PYM email addresses will always be PYM addresses (group@pym.org), created by PYM's IT service, and not created with another internet service provider (group@gmail.com or group@comcast.net, for example). PYM-created email addresses are required because email addresses created and managed by PYM:

1. Are archived and backed up on a daily basis by a third-party vendor.
2. Can also be shared with a PYM staff member to provide continuity and back-up for responding.
3. Have a high level of security and IT support.
4. Are covered by PYM's cybersecurity insurance policy.

In response to a question, it was noted that Fund for Sufferings and the Climate Witness Stewards currently have PYM.org email addresses. IT can manage and reset passwords for these accounts.

5. Policy on PYM Contributions to Other Organizations

Christie presented the proposed policy and said it was intended to codify current practice. Andrew Anderson said Finance Committee reviewed the policy and endorsed it at their December meeting. **Administrative Council approved the policy as presented.** The policy reads:

Approved Policy on PYM Contributions to Other Organizations

At its meeting of December 9, 2023, Administrative Council approved this policy on PYM contributions to other organizations.

PYM contributes financially to other organizations under a set of guidelines and expectations.

Use of General Funds. General funds are not used as contributions to other organizations. They are funds given to the yearly meeting for its operation, either by individuals, meetings, or unrestricted endowment. They are therefore not passed through PYM as contributions to other organizations.

Use of Restricted Funds. PYM stewards a range of restricted funds, some of which are restricted for supporting other organizations in specific ways. These funds are distributed as grants by PYM granting groups in accordance with the restrictions.

Annual contributions. Each year the yearly meeting contributes money to other organizations under two circumstances. PYM contributes financially to organizations for which it is committed to appointing PYM members to serve on their boards. Additionally, each year small

contributions are made to a few organizations which are engaged in ministries related to the current concerns of the yearly meeting.

The monetary contributions to other organizations come from a fund that is restricted as to purpose to support religious organizations, the Chace Fund. The Chace Fund is held in trust by Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC) and PYM has beneficial interest; PYM annually reports to FFC a list of the organizations to which it has contributed Chace income. The General Secretary is responsible for ensuring these funds are distributed.

Quaker Life Council Funds. The PYM budget allocates funds to the Quaker Life Council to be used in any way the council determines for program and initiatives to help the yearly meeting thrive. On occasion, Quaker Life Council may approve some of those funds to be granted to an outside organization with which the yearly meeting is collaborating to support a joint ministry. As these are general funds, this practice should be limited in scope and amount.

501(c)(3) requirement. Any organization receiving PYM funds must be a currently recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation in accordance with the federal tax code.

6. Discussion of FCNL Changes in Governance

Tom shared an October 2023 *Proposal for FCNL Governance Changes* from the Governance Working Group of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to the FCNL General Committee.

FCNL's General Committee has more than 150 persons representing ties to many yearly meetings and Friends across the country. Meeting once a year, the General Committee constitutes the FCNL board. It is responsible for discerning legislative priorities as well as for fiduciary responsibilities associated with the 501(c)(3) and the 501(c)(4), such as budgets, fundraising, investments, evaluating staff leadership, managing risk, and compliance with legal requirements. Some General Committee members understand the intricacies of the decisions they need to make; others are more passionate and competent about lobbying. The proposal would assign the role of 'board of directors' and its fiduciary responsibilities to the FCNL Executive Committee. It will be considered for adoption in fall 2024.

Friends noted the similarities to PYM's current structure. Administrative Council now holds the "board of directors" authority level for fiduciary and administrative matters formally held by the larger Interim Meeting. Some Friends in PYM still need to learn about the rationale for the changes after more than seven years. Education on our fiduciary duty is critical as well as educating the body on the work done by the Administrative Council.

Presiding Clerk Melissa Rycroft noted that FGC is undertaking the same kind of administrative restructuring in the near future. Tom referred to the Friends Journal article on "Nimble Responders. A Friends Journal story published December 1 has some relevance for the conversation as well: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/stewarding-our-time/>.

7. Review Rosters of Admin Council Committees

The list was circulated prior to the meeting. Friends noted corrections and updates. The Governance Advisory Committee completed a good deal of work last year and will now meet less regularly, to be activated when advice is requested or needed. Property Committee is also in a hiatus. Tom will contact all members of the Property Committee to determine consensus and direction.

8. Implementation Plan for Our Strategic Directions

Christie addressed the plan to activate our strategic directions with a focus on meetings. The Administrative Council has a role in its implementation, along with staff and the meetings themselves. We did an exercise centered on the strategic direction of Connecting and the “destination” of “Connecting Friends and meetings.” “Destination” describes a landing place that helps us in the strategic direction. We considered connecting Friends and meetings and asked what success in achieving that direction would look like.

Friends described their vivid descriptions of what a destination would look like. One Friend cited the example of supporting communities by enjoying one another, sharing stories, discerning how to care for one another and caring for the world together. Another noted that Administrative Council has the duty and ability to assess the condition of meetings and offer solutions (with the upcoming January 27 Thread Gathering on concerns on property matters being an example).

Council members’ experience in intervisitation has been rewarding. Friends in meetings can experience a wide variety of how Friends worship and work together. This provides opportunities to feed and nurture meetings by cross-pollinating ideas and concepts through interconnection. The experience of spending time with Friends in the many varieties of Quaker life is in effect the experience of the yearly meeting. Christie thanked Council members and asked Friends to send along follow-up comments. We settled into worship to help facilitate the next exercise in the Joint Council meeting.

9. Adjourn

The meeting ended with worship at 10:22 am.

Faithfully submitted,
John Marquette