

Fall Sessions 2020

Sunday, November 8 afternoon

Clerk: Elaine Learnard
Assistant Clerks:
Matthew Scanlon
Robin Gowin
Recording Clerk: Laura Higgins
Reading Clerk: Karen Snare

2020-11-13. Meeting began out of the silence of gathered worship. Clerk introduced the clerks' table. She reminded Friends about how to participate in the Zoom meeting. She gave a phone number to contact the tech team should you be having difficulty.

2020-11-14. Mary Eagelson read the last minute from yesterday's meeting for business regarding the proposed budget. The content is available in yesterday's minutes. The body still could not come to unity. Friends agreed to let Clerks reword the final minute.

2020-11-15. Seasoned Business Items

[Proposed Nominations](#) from the Nominating Committee are the only item on the Seasoned Business Items for this meeting. Having seen no objections to the Seasoned Business Items, the Clerk indicated that the seasoned business items are approved.

Jill McLellan noted that there were two corrections to the Nominations as previously posted. The first is that three people listed for service on Communications had already been nominated during Summer Sessions so they did not need to be on the nominations list for Fall Sessions. They had all been approved for the class of 2023: Alan Brenner, Shrewbury; Steve Fortuna, Matinecock; Jennifer Swann, South Berkshire/NEYM. The second correction is to a meeting affiliation. Robert Martin was nominated to the Prisons Committee, class of 2023 and his meeting should be listed as Bulls Head-Oswego. The body was asked and did approve these corrections.

2020-11-16. Additional Nominations

Jill McLellan presented additional nominations to be approved separately from the Seasoned Business Items.

- Erik Lehtinen for the Elsie K Powell House was approved
- Jennifer Swann for Financial Services was approved.
- Sam Cooley for Elsie Powell House was approved.

The body approved all these nominations individually.

2020-11-17. There was further consideration of the proposed budget, with the three levels of funding that had been laid out in the presentation by the Co-clerk of Financial Services, Mary Williams, on Saturday morning. During the discussion, Mary clarified that the baseline budget included no funding for C/Y/YA, the \$50,000 increase above the baseline would be just a few thousand dollars more than the current year's funding, and the \$100,000 increase above the baseline would be an increase over the current year.

Friends listened with openness and shared with care their concerns and their hopes for the YM.

Friends spoke about:

- the importance of our work in support of young adult Friends and the ways that work overlaps with witness work, grounded connections, and building our yearly meeting
- the complications of funding that work, asking whether we have sufficient resources to sustain additional paid positions beyond a few years, to pay a living wage, or to provide employee benefits for part-time staff
- how difficult it has been to keep connected to families with children during Covid
- the need to clarify how the witness funding, especially the administrative costs of doing witness work, is shown in the budget and whether some of that funding should be reallocated
- how it has come to be that we support a few Quaker organizations directly but not others and whether those decisions should be revisited
- how work with young adults includes pastoral care that is very much needed

Some of the aspects of budgeting to cover new positions were considered, including:

- the possibility of a separate designated fund for C/Y/YA
- the possibility of an endowment for C/Y/YA and how the Development Committee can work on this possibility
- whether sufficient work can be done for C/Y/YA without additional paid staff/with volunteers only
- that there is integrity in saying "no" to some requests
- that some meetings may be willing/able to "get creative" about funding for these goals
- that we must hold ourselves accountable
- that threshing sessions will be held, starting very soon, to consider several questions about sources of funding, including how to use the income from the Lindley Murray funds and whether to draw down principal from the endowment, expecting to consider our legal and moral faithfulness to the directions and intentions of deceased Friends whose generosity funded the YM's endowment.

Friends acknowledged that the proposed budget and the long-term commitment to C/Y/YA were dependent on Faith, and assured concerned Friends that funding this commitment would not detract from our other financial commitments **and, in particular, would not require taking money away from our witness work**. Indeed, many considered that the C/Y/YA work cannot be separated from witness work. Friends approved the budget as recommended by Financial Services Committee (that is, the \$100,000 increase above the baseline budget) with the caution that much long-range planning needs to be done in parallel and begun right away.

2020-11-18. Sessions Clerk's Report to Fall Sessions 2021

This Fall Sessions, held via Zoom and telephone, had one hundred eighty one Friends registered, 20 of whom self-identified as young adults. There were no youth or children registered.

The following decisions were made by the Sessions Committee Meeting in October 2020:

- Spring Sessions 2021 will be virtual, unless there is an unforeseen development between now and early March. From 2022 - 2026, we will go to Oakwood, assuming travel and gathering are deemed safe. A video conference option will be available for all Sessions.
- Fall Sessions will be scheduled for the first weekend in December and be virtual in 2021, 2022 and 2023. This is to be reviewed by the Sessions Committee and the YM in Summer 2024.

2020-11-19. Meeting closed with centering silence.