

Brooklyn Friends School

Saturday, April 7, 2018; 10:00 a.m.

*Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Karen Reixach (Ithaca), Recording Clerk
Mahayana (Yana) Landowne (Brooklyn), Reading Clerk*

2018-04-01. The Clerk invited Friends to move closer to the front. She reviewed the agenda. The meeting then settled into expectant worship out of which Liseli Haines (Mohawk Valley) offered an acknowledgment of the Canarsie:

Let us begin by acknowledging with humility that the land where we sit and stand today is the territory of the Canarsie, a Lenape nation, which translates as “at the fenced in place.” Their vast cornfields covered much of what we now know as Brooklyn. Their trading network stretched for hundreds of miles by land, sea and waterway. These multilingual people traded extensively with the Dutch, who brought new diseases to the Nation. It is estimated that 90% of the Canarsie died of smallpox, diphtheria and fever in the first half of the contact. Of those left, some joined nations to the east and west, as settler pressure increased.

2018-04-02. The reading clerk read the roll of monthly meetings by Quarter/Region and invited Friends from each meeting to stand as their region was called. All regions were represented.

2018-04-03. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks’ table. The folks at the clerks’ table demonstrated the temptations of cell phones, and the clerk reminded Friends of the opportunity for depth and the difficulty posed by texting, Instagram and email in worship. She acknowledged the elders and whisper buddies.

2018-04-04. On behalf of the host committee Nancy Britton (clerk of New York Quarter) introduced the host committee and welcomed Friends to Brooklyn Friends School.

2018-04-05. Treasurer’s Report: Mary Williams (Bulls Head), NYYM treasurer for 2017, described the 2017 Consolidated Financial Statement and its components, which is also on the NYYM website. She also reviewed the figures in each of the components. Laura Cisar (New Brunswick), the treasurer for 2018, introduced herself. Mary and Laura invited questions from the body.

Mary responded to a question about the surplus of roughly \$57,000 and the vacancy in the Young Adult Field Secretary position by saying that this was a partial reason; other reasons

included the income from meetings (99% of expected donations were received), and that the financial accounts were revised in 2017. She estimated that half of the surplus was one-time occurrences. Another question was what accounts were closed that could have been used by monthly meetings and are we making available to monthly meetings all the resources that they could use? Mary indicated that funds from the closed accounts were not available for monthly meetings and added that NYYM could do better in providing information about resources available to monthly meetings. An important goal of Financial Services is financial simplicity and transparency.

Friends received the report.

2018-04-06. Elaine Learnard (Conscience Bay) reported for the Liaison Committee on the the Temporary Proposal on New York Yearly Meeting Structure, which is available on the NYYM website and is attached.

The proposal is intended to care for and support the entities under Nurture Coordinating Committee without overburdening the remaining coordinating committees. Elaine summarized the changes and provided the rationale for each change: She emphasized that this proposal suspends but does not lay down Nurture Coordinating Committee.

- Aging Concerns to General Services Coordinating Committee
- JYM to become a subcommittee of Sessions (which is under General Services Coordinating Committee)
- Epistle Committee, Powell House and Youth Committee to Ministry Coordinating Committee
- Reps of FGC, FUM and FWCC to an “affiliate group” linked with Liaison Committee
- Oakwood Board to Liaison Committee

This temporary plan would begin at the close of these Spring Sessions and go through Summer Sessions 2019, by which time we hope a new structure for the Yearly Meeting will be ready to be tried or another proposal will emerge from our discernment.

A concern about the reports to the body from the various affiliate groups was raised; Elaine indicated that the affiliates will receive care.

Why is this a temporary proposal? This plan would begin now and will continue through Summer Sessions 2019. This gives time for Liaison and the body to hear concerns and suggestions.

Will this necessitate a revised budget to be approved at Summer Sessions? No.

One concern is that more time for Coordinating Committees means less time for other activities. Elaine indicated that greater efficiency and meeting times outside of Sessions may be necessary.

Where is JYM Committee and will Nominating Committee continue to bring nominations?

Elaine indicated that JYM Committee will continue and Nominating Committee remains responsible for naming individuals to this committee.

Deeper problems, both spiritual and practical need attention. We need a plan that starts soon for the transition we are in; this proposal does not answer this spiritual call. Is this plan honest and real? The threshing session will offer an opportunity for this deeper reflection.

The clerk invited Friends to reflect in silence. She asked whether we are ready to move forward with this plan.

In the present structure, the care for NCC committees is not provided; this is an experiment. We are invited to talk about the future of how the Yearly Meeting can grow and deepen during this temporary plan.

How we move forward matters. Knowing we are not going to stay, we are being pulled forward by forces that if resisted will get us in deep trouble. If we listen and support each other as a community, we will have depth, strength and power because being in a spirit-led community can allow us to do the next right thing.

A missing piece is the question of why the energy has flagged. The solution is not structural.

Friends approved the temporary plan with the understanding that we hope to experiment with what we let go of and what we will embrace, not only in structure but also in use of time.

One Friend stood aside from a place of love.

The meeting clerk then invited Friends to offer ministry on the future of the Yearly Meeting and the work God is calling us to.

2018-04-07. Minutes were read, corrected and approved in stages during this session. Following announcements, the meeting closed with brief open worship.

Brooklyn Friends School, Brooklyn, NY
Sunday, April 8, 2018

Lucinda Antrim (Scarsdale), Clerk
Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Assistant Clerk
Karen Way (New Brunswick), Recording Clerk
Rima Segal (Rochester), Reading Clerk

2018-04-08. Friends gathered in worship.

2018-04-09. Clerk Lucinda Antrim welcomed Friends, introduced the clerks' table, and reviewed this morning's agenda.

2018-04-10. In accordance with our consent agenda practice, the clerk reported that the previously posted contents had required no amendments. Friends therefore approved the items in minutes 2018-04-11 and 2018-04-12 (as follows).

2018-04-11. The report on Interim actions by the clerk and general secretary was received. (Report attached.)

2018-04-12. Nominations for appointment to service and releases from service are approved. (Report attached.)

2018-04-13. John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, introduced Pamela Wood (Morningside) from Personnel Committee. Pamela reviewed the history of trying to fill the Yearly Meeting's needs for staff support for Children, Youth and Young Adults. She proposed a model for meeting all these needs with one position: a full-time Children, Youth and Young Adult Secretary position that would combine the currently open part-time positions of Children and Youth Field Secretary and Young Adult Field Secretary. In a program modeled on ARCH (Aging Resources, Consultation, and Help), the new secretary would anchor and oversee the work of local coordinators. Working for a monthly stipend, the local coordinators would be geographically close to monthly meetings and could provide skills specifically focused on children, youth, or youth adults.

This idea will be further delineated in *Spark*. Friends were asked to consider this idea and other possibilities, and to direct their questions and comments to the Personnel Committee. A proposed job description is expected to be presented for consideration at Summer Sessions.

2018-04-14. Heidi Kelly (Old Chatham), clerk of the Powell House Committee and her daughter Maddy Kelly reported on activities and plans for Powell House.

There is a plan to try a sliding scale for Powell House fees, allowing program participants to pay less or more than the usual fee.

There will also be a yearly subscription plan for individuals (\$740) and for meetings, so more people can attend more conferences.

In addition, a summer internship will be offered.

2018-04-15. Maddy Kelly (Old Chatham) reported on a Powell House trip to Washington, DC to experience lobbying with help from Friends Committee on National Legislation. The focus this year was on immigration. The experience was rich and very educational. An article should be appearing in *Spark*.

2018-04-16. At this point, we began a Threshing Session to consider how to organize our conversation about the future. How should we structure the conversation? Who should be in the conversation? How do we include voices that are not always heard?

The resulting discussion was not minuted, but notes were taken and will be distributed. Sarah Way, Communications director, will work with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to be sure the entire Yearly Meeting will have a chance to read and respond.

2018-04-17. Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca), clerk of Sessions Committee, reported on the experience of being clerk of the host task group for these sessions. She first saw the school on Friday and realized there were 2 steps that could be a barrier to accessibility. Melanie-Claire apologized and hoped to do better in the future. Over the three days, these sessions were attended by 135 adults and 4 teens.

Summer sessions will be July 22-28, 2018 in Silver Bay.

2018-04-18. Minutes were read, corrected, and approved in stages during this session.

2018-04-19. After quiet worship, we closed with announcements.