

YF Business Meeting October 27, 2012, Woodstown MM

Clerk Emma Leibman got Young Friends' attention and, along with Nurturing Committee Clerk Katie Ellis, presented the agenda, which was approved with the removal of the first item, about later bedtimes, since Max Collins, who was presenting the item was resting due to illness. The clerk then affirmed that Hannah Mayer and Katie Ellis were taking minutes.

1. Ed Standing Committee on the Trans-gender policy for PYM Youth Programs

Christie Duncan-Tessmer offered a report on the official process in the PYM structure in regards to a policy about how the Youth Programs of PYM will accommodate trans-gender participants. Christie attended the Camp Onas business meeting in August to be with the community in its initial grappling with the issues. She took an overview of that discussion to the Education Standing Committee, asking them for a policy to meet the needs of the program. ESC decided that this policy requires greater time and attention. Committee-member Peter Lane (who was visiting for the day) explained that ESC members feel they need further communication with both the Young Friends community and parents before they create a definitive policy moving forward. **Until those communications happen, ESC expects Young Friends to continue with the initial practice that was established in the program, that when people come into YFs they are who they say they are, and we treat them as such with sleeping accommodations, bathrooms, etc.**

Christie opened the floor for suggestions about how to involve parents. A discussion followed in which Young Friends questioned the reason and degree to which parents would be involved in the decision. They emphasized that Young Friends need to be the ones who ultimately make the decision – parents could be informed and their thoughts and opinions included in the conversation, but only to a degree. Many expressed the importance of the safety and confidentiality of Young Friends as a space in which youth could experiment with their identities without parents knowing. Also need to make the YFs conversation safe and confidential. Parents should also be involved in the decision but less so. In the end, it's important that we do involve parents because they are related to the program and their concerns could intensify and become polarizing if there isn't a space for parents to voice their concerns early on in the process. Parents also have a right to know the policies of the programs that their child(ren) attend(s) – PYM has no secret policies.

A few ideas for including parents in the conversation arose:

- Young Friends can start the conversation with their parents first, framing it in the ways that they think are the best combination of effective and protective for them.
- Similarly, a letter from the Youth Programs administration (Christie) could be given to Young Friends at the end of a gathering to distribute to their parents, which would still give them the ability to frame the conversation and have a personal interaction with parents around trans-gendered issues in Young Friends.
- Additionally, Friends felt that if there is a gathering of parents along with a yearly meeting administrator (Christie) to discuss the policy, some Young Friends could be there to represent how youth in the community are thinking and feeling about accommodations for trans-gendered Young Friends.

Friends decided that we should have more discussion at this year's Christmas gathering, which is focusing on sexuality – perhaps the whole theme can include trans-gender identity as well!

2. Durham YFs Visiting Philadelphia!

Emma Leibman presented an opportunity for PYM Young Friends to meet and spend the afternoon of Saturday November 10th with 16 YFs from Durham N.C. in center city Philadelphia. Clerk asked if there were PYM YFs who were interested in this opportunity, and the following Friends expressed interest:

Raven, Madelyn, Mike, Ryan, Henry, Hannah Blossom, Isa, Sebastian, Rhodes, Cleo, Tess, Tenaja, Ananda, Hayden, Arden, Maggie, Emma.

3. Christmas Gathering Overview

Cookie described plans for the Christmas gathering thus far, which is taking place at Swarthmore Monthly Meeting from December 27th-30th and will focus on sexuality.

4. Annual Sessions

Emma Leibman and Christie Duncan-Tessmer reported about plans for Annual Sessions. Sessions Planning Committee has had Emma Leibman as a liaison from Young Friends and would like to continue to be in relationship with Young Friends, even though Emma is no longer able to serve. Emma presented about her experience serving on the committee. The responsibilities entailed keeping up to date on the email discussions and calling in to the meetings (2nd Thursday of each month in the evening for 2-3 hours). Christie shared that Sessions Planning Committee is also willing to come to Young Friends' business meetings to collect ideas and suggestions about Annual Sessions.

Ananda and Tenaja expressed interest in serving as liaisons. It was noted that we can have liaisons *and* have SPC come to our business meetings.

Christie shared the location for next summer's Annual Sessions, taking place at Muhlenburg College near Allentown. Advantages include its compact-ness, its excellent food, and the fact that all youth programs will be in the same building together (with the dining hall).

5. Connecting to PYM: MSF, JIM / Interim Meeting Involvement

Emma Leibman presented on her concern that YFs and PYM be more mutually involved. There are many ways that YFs could be involved, including being Friendly Presences at MSF gatherings (for which Friends must be at least Juniors in High School) or Junior Interim Meeting (JIM) events, or attending Interim Meeting. The next Interim Meeting is on November 10th, so any YFs who are interested could attend IM or JIM and then go with other PYM Young Friends to meet up with Durham YFs for the afternoon.

6. Mexico Trip

Emma Leibman informed Friends about an opportunity to join the Mexico Trip through Westtown, which focuses on eco-justice issues.

7. Late Night tonight?

Friends brought a proposal that we have the option of doing Late Night after the dance,

since there was no Late Night at Peace Fair. Late Night has been a tradition among Young Friends, which has become more challenging given the closer quarters of the meeting houses we're sleeping in now, compared to the Burlington space. Friends decided that we could do Late Night provided it be a trial and understood that, as we have already failed to do Late Night well in meeting houses a few times, given a few more failures, Late Night will no longer be an option. Friends decided there would be no music and that we would close the partition between the two social rooms to keep noise out of the sleeping area as much as possible.