

NCC Minutes 11/16/13

Friends gathered in silence and introduced themselves to one another.

Present: Aldona Januszkiewicz, Colleen Hardiman, Elizabeth Powers, Gabi Savory-Bailey, Deborah Dickinson, Mike Clark, Jennifer Perry, Karen Snare, Alanna Badgley, Ron Peterson, Norma Ellis, Annie Bancroft, Howard Gibbs-Hobgood, Gloria Thompson, Dare Thompson

Deb announced that Beatrice Beguin had agreed to serve as assistant clerk if appointed. The committee approved. Alanna Badgley agreed to take minutes.

JYM Report from Aldona: At the JYM Committee meeting today, they discussed ways to incorporate Quaker and spiritual content into JYM moving forward. They will seek ways to enable more youth participation in the larger YM meetings, both business and worship. One Friend spoke to her excitement about the changes that have already been put in motion, such as including the younger Friends in the opening Session on Monday morning this past summer. The HS group has benefitted from having the boathouse as their claimed space throughout the day and at night. At Spring Sessions, JYM committee members plan to consult with youth to find out what they'd like to see to revitalize the energy of JYM. Aldona said that JYM leaders and JYM clerks have been increasingly involved in planning of activities during the planning weekend. JYM clerks are also encouraged to attend the clerking weekend at Powell House.

The committee is considering three year terms for three coordinators so that the first year may act as an apprenticeship for one of the coordinators.

Committee members will talk to financial services to come up with guidelines for monitoring expenses in the future.

Aldona reported that Melanie-Claire Mallison is working on pulling together JYM policies and procedures into a JYM Handbook – not an easy job because of the amount of material!

Drug & Alcohol Task Group: Deb said that she had been working on pulling together a task group to consider steps to keep before the Yearly Meeting the issue of Friends' use of alcohol and illicit drugs, especially during Summer Sessions at Silver Bay. Jen Perry has agreed to serve. The Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee has appointed Naomi Paz Greenberg. Helen Marie Staab has agreed to participate remotely. Over lunch today, Deb spoke to Margaret Lew and Erin Clark, both of whom seem to be interested. She has contacted a number of other Friends as well, and is looking for more suggestions of Friends to form a group of 6 to 8.

Deb had sent the final report of the session to consider drug and alcohol use during Summer Sessions to committee members and appropriate clerks before this session.

Friends spoke openly and honestly about their thoughts, concerns and hopes for the D&A TG. Notes are below:

- The hope is for youth to set their own guidelines, in cooperation with JYM leaders.
- One Friend stated that misuse of drugs and alcohol is not just a youth issue; it is a multigenerational issue. This is also a symptom of deeper issues that could prompt someone to use these substances: economic pressures, stress, mental health issues, and feelings of isolation. How do we develop a sense of belonging within our community? How do we involve everyone in this conversation? How does the individual behavior affect the group? When we come together in loving ways we can uplift each other so we no longer need substances.
- One idea was to have an NCC retreat during a youth conference at Powell House, so that issues of nurturing our whole community can be considered.
- A Friend expressed a need for more participation from YAF in the conversation, and that this group needs to feel involved. However, it is difficult to classify YAF, because YAF are really just adults.
- Some YAFs have been reluctant to participate in the conversation for fear of ostracization and exclusion. How can we include those who won't resist the tendency to get on a soapbox, and Friends who fear those who do?
- Drugs and alcohol outside and inside Silver Bay are different issues. When we sign the agreement to attend Silver Bay, we are saying that we will not use substances, and if we are to uphold our testimony of integrity we cannot go against that agreement. We could suggest that worship sharing groups might center on the theme of integrity. *(I sent this suggestion to Irma Guthrie, and she said that she would pass it on to the Friends organizing WS. Deb)*
- It may be a matter of changing the mindset and expectations of the experience- one that is drug and alcohol free
- Friends expressed gratitude for the fact that we are addressing the elephant rather than letting it sit in the room unnoticed,
- We are all evolving beings, how do we grow into the changes in our lives, and how do we nurture each other as we go through these changes?
- The circle of courage, of wholeness, includes: belonging, mastery, independence, generosity – if these are fulfilled, there is wholeness.
- Structuring conversations, rather than trying to control behavior; allowing everyone to have a chance to be heard and realize that there are varying experiences within their community.

Resource Library: Deb had not been able to get support for Florence McAllister in reorganizing the Resource Library so that it is accessible to Friends. She will put a notice in the next InfoShare about the need for new housing (potentially at a Meeting House) for the collection currently under the care of Florence McAllister. When a new location is found, Karen will help do the transport from Florence's home to the new location, wherever it may be. We will still need Friends to go through the material to see what is still relevant, and consider ways to make it accessible to Friends.

Spring retreat: Friends felt that there is energy to meet at Powell House in the spring to discuss issues of inclusion, particularly of youth in our YM. This would include members of Nurture and the committees under their umbrella, but would also be open to others. Pitt Hall would be available the weekend of May 16-18. ARCH will be conducting a caregivers weekend at the same time. Between the two groups, we should be able to fill the house.

Friends recognized that the energy is already working, as 26 youth were registered for this Fall Sessions, and this Session has one of the highest number of Friends registered for Spring or Fall Sessions in a long time.

Committee Reports:

Aging Concerns will be applying on December 1 for a grant from Friends Foundation for the Aging to fund their work in 2014. NCC approved, and the application is attached to these minutes.

YFIR: Ron Peterson reported that the committee has only two members, with no interns waiting in the wings. They continue to meet by phone, and are considering laying down the committee.

FWCC: Mike Clark reported that the World Office of FWCC is collecting Funds that will be donated to Friends in the Philippines to help Friends and others with recovery after the earthquake and typhoon. Deb will look to see what Funds are available from NCC. *(Witness Activities Fund will make a contribution to this project.)*

Gabi said that the **Multigenerational Weekend** in May at Powell House was very successful with a good turnout. There is another retreat scheduled for March.

The meeting closed with a brief period of worship.

Deborah Wood
Clerk

Alanna Badgley
Recording Clerk Pro Tem