

Quaker Life Council Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: Saturday, April 9th, 2016

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Present: Lane Taylor (Clerk), Gray Goodman (Recording Clerk), Tom Hughes, Jim Herr, Charlie Randall

Regrets: Connie Webster, Cate Marion

Staff: Zachary Dutton

Agenda

11:00 am: Worship

11:05 am: Introductions & Check-ins

11:15 am: Approval of the Agenda & March 12th Minutes

11:30 am: Continuing Sessions De-Brief

12:00 pm: Updates from Governance, Sessions, and Funding Committees

12:35 pm: Break

12:45 pm: Update/Decision from Program Committee

1:15 pm: Spiritual Formation Meeting Update/Decision

1:45 pm: Clerk Contact Info Process

1:55 pm: Closing Worship

Friends began with worship. Clerk Lane Taylor welcomed Friends and members shared reactions to the March Continuing Sessions.

Friends approved the agenda. Friends approved the March 12th minutes with amendments.

Observations on Continuing Sessions: 375 people were at the March Sessions.

Negative Observations/Feedback:

1. Members shared unconscious, possibly racist, micro-aggressions they saw occur during the undoing racism workshops. It was a reminder of how mindful Friends need to be with their words and actions

2. Members felt the day flowed well, but it was long.

3. There was no Middle School and/or Young Friends report about their morning event. There was no major multi-generational activity.

4. There was some confusion regarding how the caterers arranged the food. There were at least both meat and no meat options.

5. Perhaps the William Penn lecture should not be included as an evening event directly after Continuing Sessions. Less than 100 people were at the William Penn lecture, and normally it is 150-200 people.

6. There were some logistical mistakes regarding spacing of the workshops.

Positive Observations/Feedback:

1. The flow of registration, on the far end of the east room, went very well.

Updates from Governance, Sessions, and Funding Committees:

1. **Governance Committee:** It has not met yet. Lane is working on composing a document that explains the expectations and responsibilities of serving on the Quaker Life Council. The Governance Committee will examine the document and present it to the Council.

2. **Summer Sessions:** The Plenary speaker has been scheduled. Emails have gone out for volunteers to offer work and witness sessions. Hopefully, the new Collaboratives will offer some sessions. One Friend suggested that there be space for people of like interest who are not part of formal collaboratives to gather.

3. **Funding:** The committee is developing a system for analyzing financial requests. Two face-to-face meetings before May 21 will occur to set up the procedure. Phone conferences will follow..

a. Members agreed to allow the Funding Committee to approve monetary requests from approved Collaboratives and Sprints.

b. The entire QLC needs to approve a monetary request from groups that are not yet Collaboratives and Sprints.

Strategic Project Fund monies carry over from year-to-year. Other funding (“QLC Envelope Fund”) is only year-to-year and does not carry over to the next fiscal year.

a. Members changed a previously minuted decision. Scholarships to attend the White Privilege Conference will come from the QLC Envelope Fund, NOT THE STRATEGIC FUND.

QLC Funding Clerk Tom Hughes asked members to approve Paula Kline’s reimbursement request of \$275.00 in transportation costs for attending a conference on climate as a member of the Eco-Justice Collaborative.

a. Members approved the reimbursement of \$275.00 for Paula Kline. Members agreed that requests need to be made well in advance of the need in the future. Timely requests will be easier once the Funding Committee has set up an established procedure.

Associate Secretary of Program and Religious Life Zachary Dutton noted that it is possible to track expenses of Collaboratives and Sprints to help the Funding Committee’s decision making.

Zachary Dutton explained that having a private website for QLC would be a helpful way to deposit approved minutes and decisions. Approved minutes should be sent by the recording clerk to Zachary Dutton.

a. Members approved having a private website set up for the posting and storing of information. All members who have access to the site can make posts.

Update/Decisions from Program Committee

1. **Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry:** Jim Herr asked for another member for the committee. The committee examined the application for Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry. He proposed the following queries:

- a. Does the group need to be a QLC Committee or a Collaborative?
- b. Does the group need to organize Thread Gatherings or simpler events?

Tricia Coscia has helped the applicants understand the new PYM structure. Clerk Jim Herr noted that the application is appropriate for a Collaborative. It provides a specific venue for providing a service within PYM.

a. Members approved the application of Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry as a Collaborative with the possibility of it developing a Resource Friends Group when a system for Resource Friends Groups is created.

b. Members did not feel it necessary to label the Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry as a Thread. The topic comes under the Worship and Ministry Thread.

2. **Spiritual Formation:** QLC Clerk Lane Taylor and PYM Clerk Penny Colgan-Davis met with members of the Spiritual Formation Group. After the meeting, they sent Lane a budget at her request. She let Spiritual Formation know that QLC will request to see evaluations of their programs by participants. The Spiritual Formation Group also agreed to move their website information onto the PYM website. In discussing Lane's report, a concern arose over a possible mutual confusion regarding the issue of moving the website information onto the PYM website.

a. Members request that QLC Clerk Lane Taylor confer again with the Spiritual Formation Group regarding:

- i. **the group's support for moving its website information onto the PYM website**
 - ii. **the possibility that other Yearly Meetings use the present Spiritual Formation Group website, and how a move to the PYM website would impact those relationships**

If way opens regarding these concerns, QLC minutes the following decisions:

a. Members approved the application of Spiritual Formation as a Collaborative.

b. Members approved having PYM set up an on-line registration system for any of the Spiritual Formation fees.

Clerk Contact Information: Members approved a proposed contact information policy.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2016. Arch St. Meetinghouse

Respectfully submitted, Gray Goodman, co-recording clerk

Application: Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry:

Sunday, February 28, 2016 YM Application Questions

An asterisk * means that the question is required. Please be specific yet concise. *About the proposed work, witness or activity:* Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry

This application is submitted by Amy Ward Brimmer, Lola Georg, Viv Hawkins, and Hollister Knowlton, with staff support from Tricia Coscia. We are a PYM Work and Witness Group that formed during and after November 2015 Continuing Sessions.

1. *What is the work, witness or activity that Friends propose?** We envision supporting individual calls to ministry whereby:

- Each Friend – knowing that the Religious Society of Friends did not lay down the ministry but the laity – seeks, finds, and follows the call into which Spirit invites them.
- Each faith community – knowing that gifts are given to the community – nurtures, supports, and holds lovingly accountable the Spirit-led services provided by and to its members.
- Each Philadelphia Yearly Meeting body – monthly and quarterly meetings, committees, councils, collaboratives, etc. – engages seamlessly with other bodies within and beyond the yearly meeting to support the Friends and faith communities in the above activities.
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- We believe that everyone is called to ministry, and that those individual calls arise from worship (or prayer, or work), require discernment and support to answer, and accountability to ensure faithfulness to the call. We believe that calls to ministry arise in everyone – children, teens, adults, older adults – and they change and grow over time and across our life spans.
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- The following graphic depicts a cycle of Worship to Call to Answer that has discernment, support, and accountability built into the structure with Divine Light and Love at the center.



We propose a *Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry Committee* of the Quaker Life Council, and a *Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry Thread*.

The *committee* would take under its care the following items:

- 1) Develop resources and best practices for supporting individual calls to ministry. These resources would be posted on the PYM website and may include discernment practices, clearness committees, support groups, spiritual accountability, mutual accountability, financial management, overcoming obstacles, job descriptions, frequently asked questions, adult education curriculum, etc.
- 2) Develop a process for approval of minutes for individual ministers as described in *Faith and Practice*, pages 56 and 57 (2002 edition).
- 3) encourage participation in and use of the skills and gifts database, develop a process for identifying and endorsing Resource Friends, and create a directory of individual ministers and their ministries.
- 4) Develop content for the Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry thread gatherings.
- 5) Utilize thread gatherings to create a network of ministers within PYM who can support each other, address common obstacles, and share the mutual blessings of the ministries in our midst.
- 6) Conduct workshops and trainings related to supporting individual calls to ministry for Friends, meetings, and the yearly meeting.

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7) Interface with other yearly meetings and Friends organizations to coordinate visitation, share best practices and common resources, and offer mutual fellowship and peer support.

The thread would cultivate a network of people who carry and support individual calls to ministry by:

1) Holding two thread gatherings per year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Gatherings would follow the standard thread format of:

- Worship
- Training in a large group format (suggested topics are: discernment, supporting ministries, accountability, calls across a life span,) - Potluck lunch
- Breakout sessions in a small group format (suggested topics are: managing finances, teaching children to hear calls to ministry, what's my ministry?, highlighting specific ministries, is it time to lay my ministry down?)
- Closing session in a large group format

2) Publishing two electronic newsletters per year, one in the summer and one in the winter. The newsletters would highlight the work of the committee, notify people of new resources available on the website, publicize upcoming thread gatherings and workshops, highlight specific ministries, or encourage Friends to update their profiles in the skills and gifts database.

3) Cultivating a discussion group via PYM Connect to address common concerns and issues, offer prayer and support, and notify people of upcoming workshops and trainings.

*3. Which PYM strategic directions, goals, priorities, or needs does the work, witness or activity meet? What other needs does it meet?**

Of the seven PYM strategic directions, this project directly relates to the following four directions:

- 1) Connecting Friends and meetings as a faith community
- 2) Connecting Friends via communications
- 4) Simplifying governance
- 5) Deepening relationships within the yearly meeting

This project indirectly supports the following three directions, by supporting ministries which may:

- 3) Communicate messages about Quakerism and PYM
- 6) Corporate witness and social action
- 7) Ensuring safe communities

In addition, this project supports the work of everyone in PYM, as we are all called to ministry whether it be small or big, profound or routine service, in a wide public sphere or more locally.

*4. Why should the proposed work, witness or activity be under the care of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting?**

Quaker's who are wise about Friends' beliefs and practices related to ministry, such as Lloyd Lee Wilson and Brian Drayton, hold that gifts of ministry are given to the faith community and deserve their care. We agree.

While the lion's share of that care is ideally offered at the monthly meeting level, many monthly meetings have lost the knowledge, skills, and ability to offer it. They may wish to recover the ability. The life of member ministries (existing and potential) within PYM can be significantly nurtured through a coordinated effort across PYM.

In addition, a coordinated effort of care for individual ministries in PYM will strengthen the development of the skills and gifts database, identification and endorsement of Resource Friends, and a process for approval of minutes for Friends with ministries.

*5. What efforts have been made to involve Friends from at least two different monthly meetings in the proposed work, witness or activity? How successful have these efforts been?**

Currently, four friends from different meetings have worked on this project and proposal (see response to question 2). We have a list of potential candidates for service on the committee and intend to have significant diversity - meeting, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, meeting size, PYM geography, and ministry variety. We will also enlist Friends in ancillary work such as the thread.

In addition, this project will be one of the afternoon offerings at March 2016 Continuing Sessions, where we also intend to involve other friends.

*6. What are the goals of this proposed work, witness or activity?**

We expect to more fully develop goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-stamped (SMART), but would like to invite more people before consensually agreeing on the SMART goals. Examples of goals for consideration are:

- 1) Invite Friends to and host the Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry breakout session on March 19, 2016 at Continuing Sessions.
- 2) By June 2016, hold the inaugural Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry committee meeting.
- 3) By July 2016, offer a workshop or training at Annual Sessions.
- 4) By August 2016, have 50 Friends registered in the skills and gifts database.
- 5) By September 2016, have the Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry webpage of the PYM website launched with currently available resources
- 6) By October 2016, hold a thread gathering on Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry.
- 7) By November 2016, have 10 Resource Friends identified and endorsed.
- 8) By December 2016, publish a directory of ministries.
- 9) By February 2017, publish a Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry thread newsletter.
- 10) By May 2017, hold a thread gathering on Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry.

*7. How will Friends know that this work, witness or activity is finished? Are there milestones and/or benchmarks along the way? If so, what are they?**

This work will be finished when:

- Each Friend seeks, finds, and follows the call into which Spirit invites them.
- Each faith community nurtures and holds lovingly accountable the Spirit-led services provided by and to its members.
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- Each Philadelphia Yearly Meeting group engages seamlessly with others within and beyond the yearly meeting to support the Friends and faith communities in the above activities.

That condition is a far future vision. We expect to measure progress by the number of people involved in our program offerings, the number of meetings touched, the level of understanding of support of member ministries, and the ease with which different bodies engage one another.

Some benchmarks for our progress will be:

- attendance at thread gatherings
- attendance at workshops and trainings
- number of Resource Friends identified and endorsed a seamless process for approving minutes
- growth in the skills and gifts database
- number of ministries in the ministries directory
- use of resources and best practices within PYM and beyond

*8. How do Friends plan to sustain this work, witness or activity? What is needed for its sustainability?**

By following the thread mechanism currently in place, we intend to utilize PYM's current practices of calling on staff and resources. In addition, we will require the following:

- 1) occasional use of PYM's communication devices (such as but not limited to website, PYM Today, table space at gatherings, etc.)
- 2) access to maintain our portion of the website and related training
- 3) polling certain subgroups in PYM, such as monthly meeting worship and ministry clerks, or quarter clerks, and will need access to that information from PYM's database
- 4) meeting space, including a facility in which to offer educational opportunities with appropriate audio/visual aids and electronic capabilities
- 5) on-line registration capabilities for our various events, which may include a registration fee to cover expenses of the event
- 6) assistance in identifying suitable locations for thread gatherings, and logistical support
- 7) editing and publishing assistance for two electronic newsletters per year
- 8) access to the skills and gifts database, and Resource Friends information
- 9) assistance with childcare fees and referrals for events
- 10) time from the Quaker Life Council, hopefully a modest amount, to work in close collaboration with the Council related to minutes of religious service and travel

PYM Work and Witness Group: Supporting Individual Calls to Ministry

We thank the Quaker Life Council for considering our proposal and we are happy to answer any questions. We are also interested in comments and feedback.

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Please feel free to contact any of us:

Amy Ward Brimmer – awbrimmer@gmail.com Lola Georg – lolageorg@gmail.com

Viv Hawkins – friendviv2@gmail.com

Hollister Knowlton – hollisterknowlton@gmail.com Tricia Coscia – tcoscia@pym.org

General Secretary Report on Staff Activity to Councils April 2016

Finances

1. Prepared materials and provided orientation for Finance Committee members on the PYM budget.

2. With the help of additional temporary staff, began laying groundwork for several additional approaches to fundraising including TAG-a-thons (replacing phone-a-thons) in which volunteers help with thanking and/or asking via email or phone in a party atmosphere at a Friend's home and an informative and reassuring mailing to Friends who have not donated since the financial crisis.

Program

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1. Continuing Sessions! 375 people attended, a little short of Fall's sessions, however still far more people at one time than at Summer Sessions or Interim Meeting. Highlights included successful business meeting and several work and witness groups that started getting their feet under them to move forward as collaboratives. Additionally, it was structured in a way that a) relied less on staff hours and b) is replicable for annual sessions and future Continuing Sessions.

2. Implemented the new minutes approval procedures. Minutes are now online and available for comment by the people who attended continuing sessions.

3. Following on last summer's pattern we sent out an email to all PYM Friends with information about what happened at Continuing Sessions.

4. The general schedule and big picture plans are solid for Annual Sessions. The keynote speaker will be Tonya Thames Taylor. The structure of Sessions builds on the values and flow of various previous years where we integrated youth and adults at regular opportunities and we value creative and play time and also mimics the flow from Continuing Sessions where the afternoon is reserved for time of work and witness and prayer together.

5. School of the Spirit and PYM have signed an addendum to our letter of agreement in which they begin paying for administrative and accounting services this quarter. Their board approved immediately beginning a process of becoming an independent 501(c)(3). Our finance staff is helping them navigate that process.

6. I met with the clerk of the trustees of Burlington Meeting House to check in on their direction, needs and expectations in their care of the property. Halfway through the three-year experiment of their holding nearly all responsibility for the building they are beginning to explore a different tack. The property committee is informed of the status. The finance office is staying in close touch with the trustees.

Communications

1. We implemented a short-term staff polycross to map out the program and communications intersections, timelines and workflows so that the work of each program and their communications can be mutually supportive.

2. More than half of meetings with a newsletter have now added the PYM office to their distribution list so we will begin receiving their news and can therefore encourage sharing their stories with the broader community.

Staffing and Administration

1. The new Middle School Friends Coordinator began working this week and Matt Sanderson, after many years as the Coordinator preceded by many years as the assistant preceded by many years as a Friendly Presence preceded by three years as a participant in Middle School Friends, has moved on.

2. We hired a temporary position to work in Development for four months. There are multiple initiatives that we want to get off the ground but lack the staff hours to build the scaffolding for them. This short-term assistance will help us get things in place.

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3. I've met by phone with the clerk of the Nominating Council two times and am attending their meeting this month to support their work.

General Secretary Visits and Connections

1. Friends Center Board Meeting
2. Meeting with Friends Journal staff to explore collaboration possibilities
3. Worshiped at Burlington Worship Group
4. Went on vacation for 10 days!