

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting Minutes
Sixth Month 8, 2025
DRAFT

Present in the Meetinghouse: Robin Wells, Interim Clerk; Elliott Jarrett, Recording Clerk; Steve Livingston, Kitti Reynolds, Pat Johnson, Sarah-Jane Thomas, Rusty Maynard, Scotty Utz, Stephen Soltensz, Jim Cavener, Barbara Esther, Howard Brodt, Ellie Cox

Present via Zoom: Margaret Farmer, Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Rylin Hansen, Joel Swaggert O'Brien

The meeting opened with Silent Worship.

Out of the silence, the Interim Clerk shared a reading from Owen James's Religious Studies Capstone Project. It is written in Owen's voice:

The act of participation in silence is not a passive practice. One must engage actively with the emptiness and space around them in a way that can be uncomfortable when compared to the busy and bustling world of our modern society. I personally have experienced the discomfort of having to just sit in emptiness for so long in a shared space. It is a skill that I have had to practice and develop through a continually informed process of what it means to feel silence through an embodied experience in a local context. I mention the term embodied because the corporeal aspect of silence is central to understanding the dynamics of experience within a community space. Additionally, acknowledging the active nature of body and mind in Quaker meetings highlights how we incorporate identity and relationship to self into our practice of silence. We are not just thinking about silence with our minds, we are literally physically in the silence with those in our community.

Presentation of the Agenda

Minute #1: The agenda was accepted.

Approval of 5th Month Minutes

Minute #2: The 5th month minutes have been approved with no changes.

Announcements

Owen James's Religious Studies Capstone Project entitled, "Silence as Community Connection at the Asheville Friends Meeting" will soon be available in the Digest.

The Meeting would like to send a letter of introduction to the next Meeting that he makes his home. Ministry and Counsel will send this introduction.

Our summer programming has begun for the children in Meeting. During meeting for worship each week, we will have both childcare and an activity for children upstairs. People are invited to sign-up to share a fun activity with the children. There will always be a second adult to help. Summer is a busy travel time for families and we sometimes don't have any children on a given Sunday. In that case, we will hope to find another day for the planned activity to take place. Please see Laura Lane, me, or any other Religious Education Committee member if you have any questions.

SAYMA Annual Sessions will be held virtually on **Saturday, June 14 and virtually and in person from Friday, June 20 – Monday, June 23.** The theme is "Nurturing Community in Our Broken Worlds."

For more information or to register, go to the SAYMA website www.sayma.org. In-person attendance is open til Friday, June 6th. Registration for virtual attendance closes on Wednesday, June the 11th. Scholarship is available from our Meeting. Contact Elizabeth Davis to request scholarship.

Asheville's Juneteenth celebration will be held at the City-County Plaza from 5-10 pm on Friday, June 20th. It is part of the Downtown After Five this year. Several Friends from Meeting will be helping the Black vendors through Bettie Council's Zig Zag Zoom initiative. See Pat Johnson or Robin Wells if you would like to help. We especially need help from 12-3 pm and 8-10 pm on that Friday. Everyone is invited to attend the free event, enjoy the music, and support the

vendors. Remember every dollar spent with local businesses helps with recovery from Helene. Our purchasing has power to help others.

We were encouraged by a Friend to remember that every dollar spent with Black entrepreneurs assists with their recovery from the effects of 400 years of oppression.

We have purchased the EGO lawnmower and once we have the shed reinforced, it will be available for use with the lawnmowing. The lawnmower will be stored outside, but the battery and charger will be stored inside.

Minutes of Remembrance at SAYMA Annual Sessions

The following was sent to our meeting:

Friendly clerks or friendly responders on behalf of SAYMA meetings or organized worship settings,

I hope to carry forward past Friendly traditions of remembrance of Friends lost to our fellowship. We should specially attend to those lost in the year since SAYMA last gathered in June, 2024.

If you, your Meeting, or another Friendly gathering wants SAYMA to hear of the loss, and if a minute in their remembrance is available, we ask that word be brought to SAYMA retreat at Berea College.

Anyone who registers for gathering may bring a minute, or their memories to share, to our worship at Berea with attention to sharing memories and minutes on Seventh day; Saturday, June 21, at 6:15 PM Central time. I will follow up with word about virtual access to the worship.

Friends can also reply directly to this email. I will gather minutes and other reflections to bring to and share at the remembrance worship.

In peace,

Chris Berg

SAYMA Yearly Meeting Planning Committee

worship coordinator

Meeting approved creating an Ad Hoc Furnace Committee to investigate options to replace the malfunctioning furnace on the West side of the Meetinghouse. Mike Eddy, Adrienne Weir, Rusty Maynard, Howard Brodt & Pat Johnson agreed to serve on this committee. Thanks to all of this hard working team. Note: Robin met with the Mountain Air Mechanical rep so thanks go to her as well.

We have met with reps from four companies but still will meet with at least 2 others. The companies are Mountain Air Mechanical, Bolton Heat and Air, First Choice Service Group and Gentry. The other two are Coles Heating and Cooling, recommended by Scotty Utz and Ledbetter Heating & AC, recommended by Mike Eddy.

The estimates we've received are in the chart below. First Choice hasn't given us estimates yet because their source of refrigerant became unavailable. We expect to have these estimates soon. We haven't investigated PTAC units yet but will be doing so soon.

The committee considered whether the Trane furnace on the east side could heat the whole house if the ductwork were connected. Mike found out that an 80,000 BTU furnace (which we have on the east side) typically heats homes between 2,000 and 2,500 square feet, depending on factors like insulation, climate, and home layout. Homes in colder climates may require a higher BTU rating for the same square footage. Our total finished area is 3,302 sq ft so the east side furnace probably won't heat the whole building.

The committee found out about **Electrify Asheville-Buncombe County**, a pilot program supporting home energy efficiency and electrification upgrades to support the goal of powering Buncombe County with [100% renewable energy by 2042](#). Mike and Pat met with navigator Don Moreland in April. We told him we prefer to contract with people of color whenever possible. He said that would be difficult in this situation. Mike searched for minority contractors but didn't find any in our area. Bolton and First Choice were Don's recommendations.

Bolton was concerned that there may be asbestos in the basement. They will not take the job until that is remediated. The NCDHHS site has information about asbestos requirements. Adrienne called Terracon and Buncombe county Air quality to ask for referrals for asbestos testing and abatement professionals. She found that it would be \$500.00 for the inspection and \$20.00 for each sample they take. Then one of her colleagues asked to take a look for free. These are her notes from his visit on 5/8/25:

- 1) no official report by an inspector as he did not do an inspection with sampling
- 2) he can provide us with a letter stating presence of asbestos tape on the duct work based on visual for a nominal fee if we want one
- 3) signage in basement to indicate caution, asbestos, don't disturb
- 4) suggested that door is locked and has signage indicating authorized persons only
- 5) if work is done where ductwork has to be handled, then licensed abatement would involve cutting out sections of ductwork where the asbestos tape is present, and wrapping it up and disposing of it using legal procedure for disposal of asbestos contaminated materials
- 6) just leaving the furnace and ductwork there wouldn't necessitate anything done with it (if it were my house, I'd just wrap the exposed asbestos areas with duct tape)

Asbestos Considerations

We could consider wrapping the exposed asbestos tape that's within reach with duck tape and labeling areas with adhesive signage indicating "Asbestos Present-Do Not Disturb." We could put a sign on the basement door that says, "Only Authorized Persons Allowed." We could find the key to the basement door and leave it locked but keep the key in the office. Adrienne has put up some stickers.

COST COMPARISON CHART				
COMPANY	FURNACE	HEAT PUMP	MINI SPLITS	PTAC
Bolton	\$7-9K	All Elec-\$25-30K +3-6KElec Dual-\$20-25K+\$2-4 K Elec West All Elec-\$22-25K +Elec West Dual-\$17-20K + Elec	Doesn't Recommend	?
First Choice	?	?		
Mountain Air			\$41.5K	\$15K +installation/unit
Gentry	2 Stage \$9,774 1 Stage	\$27-35K +\$3.5-4.5K elec	No Separate Numbers	

COST COMPARISON CHART				
	\$9,214			

All Elec means heat pump & back up electric strips
Dual means heat pump & gas backup

Cost of 1 Stage Trane Furnace in Jan 2020 from Mountain Air Mechanical was \$5,211.03

Here is a link to a longer more detailed report: [AFM Ad Hoc Furnace Interim Report](#).

One Friend drew attention to Duke Energy’s rebate program and wonders if this has been considered.

One Friend reminded us that if we can't find a key to the basement we can always replace the locks. They also pose an interesting observation around our duty to ensure the basement as a restricted area due to asbestos risk, this would also apply to members of law enforcement, just thinking outside of the furnace box.

One Friend asked us to address a question. Electricity in this area is made by gas. Where does sustainability come into this? Would using solar best represent our values?

A Friend posited that if we wait to buy electric options until the electricity is sustainable the electricity won't become sustainable.

Another Friend offered a metaphor to represent how our society’s use of energy could become more sustainable. They illustrated that in order to become sustainable in a system that is accessed by everyone it is helpful to make individual choices. Think of the grid as one big pool. Each energy creation source is pouring water into the pool and each energy user is extracting water from that pool. We pay a broker to provide a contract with those that “Keep the pool” so that they are required to pour sustainable energy into that pool. We do not know who is going to consume that energy but we know that it is coming from a sustainable source.

We are reminded by a Friend that purchasing renewable energy credits improves the economics of renewable energy and makes the creation of renewable energy sources more viable.

A Friend stated that Duke and one other company have rebates to help with financing.

The question was asked: Is there going to be a day when we put solar panels on this building? It would be a step towards the Meeting not participating in the fossil fuel industry and also a step towards creating (harnessing) energy from the sun. A step towards sustainability.

Peace and Earth Committee–Steve

Peace and Earth Committee was charged with the responsibility of managing the new Community Support Fund and is bringing recommendations to the Meeting for guidelines for using the fund. At a future business meeting, we will offer guidelines for replenishing the fund.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND GUIDELINES FOR DISBURSEMENT:

Is it an emergency? Did the need result from an unexpected event and is there a short time frame to address it?

Priority of request, from highest to lowest:

1. a local organization doing work that aligns with our Quaker principles
2. a Quaker Meeting in our geographical area
3. a Quaker Meeting in our Yearly Meeting
4. any other Quaker Meeting
5. a Wider Quaker Organization

The likelihood of fulfilling the request, and the amount we will authorize for disbursement, will be commensurate with the urgency of the need and the priority of the request.

Peace and Earth is always open to suggestions for non-emergency needs to be considered as part of our annual Community Outreach that is disbursed from the General Fund.

At the time of this writing, there is \$1051 in the Community Support Fund.

We considered if we would support an organization that is not in our area that is not Quaker.

One Friend offers that we should put a sixth option as Other.

A Friend suggested that number 6 be Other in consultation with the Meeting.

We are reminded that if it is a matter of urgency bringing it to Meeting could be a problem.

A Friend liked the idea that it involves a Quaker Meeting. When we donated to the people affected by the Los Angeles fires it gave the meeting in LA the opportunity to decide what is best to do with the money.

Minute #3: The Meeting accepted and approved the proposed descriptions of the guidelines and priorities.

Finance Committee Report

Asheville Friends 2024 Board Meeting—Pat

The Board of Directors requests that the minutes of its 2024 annual meeting be incorporated into the minutes of Asheville Friends Meeting:

The Annual Meeting of the AFM Board of Directors took place by Zoom on 5/16/25 at 6:00 pm. Note that this meeting was postponed from the normal October date due to disruption from Hurricane Helene.

Present were Board members Ellen Carr (Member of the Board *ex officio* as Treasurer of Meeting), Satchel Loftis (Member of the Board *ex officio* as Assistant Treasurer of Meeting), Kitti Reynolds (Member of the Board) and Pat Johnson (Member of the Board). A quorum of 4 members was present.

Pat Johnson will continue as Chairperson, and Ellen Carr will serve as Secretary.

Pat Johnson, Ellen Carr, Satchel Loftis, Kitti Reynolds, and Beth Eddy are signatories for the Self Help Credit Union accounts.

We request that the minutes of this meeting be recorded in the Minutes of Business Meeting.

There being no other new business, the Annual Meeting concluded at 7:00pm.

The Bylaws specify, “The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at the office of the Friends Meeting on the second Sunday of October of each year.” The 2025 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for October 2025, date and time TBD.

Respectfully Submitted, Ellen Carr, Secretary of the Board of Directors.

Minute 4: The Meeting accepted the report.

Ellen Carr, Treasurer noted that going forward Laura Wall, our Meetinghouse Cleaner, will submit her hours electronically to expedite check writing.

The Committee discussed how to divide up work associated with writing annual outreach checks and the preparation of charitable gift letters as well as the W-2 forms for Laura Wall in January 2026. Pat agreed to take on some of this responsibility next year.

Action Item

The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer request that the Meeting approve switching their roles so that our Treasurer will be Satchel Loftis and our Assistant Treasurer will be Ellen Carr.

Minute # 5: Satchel Loftis will become the Treasurer of the Meeting and Ellen Carr is the Assistant Treasurer. The Meeting would like to thank both of them for the hard work that they do for the Meeting.

Treasurer’s Report–Satchel

1 - Operating Activity through the first five months of 2025

Revenue (gifts, rent, interest) \$ 15,629.19
Internal Fund Transfers (3,917.00)
Meetinghouse (9,541.42)
Meeting Support (56.60)
Outreach & SAYMA (4,675.00)
Net Operating Surplus (\$ 2,560.83)

The rental income and unrestricted contributions through the first five months of the year have been healthy, at \$15,629.19.

- Early-year unrestricted gifts are strong (greater at this point than any year)
- Increased rental activity (90% of annual budget target)

Comparisons “to budget” at this point in the year are difficult, because spending is not smoothly distributed throughout the year. Notable expenses and transfers paid include:

- The annually-approved transfers to non-operating funds, in the amount of \$3,917, has been recorded for the year.
- The full annual premium for the Meeting’s insurance was paid, in the amount of \$4,961 (matching the budget target).
- The full SAYMA assessment has been paid, in the amount of \$ 4,675.
- Annual pest control and furnace maintenance has been performed.

The budget is looking good and is ahead of schedule for this year. Our budget is the largest it has been in recent memory. We have a good amount in our reserve budgets. See report.

One friend asked if we are saying that the transfers have been made to our reserve funds. Could the reserve fund totals be added to the minutes? We are dealing with some big ticket items in the near future. We may need to have a capital campaign or look into a special loan to get a new furnace.

Asheville Friends Meeting
Fund Balances

Fund Balances, as of 2025-05-31				
Fund Name	Beginning Balance	Ending Balance	Net Change	
Building	7,252.70	7,720.27	467.57	
House & Grounds Emergency	4,499.50	4,499.50	-	
Meetinghouse Improvement	6,154.12	8,554.12	2,400.00	
Bequest 2021: Evey Frerotte	9,475.00	9,475.00	-	
Totals	27,381.32	30,248.89	2,867.57	

The Meeting closed with silent worship and will reconvene as way opens for our next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on Seventh Month 13th, 2025.

Addendum

[AFM- Business Meeting- Finance Report - 2025-06-15](#)

[AFM - Operating Activity FY2025-2025-06-09](#)

