

**NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF REPRESENTATIVE MEETING**  
**April 2–3, 2005**  
**held at Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, New York**

**Saturday, April 2, 2005, 1:15 P.M.**

*Linda Chidsey, clerk*  
*Ernestine Buscemi, assistant clerk*  
*Karen Way, recording clerk*  
*Rima Segal, reading clerk*

1. Friends gathered in worship.
2. Linda Chidsey (Croton Valley), clerk of New York Yearly Meeting, introduced those at the clerks' table. Linda thanked the host committee of Nine Partners Quarter and Oakwood Friends School for their hospitality. Linda introduced Peter Baily, head of Oakwood Friends School, who welcomed Friends.
3. The reading clerk called the roll by regional and quarterly meetings, and their constituent monthly meetings and worship groups. Friends rose in response.
4. Paula McClure (Montclair), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, brought forth the business of that section. Paula introduced Harold Risler (Buffalo), treasurer, who presented two reports: the final Treasurer's Report for 2004 (to be published in the 2005 *Yearbook*), and the disbursements and income from the beginning of the year until February 28, 2005. In order to help with cash flow, Harold urged monthly meetings to send covenant donations over the course of the year, rather than waiting until the end of the year.
5. Paula reviewed the policy of reimbursing expenses for travel undertaken in service of the YM. As of April 15, reimbursement for automobile travel will be at the rate of 15 cents per mile. Friends were reminded that all vouchers must be accompanied by receipts or appropriate approval from the committee being served.
6. Paula McClure presented a summary of a report from the General Secretary's Committee to General Services Coordinating Committee. The General Secretary's Committee is tasked with evaluating the general secretary's performance and with reviewing the position of general secretary within the Yearly Meeting. Paula described Christopher Sammond's extensive visitation within the Yearly Meeting and in the wider Quaker community, plus his work with the staff in the Yearly Meeting office. He has brought energy, honesty, spiritual depth, and long hours to a job that is clearly more than one person can do. The committee acknowledges this, and supports Christopher in focusing more closely on visitation and the work of the office. Friends received the report.
7. Paula introduced Christopher Sammond (Twin Cities, Northern YM), general secretary, who presented the current draft of the Working Document for Procedures in the Event of

an Allegation of Child Sexual Abuse. Procedures need to be in effect prior to Yearly Meeting sessions in Silver Bay this summer. Friends responded with questions and suggestions. After discussion, Friends agreed to approve the document as a “working document” with the understanding that the procedures will go into effect, even as further comments are gathered. With this minute, the Child Safety Task Group (formed by General Services to address this issue) is authorized to make changes and present them for final approval in the future.

8. Ann Davidson (Farmington), coclerk of the Coordinating Committee for Ministry & Counsel, presented a request from the Conflict Transformation Committee to increase their membership from 4-6 members to 8 members. Friends approved.
9. Anita Paul (Schenectady), clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, introduced Daniel Jenkins of the Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation subcommittee of Peace Concerns Committee. Daniel told the history of Quaker militia tax objectors in 19th-century Dutchess County, N.Y. Daniel pointed out that Friends in this incident were successful because they were clear in their beliefs, expressed them publicly, and were willing to risk property and freedom to maintain their beliefs. Daniel urged us to write our own statements of conscience and share them with others.
10. Anita introduced Thomas Rothschild (Brooklyn) of the Peace Concerns Committee, who proposed that NYYM join other yearly meetings in endorsing the Fund for Education and Training (FEAT), a loan program administered by the Center on Conscience and War (CCW) for individuals who are barred from receiving state or federal financial aid because of their conscientious refusal to register with the Selective Service System. FEAT makes loans of up to \$2,500 a year for qualified applicants. The fund is self-replenishing as loans are paid back. Friends approved endorsing this fund and instructed the clerk to send a letter of endorsement to CCW.
11. Ernestine Buscemi (Morningside) clerked the meeting for the next item of business, releasing Linda Chidsey to report.

Vicki Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) reported for the Worship and Action for Peace working group, saying that a spirit of peacemaking grounded in worship continues to grow in the Yearly Meeting. Linda Chidsey reported on her experience in speaking (in Florida) to Southeastern Yearly Meeting about renewal within New York Yearly Meeting over the last 15 years. Linda described the period of spiritual deepening prior to 9/11/2001, and the remarkable upwelling of prophetic ministry that followed. Linda urged us to reach out and tell our stories to other Quaker communities, to feel the power of bearing witness to the wider world. Friends received the report.

12. Meeting closed in quiet worship.

**Sunday, April 3, 2005, 10:15 a. m.**

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk  
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk  
Lee Haring, Recording Clerk  
Anne Wright, Reading Clerk*

13. The meeting opened in worshipful silence and a verse of "Amazing Grace."

14. For the Epistle Committee, Rima Segal (Rochester) read an epistle from Ireland Yearly Meeting, held in April 2004. Irish Friends looked back at 350 years of Quakerism in their country and heard messages of inspiration. As they revise their book of discipline and consider the conflicts of today's world, they feel the challenge for their future.

15. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), clerk of the Nurture Coordinating Committee, reported on a "mini-retreat" held on Friday, April 1. This committee, continuing its work, offered two names as representatives to the World Gathering of Young Friends in August 2005, Alexander Haines-Stephan (Mohawk Valley) and Joanna Hoyt (Portland Meeting, NEYM). These appointments were approved.

16. Melanie-Claire reported that the Circle of Young Friends and Young Adult Concerns are being "recharged" and asked Friends to invite young people to attend a gathering at Powell House in July.

17. Christopher Sammond, general secretary, drew Friends' attention to his written report, and added a message about the importance of visitation, which gives hope to smaller meetings and worship groups. The work of visitation does not belong solely to him, but to all of us. He encouraged Friends to do visitation. No quarter or region lacks some small or struggling meeting or worship group, he said, as well as a larger or stronger meeting that has help to give. We are all called to this work, and it is reason for hope.

18. Anita Paul, clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, introduced Mary Eagleson, of the Committee on Right Sharing of the World's Resources, who brought a minute on "meeting the minimum needs of all," the concern of Radh Achuthan (Peconic Bay; see minute 37 of July 27, 2004), with the approval of Witness Coordinating Committee. The minute was read. It is hoped that the minute can be forwarded to Friends General Conference and Friends United Meeting, which, as members of the World Council of Churches, might be led to take the minute to that world body. Radh Achuthan spoke of the spiritual content of consciousness, which should intercede in such issues as safe drinking water and adequate nutrition. He told us his plans to advance his concern and expressed gratitude to Friends who have supported it. Prolonged discussion and tender consideration led to a sense that Friends were not ready to forward the minute, but that there is deep support for the concern and a dedication to respond to it.

19. Anita reported on the testimony of several Friends, members of the Yearly Meeting, before a committee of the New York State Assembly, in opposition to the reinstatement of the death penalty.

20. The following Friends were appointed to the services indicated.

**Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers**

Class of 2007

Joseph Rutledge ('05) Chappaqua

**FUM Triennial Representatives**

Regina Haag Adirondack

Ruth Kinsey Farmington

The following Friends were released from the services indicated at their request.

**Committee on Conflict Transformation**

Class of 2006

Alyce Branum ('03) Albany

**American Friends Service Committee**

Middle Atlantic Region Executive Committee

Class of 2005

Edward Stabler ('98) Syracuse

**Oakwood Friends School Board of Managers**

Class of 2006

Renalda Higgins Walker ('03) Poughkeepsie

**FUM Triennial Representative**

Ruth Bradley Poplar Ridge

21. The meeting closed in worshipful silence and song.