

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Asheville Friends Meeting

First Month 9, 2022

Present via Zoom: Bob Lackey, Clerk; Barbara Burke, Recording Clerk

Present via Zoom: Morgan Murray, Steve Livingston, Elizabeth Davis, Laura Lane, Rylin Hansen, Patty Burgess, Robin Wells, Margaret Farmer, Pat Johnson, Ellie Cox, Adrienne Weir, Gita Larson, Jim Barham, Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Jim Cavener, Barbara Esther, Landon Ward, Ellen Carr, Satchel Loftis, Kitti Reynolds.

Meeting opened with Silent Worship

The Clerk shared a reading out of silence.

From *Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches* by Mathilda Navias.
Friends Publishing Corporation 2012.

“Advices and queries have unique roles in Quakerism not found in other denominations. While advices, which are phrased as directives, have largely gone out of favor among Liberal Friends, writing and responding to queries remains a distinctive Quaker practice. The first queries were factual, asking such things as how many members in the meeting had been thrown in prison in the last year, but over time their nature and purpose developed more spiritual depth, asking not just for facts and figures but such things as whether members were being faithful to promptings of the Spirit. Queries have become a vehicle for self-examination as much as a means of reporting. Queries have been crafted on all sorts of topics outside those typically found in a book of Faith and Practice as an aid to reflection and to deepen the spiritual life of individuals and the worshipping community. The following observation reinforces the aptness of queries for Quakers:

‘The Quaker Way is not so much a system of beliefs as it is a framework for asking the right questions.

(Christopher A. Dorrance, *Reflections from a Friend's Education*, pp. 39-41)’ ”

The Twelfth Month business meeting minutes were reviewed and discussed, and the following changes were suggested:

A Friend advised that the reference to “ a committee”, in the report on SAYMA should be changed to “the representatives meeting” in two places. The last sentence will now read “This activity distracted the representatives meeting from its purpose.”

Evey Frerotte’s name, who left a bequest to the meeting, was misspelled and corrected.

Mention the placement of appreciation for Margaret Normile for her service as clerk of the P&E committee, to the P&E report.

The sentence referring to 2022 expenses was removed from the financial report presented by Satchel Loftis.

A clarification to Minute 3 was requested. It will now read: Approved that a Reparations Fund management team be established, where 1-2 members are from the Peace and Earth Committee (P&E), 1-2 members are from the Racial Justice Committee (RJC) plus one member from the Meeting (preferably from Ministry and Council [M&C]). The members first assignment is to develop a process for disbursement of reparation funds.

The Clerk and the Recording Clerk suggested a trial of using Google Docs for future Business Meeting minutes. We are using the suggestion mode for

members to make changes. The suggestion mode will be turned off once the draft is posted on the website.

Minute # 1: The Eleventh Month business meeting minutes were approved.

Minute # 2: The Twelfth Month business meeting minutes with corrections were approved

Announcements:

The Tuesday night book group resumes on 1/11 and will be reading *Me and White Supremacy*. The books are ordered and Gita is distributing them. Gita found books on sale and offered them to people who need one.

Morgan sent out new invitations to join meeting for worship via Zoom, as our Zoom contract expired at the end of the year. Let him know if you have not received an invitation and registration link, and he will send one to you.

From Spiritual Enrichment Second Hour Programs for January

January 16 - **Ms. Bettie Council's Work about her work**

January 23 - [possible time for Spiritual Friendship chats]

January 30 - **Card Writing- Peace and Earth Com. Message will come**

Committees:

Ministry and Counsel: Robin Wells

As we approach the two year anniversary of the start of COVID in our local community, we come to the realization that it is not going away any time soon and we need to continue focusing on how to live our lives within a pandemic. We have attempted to rethink meeting for worship and other parts of our meeting life and find ways to continue them safely. Zoom video communication has provided a way for some to stay connected and continue many of our regular activities such as meeting for worship, first day school check-in, second-hour programs, committee meetings, and weekly evening discussions. When it was warm enough to be outside, we offered meeting for worship and first day school in person with safety precautions in place, such as distancing and wearing a mask. At one point when the COVID metrics were low enough, we offered indoor meeting for worship for those who were vaccinated. Most Friends did not take advantage of this offering and continued to meet outdoors.

Today, the COVID numbers are back up and we no longer feel safe meeting in person. This takes its toll on all of us, but perhaps the families with young children feel it most of all. They likely worry about sending their children to school and many of them work in schools or colleges themselves or are in other high-exposure jobs. We want to be sure to support them as they go through this difficult time. While our young families are always invited to be part of business meeting, we made an effort to invite them here today so we can check in with them and see how we can better support the spiritual needs of our families. Let's hear from our families about what is working for them and what we could be doing better.

Responses: Some parents have mentioned that their children miss being around other kids, specifically children their own age. While the teens enjoy time with the younger children, they need time with other teens. A parent pointed out that, especially for children of a young age, the epidemic has been a large portion of their life. Some of these children don't remember their Meeting friends. A Friend said that it is hard to feel that they are keeping in touch and deepening relationships via Zoom.

Suggestions were offered: on-line check-ins, participating in games on-line, offering stories and crafts via Zoom, alternating with regularly scheduled outdoor events such as walks at the Botanical Gardens. Several parents expressed their frustration with too much Zoom and would like regular in-person get-togethers when it is safe to do so. Patty, our childcare provider, offered to help with childcare for these parent gatherings.

A chance for parents to meet together or interact via Zoom was suggested, but time constraints exist, and a Friend was concerned about the lack of privacy for parents with their children present.

One day the numbers will go down again and we hopefully will be able to move back indoors. In preparation for that day, we have purchased air purifiers for the Meetingroom and two first day school rooms. Our current Meeting policy mandates COVID vaccination for everyone meeting indoors. As we all know, this leaves out our youngest Friends who are not old enough to be vaccinated. How can we help families meet their spiritual needs if some of their children are not eligible for vaccination? How can we best protect each other and our children? Do we need to modify our policy on vaccination?

Responses: A Friend stated that a vaccine mandate to attend indoor events might place a burden on some people and prevent their attendance. Others may feel uncomfortable attending indoor events where some are not vaccinated, despite air purifiers and filters.

Opinions and concerns were voiced by many, but it was felt we are not ready to make a decision. A mandate could impact many and we want to carefully consider this.

Finance: Satchel Loftis, Ellen Carr

Satchel began with presenting the 2021 end of the year budget and the 2022 budget proposal via shared screen. He explained that numbers may change as checks that came in December are cashed in 2022. There were specific donations for specific programs (windows, air purifiers, etc) that are not included in the operational budget.

He reviewed the Reserve Fund attachment.

He explained that cash holdings (page 3) is actual cash, (not buildings, etc).

Reparations funds are specified for that purpose in a reserve fund, not general funds.

Care and Nurture funds cannot be paid to an individual, but can be used to pay a bill or other expense.

\$300 TV expense is to come from the Meeting's General Fund, as stated in December BM minute # 2

There was agreement that unspent RJC funds are still accessible to the RJC committee.

Key points, with the assumption that final contributions and expenses will change:

- In 2021, unrestricted contributions were up significantly compared to the year's budget (\$28k vs \$24k), leading to a modest surplus (<\$5k). We will know that amount in a few weeks after final check requests and payments are made.
- Using the 2021 contributions total as our target for 2022, the budget as currently being discussed needs to be trimmed by between \$3k and \$5k. The areas with the largest discretionary amounts are paying workers and making contributions to other groups.
- We were able to bring the preliminary budget into balance by agreeing to reduce the annual transfer to the Meetinghouse Improvement Fund to \$2,400 and also to reduce the three outreach budgets to \$2,500 each. A detailed layout is attached and as final results come in over the next couple of weeks, we will tweak these numbers as needed.
- At the Second Month business meeting, we will present an updated budget for approval.
- Additionally, a preliminary listing of the meeting's cash holdings, organized by fund, was reviewed. The total is approximately \$70k. Details attached.

We accepted the proposed budget for 2022, which will be posted on the website, but will need approval at the February Business Meeting.

Appreciation expressed to Ellen and Satchel for all the work done on the budget.

Peace and Earth: Mike

Proposal to honor our commitments made in the Land Acknowledgement (AFM LA.) One way was to read the AFM LA aloud when we gather. The

committee approved reading a shortened version at every Rise of Meeting. When we discussed how to make this a regular practice, it was brought up that the Worship Closing Script, which we had used after Worshiping in person, is no longer being used during Zoom meetings. If we use that script to close our Zoom Worship, then we could add the shortened AFM LA to that script.

A friend had a concern that this addition might feel overly programmed for our silent, unprogrammed meeting and might remove from the feeling of worship. Another friend suggested that a closing script can be grounding.

A friend suggested after Joys and Concerns might be a good time to read the AFM LA.

Ministry and Counsel asked if they could address this, along with Peace & Earth, at their next meeting, and this was approved

Minute # 3: Peace & Earth and Ministry & Counsel will address when, during or after Meeting for Worship, to read the Land Acknowledgement statement

Reparations Fund Team: Bob

The current members of the Reparations Fund Team are Steve Livingston, Pat Johnson, and Mike Eddy. M&C is bringing Barbara Esther to business meeting for consideration as a member of the Reparations Fund Team, which is not a committee. The makeup of the Team is 1 or 2 members from RJC, 1 or 2 members from P&E, and 1 member from Meeting, preferably from M&C, as recorded in the December, 2021 Minutes of the meeting.

Minute #4: Approved that Barbara Esther be the Ministry & Counsel representative to the Reparations Fund Team.

In the future, BM will need to decide whether members of the Team ought to be nominated and approved by the meeting. There was nothing in the approved proposal that stated or implied that its membership required nomination. Hopefully the Team will come back to the Meeting with a recommendation as to how its members will be named in the future, along with other processes around how the Fund is disbursed. That recommendation might be that Team members be nominated and approved just as most other positions of responsibility in our Meeting are.

SAYMA: Morgan

Morgan reviewed the contention that existed at the recent SAYMA representatives meeting.

It was noted that Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting has withdrawn from SAYMA.

Minute #5: The Clerk and Steve Livingston will send a card to Swannanoa Valley Meeting reinforcing our meeting's feelings of connection and affection for them.

Queries and State of the Meeting: Bob

Bob requested that clerks report convenient times to meet for the Clerks Committee to answer SAYMA queries which will lead to the State of the Meeting Report. The First Draft of State of the Meeting document will be presented at Second Month Meeting for Business. A final Draft will be presented at Third Month Meeting for Business for approval.

The SAYMA Queries

These queries are a guide, to help your monthly meeting look at the year behind us, to discern the “Spirit,” or state of your Meeting. These are guides based on observations made by the SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee. They may not all speak to all meetings, or in the same way. We hope that these queries open conversation, and are used for community contemplation, giving insight also on the growth of your meeting over the past year. It should be a mystical process, not rigid, or stressful. There is more than one path to take in Light,
SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee

1. How have we actively listened for that of God in others as we contend with vulnerability, hurt, anger, and new ideas?
2. If a method of communication we have been using has not worked, what other ways have we tried?
3. How have we wrestled with the possibility that we are wrong? How have we allowed the space that Spirit needs to show us new possibilities?
4. How did we make room for humanity and life circumstances in our expectations of each other? How have we respected each of our lived experiences?
5. What moments of joy have we experienced during worship this past year?

The Meeting closed with silent worship until the way opens for our next business meeting in the second month of 2022.

Attachments:

Asheville Friends Meeting
2021 Operating Activity (PRELIMINARY) and 2022 Budget (PROPOSED)
As of December 31, 2021

	2021 Actual	2021 Budget	Actual / Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	2022 Budget (Proposed)	
Operating Activity						
Income						
Contribution Income - Unrestricted	28,283.24	23,800.00	119%	4,483.24	26,042	28,283
Rental Income	105.00	-	---	105.00	-	Awaiting
Interest Income - Unrestricted	56.73	133.00	43%	(76.27)	50	Year-end
Total Income before Transfers	28,444.97	23,933.00	119%	4,511.97	26,091.62	Results
Total Income & Transfers from Other Funds	\$ 28,444.97	\$ 23,933.00	119%	\$ 4,511.97	\$ 26,091.62	
Expense						
Transfers TO Other Funds**						
Meetinghouse Improvement Transfer	1,426.00	1,426.00	100%	-	2,600	Restoring
College-Age Support Transfer**	-	17.00	0%	(17.00)	17	Transfers to
M&C Needs Fund Transfer**	377.00	377.00	100%	-	688	2019 Levels
Scholarship Fund Transfer**	110.00	110.00	100%	-	200	
Total Transfers TO Other Funds**	1,913.00	1,930.00	99%	(17.00)	3,505.00	
	9%					
Meeting House						
House and Grounds						
Cleaning	1,040.00	1,200.00	87%	(160.00)	960	
Maintenance (+Landscaping)	3,425.00	2,100.00	163%	1,325.00	2,259	
Meetinghouse Improvements		-	---	-		see below
Total House and Grounds	4,465.00	3,300.00	135%	1,165.00	3,219.00	
Insurance	3,950.00	3,800.00	104%	150.00	4,000.00	
Total Utilities	1,513.79	1,800.00	84%	(286.21)	1,800.00	
Total Meeting House	9,928.79	8,900.00	112%	1,028.79	9,019.00	
	44%					

** These items are transfers to/from other funds, not cash out/in.

Asheville Friends Meeting
2021 Operating Activity (PRELIMINARY) and 2022 Budget (PROPOSED)
As of December 31, 2021

	2021 Actual	2021 Budget	Actual / Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	2022 Budget (Proposed)	
Meeting Support						
Care and Nurture Committee	-	110.00	0%	(110.00)		
Communications Committee (website)	-	69.00	0%	(69.00)	300	TV
Total Finance Committee	279.23	311.00	90%	(31.77)	300	
Hospitality Committee	-	137.00	0%	(137.00)		
Library Committee	-	82.00	0%	(82.00)		
Ministry and Counsel Ctte	-	27.00	0%	(27.00)		
Peace and Earth Ctte	-	59.00	0%	(59.00)	100	
Racial Justice Committee	63.52	274.00	23%	(210.48)	450	
Total Religious Education Ctte	1,950.00	2,019.00	97%	(69.00)	1,800.00	
Spiritual Enrichment Ctte	-	55.00	0%	(55.00)	50	
Total Meeting Support	2,292.75	3,143.00	73%	(850.25)	3,000.00	
	10%					
Outreach & SAYMA						
General Outreach	2,515.00	1,645.00	153%	870.00	3,000	Restoring
Racial Justice Outreach	-	1,645.00	0%	(1,645.00)	3,000	Outreach to
Quaker Outreach	775.00	1,645.00	47%	(870.00)	3,000	2019 Levels
SAYMA Assessment	5,025.00	5,025.00	100%	-	5,025	
Total Outreach & SAYMA	8,315.00	9,960.00	83%	(1,645.00)	14,025.00	
	37%					
Total Expenses & Transfers TO Other Funds	\$ 22,449.54	\$ 23,933.00	94%	\$ (1,483.46)	\$ 29,549.00	
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 5,995.43	\$ -		\$ 5,995.43	\$ (3,457.38)	\$ (1,215.76)
2022 special projects						
Roof	\$ 15,900					
Kitchen remodel	\$ 1,500					
Driveway paving	???					
E. Frerotte bequest (one-time)	\$ 10,000					

** These items are transfers to/from other funds, not cash out/in.

Asheville Friends Meeting Fund Balances

Fund Balances, as of 2021-12-31

Fund Name	Ending Balance
General Fund (Undesignated)	13,266.15
Building	31,164.88
College-Age Friends Support	1,854.38
House & Grounds Emergency	6,000.00
Junior Business Meeting	213.66
Meetinghouse Improvement	1,833.00
Memorial: Alice Brown Bequest 2009	498.66
Memorial: Evey Frerotte Bequest 2021	10,000.00
Ministry & Counsel Needs	2,512.00
Misc Restricted	270.83
Reparations	1,200.00
Residential Retreats	428.56
Scholarship	246.45
Special Projects (Air Filtration)	(263.42)
Special Projects (Indigenous Speakers)	-
Total Fund Activity	69,225.15