

MINUTES: General Services Coordinating Committee
Saturday, November 16, 2013, 7:00 to 8:45 p.m.
New York Yearly Meeting Fall Sessions at Caldwell College, NJ, All Friends Region

Present: Susan Bingham (Montclair), Bridget Bower (Perry City), Laura Cisar (New Brunswick), John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes, Clerk), Steve Davison (Yardley, PhYM, Communications Director), Robin Gowin (New Brunswick), Jeff Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield), Linda Houser (Purchase), Melanie-Claire Mallison (Ithaca, Recording Clerk), Jill McLellan (Buffalo), Héloïse Rathbone (Brooklyn), Christopher Sammond (Poplar Ridge), Matt Scanlon (Scarsdale), Carol Summar (Fifteenth Street), Dare Thompson (Poughkeepsie)

Visitors: Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick), Regina Baird Haag (Adirondack), Annie Bancroft (Butternuts), Ann Davidson (Farmington), Carol Condon (Rahway-Plainfield)

Regrets: Timothy Johnson

2013-11-01. John Cooley, Clerk, reviewed our agenda and read through the General Services Coordinating Committee (CC) membership in the Yearbook to help identify those here tonight.

2013-11-02. The Clerk introduced a discussion on the 2014 NYYM budget. Updates have been made since this morning's Meeting for Business. Linda Houser reported on these changes for the NYYM Trustees and Matt Scanlon reported for Financial Services Committee. With their suggested changes, the 2014 budgeted expenses will be \$520,838, revenue \$521,565 (a positive balance of \$727). This draft budget contains reduced donations from NYYM to FGC, FUM, FWCC, and Oakwood. John will ensure that a letter is sent to these entities to notify them of the expected reductions and to encourage them to apply, as appropriate, to the Lindley Murray Fund or World Ministries Committee (or other trustee funds) to make up the difference. General Services CC approved recommending this new draft budget to the Yearly Meeting business session the next day.

2013-11-03. Dare Thompson, as Clerk of the Committee on Aging Concerns, reported that the work of the Aging Resources, Consulting and Help (ARCH) program is progressing well. John Cooley noted that as Clerk of GSCC, he has reviewed the administrative aspects of the Committee's application to Friends Foundation on Aging for renewal of the ARCH grant and recommends our approval. General Services CC approved. Nurture Coordinating Committee also considers and approves ARCH applications.

2013-11-04. Jeffrey Aaron read the following report for the Clerking Task Group:

Clerking Task Group
Report to GSCC
Fall Sessions 2013

The Clerking Task Group was authorized by GSCC at Spring Sessions 2013, at the request of Liaison Committee, after a concern was earlier brought to Liaison. It formed shortly thereafter and began to meet with Jeffrey Aaron as convener. Original members were Jeffrey Aaron, John Cooley, Lisa Gasstrom, Jeff Hitchcock and Steven Ross. More recently, Ernie Buscemi and Linda Chidsey began to participate as well. There has consistently been Spirit-led energy in our meetings and work.

The concern of the task group has been to support and assist clerks of NYYM committees, including coordinating committees. The committee has attempted to delineate techniques, expectations and responsibilities of committees, including good clerking techniques, Yearly Meeting reporting and communications responsibilities, and expectations and schedules. A proper and timely process of annual re-organizational meetings in particular requires good planning for the continuation of the committees when the existing clerk retires for any reason, including rotation off the committee. Some committees have found themselves without a clerk or convener as a result of insufficient planning.

Although much of the information reflected in these concerns has long been spelled out in the NYYM Handbook, its passive existence there in the midst of everything else in the Handbook has clearly been inadequate to inform new committee clerks of the many expectations, responsibilities and techniques that come with the position – and until recently, the Handbook has not been readily available for years. Lack of proactive support and information may well have contributed to declining committee work and membership, deficient clerking, and the consequent neglect of many of the concerns that the committees were expected to address.

In response to these concerns, the task group offered an interest group and other workshops and personal or group sessions to any interested individual, at Summer Sessions 2013. Although these offerings were successful, they were not well publicized and were sparsely attended. The task group recognizes that the available audience at Summer Sessions is always very limited. We therefore suggest regions consider offering clerking workshops at future spring and fall sessions, with the assistance of someone with expertise from the Yearly Meeting, most likely as an option for Friday evenings. We also recommend workshops of some sort at future summer sessions - and possibly elsewhere.

The task group created a booklet, *Guide for Clerks*, comprised primarily of the material in the Handbook, revised and updated and supplemented. Several copies of the first draft of the booklet were given to all Coordinating Committee clerks at Summer Sessions 2013 and to a few new committee clerks. The *Guide* will need to have periodic updating. It will soon be available electronically and on the YM website*. Some paper copies will be available at the YM offices*. Staff is also asked to provide electronic copies to all of the YM committee clerks*.

We ask that the clerk of GSCC convey to Liaison Committee the suggestion that all CC clerks should at least annually assess the state of each of the committees under their charge and personally reach out to those whose clerks/committees may particularly benefit from a personal outreach. To assist and encourage this process the task group has developed a spreadsheet to review committee self-evaluations and other observations**.

There was some thought to expand the charge of the task group to include assistance for clerking at the regional and monthly meeting levels; however, there was no clear sense of the group to proceed in this direction. At this time, the task group believes that its charge has generally been fulfilled and that the responsibility for this concern be passed on to Liaison for follow through, with the suggestion that committee assessment and dissemination of the *Guide* become an annual process beginning soon after committee re-organizations during or after summer sessions.

The task group asks that GSCC approve laying down the task group at this time. Jeffrey Aaron, convener

*The tense or time references will be revised if this has been accomplished by the time of the report at Fall Sessions 2013.

**Provided as well.

Friends received this report. General Services CC approved the laying down of the task group, as they requested. The Clerk will ensure that their recommendations are communicated to the Liaison Committee. @

2013-11-05. Laura reported for the Audit Committee. In the spring, the committee expects to work with the Trustees and the Treasurer on contracting for a joint audit of trustee-managed accounts and treasurer-managed accounts (including operating budget). @

2013-11-06. Melanie-Claire presented a request from Sessions Committee to share the NYYM mailing list with Silver Bay YMCA for two specific postcard mailings limited to November 2013 and Spring, 2014, to encourage participation in the 2014 Summer Sessions. General Services CC approved this request.

2013-11-07. The Clerk presented the updated Sessions Committee handbook page approved and submitted by Sessions Committee. General Services CC approved forwarding the page to the Clerk of NYYM for the consideration of the Yearly Meeting. We agreed that the changes are substantial and therefore the handbook page will require a first and second reading.

2013-11-08. Bridget reported for Records Committee, noting that while the committee is not happy about the 2014 draft budget reduction in our contribution to the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College, they understand the reasoning behind the decision and support it. Bridget also reported on an interest shown by Ancestry.com in the genealogical information found in the NYYM minutes, including Monthly Meeting minutes. She requests the authority to explore this interest. General Services CC asks that she first talk to members of the Yearly Meeting to apprise them of this possibility and gather their thoughts and concerns.

2013-11-09. Steve Davison, NYYM Communications Director, gave a brief report for the Communications Committee. Volunteers have been sought to update the old NYYM.org to bring appropriate content over to the new website, or take on web content updates. This has had mixed results, but when it works, it has been very successful.

2013-11-10. Announcements: Peter Bailey is now Clerk of Development Committee.

General Services Coordinating Committee meets next at NYYM Coordinating Weekend, at Powell House, January 24-25, 2014 (Friday evening to Saturday dinner).

Melanie-Claire Mallison, Recording Clerk

John Cooley, Clerk

@ This symbol at the end of a paragraph indicates to the recording clerk that the minutes were read and approved up to that point..