

Young Friends Business Meeting Minutes – 5 May 2018

Presiding Clerk: Eliana Colzani

Recording Clerk: Jacob Hoopes

Business Meeting began with an overview of its function and aims by the clerk.

Moment of Silence.

The clerk went over the agenda.

Friends approved the agenda.

Discernment of Clerks

Mary and Julia left the room.

Eliana (for discernment) presented the names of Julia and Mary as the Clerks for next year.

Friends approved.

Mary and Julia were brought back in.

THE FRIENDS APPRECIATED THE PREVIOUS/CURRENT CLERKS WITH RESOUNDING APPLAUSE.

Report from Sprint III

Robert summarized the Sprint, a paper summary was handed out.

The clerk read the mission and vision statements and asked for feedback.

Feedback

Vision + Mission Statements

Why use the word God? – Quakers as a religious group care about the root of Quakerism among many things, and a part of that is its connection with God.

Robert read the section detailing the governance structure and asked for feedback.

Governance Structure

How power dynamics would work between Young Friends and this Committee? –

A subcommittee of the Quaker Life Council? – Most of the operations of the Yearly Meeting are done by the Administrative Council, the maintenance of the well-being of the community falls into the jurisdiction of the Quaker Life Council. The running of the Youth Programs, for all intensive purposes, is a subset of the Quaker Life Council.

Making sure that sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are included in the accessibility section.

Autonomy to approve our own guidelines, YFs have full control over the creation of the guidelines, but outside feedback is given for potential back lash. Authority/advisement could be clarified.

More than one representative from each group in YPAC would help.

“God” would not be entirely representative of our group. A potentially limiting word – this community aims to be welcoming to all people; change to “spiritual (something)” – The spirituality of Quakers is not God-centric. A lot of people coming to YF are at a very transformative/malleable period in their lives. It is important to recognize not the personalization of God, instead the spirit of it. “The spirit” “The spirit of Quakerism” Young Friends is less about the religious aspect, more about the spiritual and community-related bits. “The Light” “The light within each person” Why not “Allah”? – By using “The light” we would be escaping the uses of “God” in the past.

“Deepening” -> “Exploring”

It seems strange that such an impactful document could be written with respect to people not necessarily part of this community. – Not necessarily a fair representation if a single friend who was the age of a high schooler made the decisions on behalf of all Young Friends.

It is not the central goal of this community to keep the members of this community Quaker, rather, it could be said to be aiming for getting something of a personal spiritual awareness.

Provided there is no misrepresentation, most any mission statement would be fine.

“Recommend surveying youth who are involved and those not involved to identify areas of improvement.” What form would this take?

Monthly meetings don’t generally advertise Young Friends. Have a Young Friend or member of the community write something personal and descriptive about the community, as a part of or separate from YPAC. The advertising is made for those who are already part of the community, not so much for new people.

The recording clerk read the feedback on YPAC and friends approved.

Native Justice Report

Kaise presented on behalf of the Native Justice Committee.

Boon and Jim, Native rights activists, are going to have a workshop at Annual Session. Another committee of Boon’s suggested that Young Friends lead another of their workshops if we want to.

If we accept, should we spread the responsibility to other youth groups? Friends liked this idea.

The workshop would fit into the structure of annual sessions as one of the morning, all-together times. Open to everyone in the yearly meeting who are at annual sessions.

Volunteers:

Hannah + Kody Announcement

Hannah and Kody shared the following announcement:

“As many of you know, following a restructuring of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting staff last year, Hannah accepted a full time job at Pendle Hill as Asst. to the Executive Director. She has continued to work part time with Young Friends, sharing a larger portion of the work with Kody as co-Facilitators, as she discerned whether it could be sustainable for her to serve in both positions.

At the same time, Kody has been experiencing a leading to move back to Florida and do youth work for his home Yearly meeting, which currently has no youth program outside of its annual sessions. In March, his yearly meeting affirmed his leading and created the position of Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, to start in January 2019. This means that, over the course of the next 8 months, Kody will be finishing his time as Young Friends staff. Hannah has discerned that it is not sustainable for her to continue in both her current jobs, especially as she turns her focus to her upcoming marriage in a few weeks and the prospect of starting a family.

It feels right to us to close this chapter of our work with PYM Young Friends, in which we have been partners for six years, together. But we also want to support a smooth transition to a new team of program staff. We plan to help, and support Young Friends participation in, a process to hire a new staff person between now and Sessions, who would have a chance to work with us as an Assistant before taking up the Facilitator role. Hannah’s plan is to skip Sessions and attend Onas as her last Young Friends gathering in a staff role. Kody will work through the summer and fall with Christmas as his last staff gathering.

Through the upheaval of last year’s staff restructuring, you all have supported us and our work with unfailing generosity. You wrote letters, attended meetings, even made us afghans.

In Quaker tradition, a ministry that the community recognizes is coming to its rightful end is “laid down”, and the ministers “released”. We ask now for your continued generosity in releasing us from our ministry with PYM Young Friends, in its current form, so that we can be faithful in turning our attention to the new work to which we are each called.”

HE GROUP AFFIRMED THE RELEASE OF THE FACILITATORS TO GO ON TO NEW AMAZING THINGS WITH GRATITUDE.

Melinda Letter

The Clerk read a letter from Melinda (Youth Engagement Coordinator), who requested 1-2 Young Friends to join a search committee to find a new Young Friends Facilitator. Volunteers: Julia, Mary, Sophie, Kaise, Estelle. The clerks are released to select one or two of the friends to join with the search committee.

Youth Programs Advisory Committee nominations/volunteers. The clerk asked those who were interested to hold on to that interest until after our concerns about the YPAC have been addressed.