

**AD HOC COMMITTEE ON
STAFFING AND STRUCTURE**

**REPORT TO NEW YORK YEARLY
MEETING**

JULY 2003

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INTRODUCTION

In July 2001, after extensive consultation with monthly meetings and individual Friends, review of the practices of our Yearly Meeting and others, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of NYYM (Function Committee) submitted its report and recommendations to the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting accepted their report and created two follow-up ad hoc committees:

- Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing and Structure, charged *“to test with monthly and regional/quarterly meetings the recommendations and suggestions put forward in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of NYYM... Through this testing and their own discernment process the Committee is further charged to revise the recommendations with a view to achieving greater unity about the steps to be taken to serve the renewal of the Yearly Meeting.”*
- Ad Hoc Committee on Committees, under the care of the Staffing and Structure Committee, with its own charge.

This Report represents only a small portion of the material the Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing and Structure (the Committee) has worshipped over and explored during the past two years of frequent day-long meetings. The Function Committee recommendations were reviewed and discussed, as was the Yearly Meeting's effort to implement them, particularly in the areas of communication and education for new Friends at Yearly Meeting gatherings. Many Function Committee recommendations, although discussed, were not yet sufficiently seasoned to bring forward to Yearly Meeting for action at this time. However, the Committee believes that the three recommendations that follow are necessary to place before you for consideration, hoping you will feel moved, as we have, to approve them as the gathered body of New York Yearly Meeting.

The Function Committee recommended that we, *“add a managing clerk who would provide both servant leadership and oversight of staff and organizational operations.”* (p.18) They suggest that, *“...a large part of the job be to structure 'space' of the Yearly Meeting and its work so as to be congenial for the Spirit to work through others.”*(p.19) They state that the needs and priorities of Friends are neglected, *“while the limited staff continue to focus, as they must, on the significant administrative tasks for which the Yearly Meeting office has responsibility.”*(p.17)

Therefore, we recommend that NYYM create a staff position for a managing clerk, titled General Secretary. Further, we recommend that the position be evaluated in three years to determine whether the position, job description and accomplishments serve NYYM (individuals', monthly and regional meetings') needs so that the leadings of the Spirit can more clearly manifest.

After our preliminary Report of 2002, where we first presented this recommendation, we were advised to reconsider the suggested salary range. Subsequently, with counsel of the Personnel Committee and Friends with expertise in financial matters, we lowered the salary range from its original figures. Friends also advised that we consider fewer responsibilities for this position. In this final report, we lay aside, as some Friends recommended, a specific responsibility for pastoral or spiritual leadership, recognizing that the right candidate will be able to help draw out and support the rich pastoral gifts that already exist among Friends in regional and monthly meetings.

Our other two recommendations relate to strengthening the vitality of the Spirit in NYYM by enhancing the relationships of regions and monthly meetings to each other and to Yearly Meeting as well.

The Function Committee saw the strengthening of regional meetings as a priority (page 4) and recommended that we, *"Consider eliminating the spring Representative Meeting and consolidating the two Representative Meetings...the elimination of the spring Representative Meeting might enable regional/quarterly meetings to hold spring gatherings similar to Farmington-Scipio's."* (page 7)

Therefore, we recommend a gathering of representatives from all regions into a Regional Representatives Council, to worship and share ideas and resources, and develop a strengthened inter-regional voice. The purpose would be to provide for more robust growth within regions. The Council would set its own priorities and become an integral part of discernment throughout NYYM.

We heard, as we visited meetings and through Friends' letters, a desire to develop new ways of addressing their concerns. A Regional Representatives Council could encourage growth and mutual support using existing resources and creating proposals for sharing new resources when priorities become clear.

Our third recommendation addresses what we have heard regarding monthly meeting participation in Yearly Meeting decision making. This is addressed in *Faith and Practice*, but as the Function Committee reported, we need to do, *"a much better job of involving monthly meetings in the work of NYYM. Monthly meetings need to be informed early about matters coming before sessions of NYYM...so that the views of Monthly Meetings, not just of those Friends who happen to be in attendance at NYYM sessions, can be heard."* (p. 14) The Committee, testing this statement with Friends, and with its own discernment, concurs that the voice of the monthly meetings in Yearly Meeting decision making has been eroded.

Therefore, we recommend that NYYM make a conscious re-commitment to strengthen monthly meeting designated representation, as well as individual representation, in NYYM gatherings.

The Function Committee's report also addressed this concern in recommending education about Friends' practices. Some of this has already been addressed by various Yearly Meeting committees, but there is more that can be done.

Many members of the Committee will be stepping down after Yearly Meeting 2003. However, there are more Function Committee recommendations that need further discernment. Two potential recommendations that our Committee has spent considerable time exploring, but has not yet seen clear to bring forward, are:

- 1) the mechanism for providing funds to support regional initiatives and
- 2) support of youth through Yearly Meeting staffing.

We would like to suggest that the Committee be sustained to seek clearness about these and other Function Committee recommendations or the Yearly Meeting find some alternative means to address them.

GENERAL SECRETARY

The Function Committee recommended that we hire a “*clerk manager (or executive secretary)*.” The Staffing and Structure Committee, tested with counsel of many Friends, agrees with this recommendation, choosing to use the more familiar title, General Secretary.

It was apparent that there was an unreadiness to approve this recommendation at Yearly Meeting 2002. We withdrew the request for approval and spent this past year testing and rethinking the proposal. Some Friends asked if the Committee would consider a less comprehensive set of responsibilities, in particular, a more limited role in spiritual leadership, which we have done. Some Friends asked that we consider a lower salary, which we have provided (see section on Financial Considerations). If there is approval of the position, the decisions regarding salary and job description (as well as determination of specific job qualifications, establishment of a search committee, interviewing of candidates and hiring) rest with General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) and the Personnel Committee.

We have continued to meet and reconsider this position, and it has become increasingly clear that the temporary measures we have adopted as a Yearly Meeting to fill the gaps in staffing are insufficient to meet our needs for growth and renewal Yearly Meeting-wide. The Committee requests that you consider and approve the recommendation for a General Secretary as presented to you in the Introduction.

Although a specific position description was requested, that task falls to the Personnel Committee in consultation with GSCC, Liaison Committee and current staff. Below we outline our suggested areas of responsibility that would be assumed by a General Secretary.

The General Secretary would be the senior staff person of New York Yearly Meeting. She/he would require a working knowledge of the Yearly Meeting as a whole and of its constituent meetings. She/he would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of Yearly Meeting policies and programs and facilitate nurture and support for individual Friends, and their meetings and regions, coordinating assistance from individuals and NYYM committees.

(continued)

Some of the suggested areas of responsibility for a General Secretary position would include:

- * Visitation to monthly and regional meetings, facilitating communication and networking;
- * Meeting with the proposed Regional Representatives Council to increase communication among monthly and regional and Yearly Meetings, consider possible staffing needs and make support available as resources permit;
- * Assisting NYYM clerk and other officers in the performance of their responsibilities, as needed, providing information and insight into the current concerns and activities of monthly and regional meetings and of NYYM committees;
- * Attending to the work and needs of NYYM, facilitating communication among committees about activities, emerging interests and concerns.
- * Recruiting, training, and supervising NYYM staff, according to established Yearly Meeting guidelines, in consultation with Personnel and GSCC.
- * Maintaining liaison with wider Friends' bodies, and providing for interchange of concerns and support. Representing NYYM at the meetings of other organizations.

These areas of responsibility are not presented in order of importance.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR A GENERAL SECRETARY POSITION

The following suggested salary and benefits for a General Secretary are working estimates based on recent information collected and provided by Stanley Zarowin, former clerk of Financial Services Committee, clerk of the Ad Hoc Committee on Committees and assistant clerk of NYYM.

The actual figures will be determined by the Personnel Committee in consultation with GSCC, if there is approval of the position by Yearly Meeting. The proposed salary figures are close to those of comparable religious organizations, such as Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM). The suggested salary is between \$60,000 and \$70,000 per year plus 20% for benefits and up to an additional \$5,000 for travel and other expenses.

We have made allowance for the larger size and resources of PYM. It is also noteworthy that PYM contracted with a human-resources firm to benchmark salaries for similar religious organizations in its geographical area. The above estimated figures for a General Secretary position are in line with their findings. For comparison, the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators' midpoint salary is \$69,944. and the United Methodist Church's comparable average hiring rate is \$65,200.

The proposed salary range, with benefits and expense reimbursement, result in a total expense of between approximately \$75,000 and a maximum of \$89,000. The Committee was concerned that the Yearly Meeting find a way to fund some of the salary by reallocating its funds rather than by achieving it totally from new costs to monthly meetings. In the 2004 proposed budget, \$25,000 is to be included for a new part time interim Staff Supervisor. This position was created and approved by Personnel and GSCC (independently of the Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing and Structure) to meet critical staff needs. The position would be laid down upon the hiring of a General Secretary. Any remaining funds in the year of the hiring would go toward the new General Secretary position. The entire \$25,000 budget line would thereafter be reallocated to the General Secretary salary.

Included in our 2003 budget of \$454,341 is \$15,000 for the Opportunity Fund, which Ministry and Counsel Coordinating Committee is using for its Traveling Ministry program. With a General Secretary in place, it is expected that the Traveling Ministry Program will be folded into the General Secretary's position and the budget line as well. This means that \$40,000 of the proposed salary would be accounted for by reallocation of funds already in the budget.

The Budget

<u>2003 budget</u>	<u>Projected 2004</u>	Plus <u>int. Staff Sup.</u>	<u>New Total</u>	<u>+Balance for GS</u>	Grand <u>Total</u>	<u>% increase</u>
\$454,341	\$465,700	\$25,000	\$490,700	\$42,000 *	\$532,700	8 %**

* \$82,000 represents the midpoint of total expenses of the General Secretary position, including benefits and travel.. From this figure \$40,000 was subtracted from budget reallocations leaving \$42,000 of increase to the budget for the General Secretary position.

** The 8 % increase in the budget is based on a General Secretary not overlapping with the interim Staff Supervisor (\$25,000) and having the full amount of the \$15,000 Opportunity Fund folded into the GS salary line as well. This would be most likely to happen if hiring was as of the beginning of a budget year. If a hiring occurs midway through a budget year, there is a likelihood of greater increase in expense since the Opportunity Fund may have been exhausted.

Based on the \$82,000 midpoint of the full expenses of the General Secretary position, the increase per member in the Yearly Meeting would be \$23. Reallocating the salary of the interim Staff Supervisor to the General Secretary position, the increase would be \$16 per member. Reallocating the funds from the Opportunity Fund to the General Secretary position, the per member cost would be \$12 per member. This is a rough guideline of cost since some members contribute less than suggested and some more, and many attenders also contribute.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES COUNCIL

One recommendation of the Function Report appears as, "*...the possibility of having fewer, larger, and more dynamic Regional Meetings.*" (page 20) The Staffing and Structure Committee concurs that encouragement of a greater voice for regions in the deliberations of Yearly Meeting is an important ingredient in our revitalization. At times the monthly meeting/ Yearly Meeting dynamic is found cumbersome. Yearly Meeting committees send out mailings, reporting that many times they hear back from only a handful of monthly meetings. Part of the problem may be the weakened condition of many of our regional/quarterly meetings which erodes satisfactory Yearly Meeting-wide interaction with monthly meetings. The concerns and leadings of monthly meetings might be more successfully expressed through a greater regional/quarterly meeting interaction at Yearly Meeting and more talk between regions.

The Council could replace spring Representative Meeting, which would be in keeping with one of the Function Committee's recommendations.

The purpose of the Council would be to revitalize regional and monthly meetings by sharing successful programs and areas of mutual concern. It could branch out into collaboration in youth-related activities and spiritual leadings and share ideas on spiritual as well as financial development.

The Council would be composed of at least two Friends from each region: the region clerk or other officer, and one or more other Friends who, with Divine guidance, could aid in problem solving and sharing successes. The Council could meet two to three times a year.

The Council could offer insight and information about regional matters to Yearly Meeting staff, especially to the General Secretary, and to Yearly Meeting committees, in addition to sharing information in Council meetings among the regions.

We suggest that if the Yearly Meeting approves the Regional Representatives Council recommendation, that we ask the clerk of the Yearly Meeting to send a letter to clerks of regional meetings containing the approved recommendation and letting them know that further development of the Council would be independent of Yearly Meeting oversight.

RENEWAL THROUGH STRENGTHENING MM/NYYM COMMUNICATION

The Committee has tested the Function Report statement that,

" Friends that we spoke with in Monthly Meetings felt that NYYM needs to do a much better job of involving Monthly Meetings in the work of NYYM. Monthly Meetings need to be informed early about matters coming before sessions of NYYM: early enough to give Monthly Meetings time to consider proposals, time enough to ask questions and have them answered, so that the views of Monthly Meetings, not just of those Friends who happen to be in attendance at NYYM sessions , can be heard." (pp. 13/14)

In that regard, as much as the Yearly Meeting has responded positively and has been working to implement changes related to concerns raised in the Function Report regarding communication with monthly meetings, we nevertheless urge,

"...that NYYM find ways to strengthen Monthly Meeting representative participation in NYYM activities, with such representatives encouraged to report back to their Monthly Meetings."(Committee minutes, approved 3/1/03)

Although the appointment and nurturance of monthly meeting representatives to Yearly Meeting is outlined in the current *Faith and Practice*, our practice needs strengthening. We recommend, therefore, that the Yearly Meeting take steps to encourage the use of these procedures by making note of them in Yearly Meeting sessions and through other communication vehicles. Some of the alienation Friends have indicated exists between monthly meetings, regional meetings and Yearly Meeting comes from a lack of knowledge of the ways in which they are intended to interact. The Yearly Meeting could indicate periodically in *Spark*, in a separate mailing, in *Infoshare*, through Powell House weekends and "on the road" programs, and through the Yearly Meeting email list:

1. that each monthly meeting is encouraged to select a representative to be at all Yearly Meeting gatherings;
2. that monthly meetings be provided with written materials relevant to upcoming Yearly Meeting business at least six weeks prior to Yearly Meeting gatherings, if possible;
3. that monthly meetings consider a meeting for business prior to Yearly Meeting gatherings to explore materials relevant to the upcoming sessions and prepare the representative to move their corporate positions forward;

4. that the representatives be made aware of financial assistance opportunities from the Yearly Meeting Advancement Committee and possibly from the monthly or regional meetings to attend Yearly Meeting gatherings;
5. that the representatives be prepared to provide a report of their participation in Yearly Meeting sessions back to the monthly meeting.

Execution of this supportive preparation of monthly meeting representation at Yearly Meeting gatherings varies so considerably that it would be helpful to provide information on the mechanics of this in the form of a small pamphlet from the Communications Committee.

The names of the representatives could be asked for in advance of Yearly Meeting gatherings and provided to Sessions Committee and the Yearly Meeting clerk for inclusion in the minutes of sessions. Also, when the clerk invites Friends from various meetings and regions to stand during roll call, the representatives could be specifically named.

We seek Yearly Meeting approval of the recommendation presented in the Introduction to encourage a strengthening of a greater connection between monthly and Yearly Meetings through stronger monthly meeting-identified representation. If the recommendation is approved, the Committee asks the Sessions Committee, the Yearly Meeting office and Communications Committee to examine their roles in strengthening these vital connections.

APPENDIX A

STAFF LEVELS/STAFF SUPPORT

We are left with great concern for the future of the Yearly Meeting if we do not take action soon to remedy insufficient staff and staff support. Staff levels are down two fulltime executive positions from prior staffing and although the current staff performs exceptionally well within their prescribed responsibilities, the fallout from reduced staff inevitably leads to greater than reasonable burdens as current staff try to field Yearly Meeting needs outside their job descriptions.

An additional burden to compensate for our under employment situation falls on Friends in unpaid ministry such as the clerk of the Yearly Meeting, the clerk of Ministry and Counsel Coordinating Committee, the clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, volunteer staff supervision, and a variety of unnamed volunteer support. There are, of course, released Friends who have been traveling in the ministry with some support from Yearly Meeting and the same kind of arrangement with support from regional meetings. Having felt called to their Ministry, we assume that they would be doing a good portion of their current work even if we had the full complement of Yearly Meeting staff.

What we have as a Yearly Meeting office staff was actually designed to be part of a system, not a whole system. What was cut away from the whole was provision for essentially all the non-office functions, including administrative support for individual appointees, meetings and committees, and any representation to other organizations, Quaker and non-Quaker, and support for worship groups, pastors, and youth. The system of which current staff was a part already lacked adequate oversight and review. We have been blessed as of late with well qualified volunteer oversight assistance. However, all volunteers have priorities that arise that can pull them away from their unpaid ministry so we continually court the loss of continuity, predictability and our historical record unless these tasks are performed by paid staff.

Our current staff is highly efficient and capable, working extraordinarily long hours, some at fixed salary levels. If we were to lose any of them, we would not be able to find new employees with similar experience, efficiency, and willingness to work at the pace demanded of them by the current conditions. It is clear to all who work with the staff that the present functioning of NYYM would fail altogether were it not for their dedication.

It is our belief that the future without approval of a General Secretary will lead to an eventual crisis resulting from overwork, burnout, staff attrition and continuing loss of membership, as worship groups, youth needs and wider Quaker representation remain inadequately nurtured. This staff increase can provide greater responsiveness to monthly/regional meetings' needs toward continued revitalization and produce greater staff wellbeing.

APPENDIX B

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FUNCTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Summary Recommendations

- 1) Nurture Monthly Meetings with attention to the needs of young Friends;
- 2) Encourage and support the gifts of Friends who are led to travel in the ministry;
- 3) Bring more servant leadership and traveling ministry to serve the growth and expression of the Spirit within the Yearly Meeting;
- 4) Improve communication.

For Sessions and Advancement (p.7)

- 1) Subsidize attendance at YM gatherings, particularly for first time attenders;
- 2) Give automatic rather than needs-based scholarships to first time attenders;
- 3) Help first time attenders at YM gatherings feel welcomed through first night activities:
"plan the first evening...helping Friends feel bound together in one Spirit."
- 4) Consider eliminating Spring Representative Meeting -- encourage regional gatherings --add a committee day in addition to March Coordinating Committee weekend --change Representative Meeting to "Interim Gathering" and YM at Silver Bay to "Annual Gathering."

For Communications Committee (pp.11,14,15)

- 1) Provide published material (make pamphlets on Quaker practices available);
- 2) Offer seminars/conferences on Quaker practices at least one per year per region;
- 3) Identify resources on Quaker practices in the wider bodies of Friends and Monthly Meetings. Communicate this information to all Monthly Meetings;
- 4) Encourage staff to model Quaker practices;
- 5) Use the website as a major communication tool and email in addition to paper publications;
- 6) Make Handbook and Yearbook available on NYYM website;

- 7) Include timely information on events and activities of interest;
- 8) Promote website (with a resource brochure for Monthly Meetings);
- 9) Develop Monthly Meeting contacts for web information;
- 10) Mail copies of info. on request to those who prefer regular hard copy;
- 11) Make membership database available electronically;
- 12) Install a toll-free phone line in NYYM office;
- 13) Improve the form and process of collecting data from Monthly Meetings;
- 14) Transform *Spark* into a different kind of publication, which focuses on the needs and concerns of the members of the Monthly Meetings and on our spiritual community;
- 15) Hire a consultant to work with the Committee to redesign, address, reformat and create new layout for *Spark*.

For Staffing (pp.16-18)

- 1) Current staffing level and configuration is inadequate...There is a need for a person who will lead the work of NYYM for the optimum allocation of staff and financial resources in support of the leadings of the Yearly Meeting and who will serve as a catalyst...Add a managing clerk (or executive secretary) to provide both servant leadership and oversight of staff and organizational operations;
- 2) Add an Education, Youth and Outreach Secretary.