

MINUTES General Services Coordinating Committee
January 25, 2014
NYYM Coordinating Weekend, at Powell House

PRESENT: Laura Cisar, Bridget Bower, Susan Bingham, Heloise Rathbone, John Cooley, Jill McLellan, Lucinda Antrim, Christopher Sammond, Melanie-Claire Mallison

REGRETS: Tim Johnson (Laura Cisar representing Audit), Adam Segal-Isaacson, Matthew Scanlon, Linda Houser, Jeffrey Aaron

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

MORNING SESSION:

201401-1. Friends introduced themselves around the circle and spoke of their level of “tech” involvement – computer, Facebook, email, texting, twitter, etc.

201401-2. Laura reported that Audit Committee is asking Mary Hannon Williams to work with the committee. General Services CC recommends and approves Mary Hannon Williams as the Trustee Liaison to the NYYM Audit Committee.

To proceed with their decision to consider changing auditors (as a good business practice) the committee has researched other Yearly Meeting audit requests, and composed a draft letter to solicit proposals, to begin with a 2015 audit of the 2014 books of both the NYYM office and the Trustees. The committee has also compiled a preliminary list of auditors to consider inviting to submit proposals. Their summary report is attached. @

201401-3. Christopher reported for the Development Committee. A major “ask” was sent out for 2014. Approximately 75 households have responded, including at least one incarcerated friend, for a total of about \$16,000 received so far. This is working towards the operating budget commitment of \$34k. The committee is planning a fund-raising concert at Fifteenth Street Meeting. They are also considering various options for automatic monthly donations. Finally, Christopher talked about asking monthly meetings to share donation requests with their members and attenders. @

201401-4. John reported that the NYYM “Financial Systems Guidelines” are being updated by Helen Garay Toppins, Paula McClure and himself. They will send the revised document to Jeffrey Aaron for review and share the document with Audit Committee for comment. @

201401-5. Deb Wood has requested that Oakwood School be allowed to use the NYYM mailing list for its 2014 Spring Appeal. General Services Coordinating Committee approved this use. @

201401-6. In the absence of Linda and Jeffrey, the attached report from the NYYM Board of Trustees was read by Susan. The Trustees are in transition though the board has continuity. Jeffrey Aaron is organizing information and informing himself about our insurance coverage, now serving as liaison to the insurance carriers and a reference for all of us. Please see the report for a summary Jeffrey’s work thus far. @

201401-7. John reported briefly on the rental costs of the YM office at Rutherford Place. He is working with the directors of AFSC and YSOP and the NY Quarter Trustees to clarify the fair distribution of these shared-space costs. @

201401-8. Budget and Planning Implications of Priority Setting. DISCUSSION NOTES FOLLOW: John opened the floor to a discussion of the Priorities Working Group report and any changes it might indicate for the budget process, formats, and priorities. Christopher talked about the process for accounting for staff hours and the categories of the work they are doing (ministry, youth, sessions, communications, etc.), which then informs the “program based” YM budget. Friends discussed the impact of the Yearly Meeting choosing singular priorities and how the staff can address those priorities within their work week. The priorities are not just for the YM staff, but also must be integrated into the entire YM committee structure as their priorities also. The YM staff, who cannot do all the work themselves, can then point people to the appropriate committee or person to answer to their particular concern. Friends considered how the budget process may change with regard to agreed-upon priorities. So much of what the Priorities Working Group is hearing is about the disconnect between the Meetings and the Yearly Meeting, and in some cases, even the Quarterly and Regional Meetings. The answer may involve Friends raising their funding levels -- even if only at their

local Meeting level -- to accommodate Friends wanting to travel to other Monthly Meetings, conferences, Sessions, and Gatherings.

GSCC need take no action at this time.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Present: Laura, Bridget, Susan, Heloise, John, Jill, Melanie-Claire

201401-9. John raised a concern regarding the nominations approved at Summer Sessions, along with other changes made during Summer Sessions (i.e., new clerks, released members, etc.), and the need for that information being disseminated quickly to clerks and representatives to facilitate their work. We discussed the ways these changes could be made available. We ask that Nominating Committee and the NYYM Communications Director come up with a process for sharing appropriate changes and member information, including contact information, with committee clerks and representative groups, in August. @

201401-10. Melanie-Claire reported for Sessions Committee, also wearing her JYM Coordinator hat. She reminded us that the updated Sessions Committee NYYM Handbook page has substantial changes and GSCC will therefore need to present it to Spring Sessions for a First Reading. The Second Reading would be at Summer Sessions. She also noted that Spring Sessions planning has begun, including what looks to be a strong Youth Program.

201401-11. John raised a concern regarding the definitions of provisions to funds in the NYYM budget – some are considered full provisions to funds (100% to be deposited no matter what) and some are discretionary provisions to funds (only if the money is available). There is ongoing confusion and discussion regarding the difference in provisions. Moving forward, we ask the Treasurer to clearly label each provision as a “Full Provision” or a “Discretionary Provision” – the different descriptions being approved by the Coordinating Committee under whose care the provision resides. Such labels should be decided by Budget Saturday.

GSCC recommends that the Equalization Fund line in our budget be labeled as a discretionary provision (DPEQ).

A discussion followed regarding the use of the Equalization Fund, especially with regard to Spring and Fall Sessions. Bridget, as clerk of the Spring Sessions Host Committee and Melanie-Claire, as clerk of Sessions Committee Spring/Fall Sessions Sub-committee, will clarify and record the answers to these questions.

201401-12. Bridget, as clerk of Records Committee, outlined a proposal from Ancestry.com. General Services CC approved Bridget moving forward working with Ancestry.com on a proposal to present to NYYM at a future Session.

201401-13. GSCC evaluated these meetings at Coordinating Weekend – how did the schedule work for us? Given the restrictions of time and energy and cost, meeting face-to-face is essential to the good work of any committee. We appreciated having this time together and the time spent was fruitful.

201401-14. GSCC will meet again on Saturday, April 5th, at NYYM Spring Sessions.

201401-15. GSCC asks that Susan Bingham continue on the internal Nominating Committee for GSCC. We approve Melanie-Claire Mallison working with Susan to bring forward nominations for clerk, assistant clerk, and recording clerk.

201401-16. Friends gathered in worship before adjourning.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie-Claire Mallison, Recording Clerk
John Cooley, Clerk

Attached: Audit Committee Summary Report
NYYM Trustees report

NYYM Audit Committee
Summary Report to General Services Coordinating Committee
Coordinating Committee Weekend – January 25-26, 2014

Tim Johnson was designated as the new Audit Committee Clerk by the previous Audit Committee. And Laura Cisar was approved as a member of the committee at Summer Sessions. We are still urgently seeking an additional regular member of Audit Committee with skills relevant to the Trustee Accounts, e.g., investment management, or associated legal issues related to auditing and reporting. As indicated below, Mary Hannon Williams has agreed to join the Audit Committee in 2013 as a Co-opted member, in view of our immediate need for a person familiar with Trustee accounts.

Following dialogues by John Cooley, as incoming Clerk of the General Services Coordinating Committee, with Tim Johnson and Mary Hannon, the present Audit Committee and the Trustees agreed on combining audits of the Treasurer Managed (Operating) and Trustee (Investment) accounts in 2014 and beyond. [Mr. Robert Lee's firm will continue to audit these accounts separately for 2013 accounts as previously arranged.]

The Audit Committee reviewed and accepted Mr. Lee's audit of the 2012 Treasurer Managed Accounts by August, 2013. Mary Williams and Paula McClure met recently with Mr. Lee, the auditor of the 2012 Trustee Accounts, to review a draft version of the audit. It is expected that a final version will be available for review by Trustees at their February 15 meeting. Topics raised in the TMA account audit include the need for a financial practice and procedure covering the designation and disbursement of contingency funds, a discussion of the use of fund balances that carry over from year-to-year (vs. those that do not), and the need for action to make bookkeeping changes to correct minor errors found in past audits dating back to 2002. Revisions to implement these changes are in progress.

The Audit Committee has surveyed other Yearly Meetings concerning their Audit Practices. We have been unable to locate a copy of the original solicitation for our auditor, which would date to 2001 or 2002. NEYM has not yet done an audit. BYM has an in-house volunteer auditor. Although we have a copy of AFSC's Audit RFQ, that organization is quite un-like NYYM, and – though it is quite thorough – it is not very similar in content to what NYYM will require. The best model for an Audit RFP/RFQ is that of PYM, which did a solicitation for an auditor in 2012. The document closely follows the recommended audit solicitation format of the AICPA (American Institute of CPA's) recommendation for the template of a non-profit organization audit.

We have used the PYM RFQ (as well as the AICPA template) as a model for generating a draft of an RFI (request for information) and subsequent RFQ for an auditor for NYYM. Both of these documents will include both TMA Accounts and Trustee Accounts. These documents, and associated attachments, are nearing completion. The RFI will be sent to a list of prospective auditors (planned in February), and the responses will be reviewed to select a list of "qualified bidders" (planned in March), who will receive the RFQ (or possibly RFP, the difference being in whether the scope of work is considered to be sufficiently well-defined to permit a priced quotation), planned in April. In keeping with industry practice, an annually renewable contract with a limit of 4 renewals is anticipated.

The outgoing Audit Committee met in August 14, 2013, to complete its 2013 business. Teleconferences have been held on December 14, 2013, and on January 5, and January 19, 2014. Upon the decision by the Trustees to move toward a combined audit, Mary Hannon Williams has joined the other members of the Audit Committee for its 2014 Meetings to represent Trustee interests. We are delighted that she has agreed to serve as a co-opted member so that the solicitation for a new auditor can move forward expeditiously.

NYYM Board of Trustees underwent a significant change in personnel at Summer Sessions 2013. The long time clerk, Todd Tilton, resigned, and the long time Treasurer, Paula McClure, rotated off, along with other two others, leaving only three continuing members. Trustee terms are five years with two renewals permitted. Of the remaining three, Linda Houser is serving as clerk and Mary Williams is serving as Treasurer, so there is sufficient continuity despite the sudden shift in personnel. Four new trustees are Jeffrey Aaron, Christine (Spee) Braun, Frederick Dettmer and Peter Phillips.

Linda will be serving as representative to GSCC; however, she is unable to attend this gathering. Jeffrey Aaron had anticipated serving for these meetings; however, he, too is unable to attend. He sends this report.

With the new board getting up to speed, there is not a lot yet to report; however, Jeffrey has taken over as liaison to the insurance carriers, and has a small report. Liaison to the carriers had not been a formally recognized position in the past, but was handled for years by Paula McClure, who recommended that Jeffrey take on the position because of his contacts with the primary agent when he was clerk of GSCC. The Board agreed.

In order to organize himself, Jeffrey began by making a schedule of the various policies, agents and carriers, including who is responsible and how the policy premiums are paid, since they are not all paid through the NYYM budget. As this organization proceeded, it became evident that the schedule, updated as appropriate, would be of value to selected others as well, specifically the clerk of GSCC and the NYYM office, as well as the clerk of Financial Services Committee and whoever eventually succeeds Jeffrey as insurance liaison.

As this project proceeded, it also became clear that details of coverage were not always entirely clear, and that there may be gaps in coverage, possibly unnecessary coverage, and possibly a need to examine the policies from a competitive cost basis, so a complete analysis is being undertaken by Jeffrey in conjunction with John Cooley in his capacity as clerk of GSCC.

An example of the kind of information already ferreted out, some of which may have already been know by individuals, but was not necessarily widely known, is that all members of NYYM who are doing the business of NYYM are covered by our liability policy, or at least the YM is covered, the distinction needing clarification. It is also not yet clear, if someone who is not a member – e.g. a committee member from another Yearly Meeting, or a non-Friend – is covered. In addition, although all employees are covered for medical needs while traveling abroad, volunteers are not, and the employee coverage may need supplementation, especially in certain marginal regions. The implications of this situation include the need to advise those who are not employees and to consider the possibility of NYYM's liability should those doing its business have a medical emergency.

These questions and any others that arise will be investigated and some form of documentation will be created such as an insurance handbook for reference. The line in the GSCC budget previously referred to as "insurance" referred to our commercial liability and property coverage, and the name will be changed to clarify that. This year, the NYYM trustees have agreed to pay for that coverage.

If anyone has any questions or suggestions, please contact John or Jeffrey, as this in an ongoing project in its incipient stages.

Jeffrey Aaron, Trustee