

**MINUTES: General Services Coordinating Committee**  
Coordinating Committee Weekend, Saturday morning and afternoon

**January 31, 2015 at Powell House, Old Chatham, NY**

Present: Christopher Sammond, Laura Cisar, Linda Houser, Susan Bingham, Jim Schultz, Lucinda Antrim, John Cooley, Bridget Bower, Rosanne Press, Robin Gowin

Regrets: Barbara Menzel

2015-1-1 The clerk opened with a reading from Baltimore Yearly Meeting : *As a worshipping community, we are strengthened when we share our journeys with one another, even if the part of the journey is on the surface quite mundane.*

The agenda was reviewed.

2015-1-2 **Personnel Committee.** Susan Bingham distributed a proposal for a Children and Youth Field Secretary. It is a .6 FTE position, and is proposed to be initially supported partially by a grant over the first several years. The field secretary's role is to support children and youth through 18 years of age and to support parents and meetings working with children and youth. The proposal is attached.

Friends expressed concerns about the part-time nature of the position and of potential for exploitation of staff. The work could be a full time job. A part-time position is what could be done within the current budget situation and is a starting place. There is no assumption that the position will become full time in the future. Questions were raised about qualifications, particularly education and experience in working with youth. Some reference to personnel policies would also be useful. Youth Committee and Personnel Committee will continue to refine the job description.

Finances for the position. Concern was expressed about stating the office rent reduction in 2015 as an offset to the costs of the field secretary, as it is simply a change in the operating budget. The 5 year budget plan presented includes income from the YFIR fund, the trustees, the reduction in rent, from outside grants and increasing contributions from the operating budget. Nurture and Trustees have not yet considered this proposal.

General Services approves the proposal for the Children and Youth Field Secretary understanding that some of the details may change as other committees season it. GSCC also approves having Personnel Committee and staff draft grant proposals for grants from outside sources to partially support the initial years of the position. We understand that grant proposals are submitted only after further review by Financial Services.

2015-1-3 **Sessions Committee.** Ro Press reported that Sessions had chosen the theme for 2015 Summer Sessions last summer. They have a five year theme cycle based on the Priorities and Leadings. They met with Meetings for Discernment and have a new pattern for including MfD in the week. She noted that there are inefficiencies in the way that we do Spring and Fall Sessions and that there are many distractions at Silver Bay. She encouraged us to think about standardizing where we meet together.

2015-1-4 **Trustees.** Linda Houser reported that trustees have created and reviewed a draft of NYYM Trustee Financial Guidelines. They also reviewed the bylaws of NYYM, Inc and recommended and approved changes to those. Audit will be combined with the other YM funds and both Audit Committee and Trustees are working on changing their handbook pages to reflect this.

2015-5 **Audit Committee.** Laura Cisar reported that they met with three different companies and selected a preferred bidder and are working on a Letter of Engagement. This year will be a review year due to multiple changes. Report is attached. The report was received.

2015-1-6 The clerk asked how General Services could help move forward the Leadings and Priorities. He noted that we manage the guts of the Yearly Meeting and wonders how we can help the monthly meetings.

Bridget Bower reported that Records Committee would be happy to go and talk about why records are important, or other records related questions.

Other possible areas of General Services or other administrative resources: Questions about legal issues or financial issues and how to find resources to solve them. Cemeteries, old meeting houses, insurance. Concerns about communications and how we communicate with each other.

2015-1-7 The clerk raised a concern about the health of GSCC, given that most members represent committees rather than those serving at large. It was noted that this is also a larger problem in the yearly meeting.

The clerk reported that the rent for the YM office had been recalculated and recalibrated resulting in a substantial decrease in our annual costs (20% decrease on this year from last year). He felt that the process had resulted in a much better relationship with New York Quarter.

John Cooley, clerk  
Bridget Bower, recording clerk for the day

**NYYM Committee Weekend****Audit Committee Report to General Services Coordinating Committee****Status Update since Fall Sessions:**

The Audit Committee has continued on its plan of actions outlined in the Fall Sessions report. A revised Statement of Work was sent out to all three bidders, and revised bids were received. These bids were within the budgeted amount in the 2014 budget (\$15,000). The Committee has agreed on a preference order among the bidders and is presently reviewing the Letter of Engagement from the first-selected bidder. It is likely that a (slightly modified) engagement letter will be executed shortly.

A second Statement of Work has been prepared for NYYM's Bookkeeping firm (Demasco, Sena & Jahelka LLP), covering the added tasks associated with generating Consolidated Financial Statements for 2013 (retroactively), 2014, and 2015, as well as making journal entries prior to closing the 2014 books, and during the 2015 calendar year, to bring accounts into conformance with GAAP guidelines. This will be executed as a sole source solicitation, and will be processed as a one-time add-on to the present agreement with this firm. It is also expected that this work order will be executed shortly.

**Audit Committee Plans for the 2015 Calendar Year:**

The following tasks are contemplated for the 2015 Calendar Year.

- 1) Slight revision of the NYYM Handbook description of the Audit Committee, to clarify that the committee is responsible for the audit of the Consolidated (Trustee and Treasurer-Managed Account) Financial Statement and removal of the restriction on its membership so that the membership includes a member of the NYYM Trustees who is not the Trustees Treasurer. (It is contemplated that the present Liaison position will be replaced by a permanent committee position). These actions are expected to be brought to GSCC for review and approval at Spring Sessions.
- 2) Oversee and coordinate activities required to generate a 2014 Consolidated Financial Statements for NYYM that is as close to GAAP compliance as possible, within the available time frame. These activities will be coordinated through consultation with the cognizant bodies (mainly Trustee Treasurer and NYYM Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer). The consolidation will be executed, for the 2014 accounts, by combining the Financial Statements of the Trustees and Treasurer-Managed Accounts, and other administrative changes such as completing and specifying asset types to conform with GAAP. In addition, the

definition of short and long-term assets will be brought into conformance between Treasurer-Managed and Trustee Accounts, and Trustee-Managed Real Property Assets will be included.

- 3) Execution of the Review Audit of the 2014 NYYM Consolidated Financial Statement by an outside Audit Firm. This is expected to follow the usual Audit Cycle. A draft Audit should be available by Summer Sessions. Any deficiencies found in the 2014 audit will be addressed in 2015, with the goal of resolving as many as possible within the 2015 calendar year.
- 4) Oversee and coordinate activities required to bring NYYM practices and procedures into conformance with GAAP standards by the end of 2015 (See Appendix below). This includes not only the 2015 Consolidated Financial Statements but also various committee procedures and documentation that are required for full GAAP compliance. For the most part, this is expected to involve a review and collection of records of appropriate NYYM committee procedures for authorization of funds, approval of expenditures, receipt of income, and initiation or termination of accounts, most of which are already in place at NYYM. It will also include a review of NYPMIFA requirements by the Trustees, certain NYYM committees that disburse funds (e.g., Sharing Fund, World Ministries, Lindley-Murray fund), and Audit Committee members to assure that these will be brought into compliance with present audit and legal standards. This may also involve some handbook changes for existing committees later in 2015. This will be done in coordination with NYYM's bookkeeping firm.
- 5) Coordination with Financial Services Committee and Trustees concerning longer-term modification and consolidation of financial practices and procedures to simplify NYYM's accounts and financial procedures in future years.

## **Appendix**

The following is a re-statement of the tasks that were outlined in the Audit Committee's report to GSCC at Fall Sessions, with the tasks ordered by the year in which they are to be completed.

### Tasks to be completed prior to closing of 2014 books:

- 1) Confirm that Form 990 is not required by Seller-held Mortgage on Stamford-Greenwich Property.
- 2) Clearly identify accounts for Matching Funds for 403b retirement matching (and any associated payroll accounting issues), and clarify responsibility for review of these funds and policies.
- 3) Review asset and liability type specifications for all funds (restricted, temporarily restricted, board directed, etc.)
- 4) Make corrections designated in 2013 Audit recommendations (specifically, define and state more precise procedures for approval of contingency fund expenditures, and for use of the accumulated retained net assets (operating fund surplus account).
- 5) Review and/or correct accounting treatment of health benefit payments.
- 6) Seek consistent definitions of TMA and Trustee Accounts for short-term and long-term assets.
- 7) Prepare draft consolidated financial statement for 2014 financial records by March, 2015.
- 8) Add control processes to Financial Guidelines for Treasurer Managed Accounts
- 9) Create or update Guidelines document with control processes for Trustee accounts.**

### Tasks to be completed prior to closing of 2015 books:

- 1) Real Property valuation added to Trustee accounts.
- 2) Complete investigation of original conditions stipulated by Trustee account grantees, and reflect these in future Trustee practices and financial procedures for release of fund obligations to comply with NYPMIFA.
- 3) Continue progress toward moving Trustee Bookkeeping to our present Bookkeeper, with a goal of completing this transition by the end of 2015.
- 4) Obtain appropriate approvals of the Yearly Meeting Body and Trustees that are necessary to formalize any procedural changes associated with the above actions.

## **Proposed Children and Youth Field Secretary New York Yearly Meeting Society of Friends**

**Background:** In the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Function of the Yearly Meeting (2001), they recommended two staff positions, a general secretary, and a children, youth, and advancement secretary. The yearly meeting saw clear to create one of these. The need for the other has not gone away. The lack of support for children and youth, especially at a monthly meeting level, has been a significant contributing factor in the erosion of the fabric of our community.

One of the largest problems facing our monthly meetings is the dwindling of our First Day Schools, and the paucity of children and youth participating in the life of our communities. When newcomers with children arrive, if they find few or no other children there, their children do not want to return, and the family often doesn't. Nurturing our existing First Day Schools, and restarting them where they have totally died away, is crucial to the life and vitality of our monthly meetings.

New York Yearly Meeting seeks to better nurture and support the spiritual lives of our youngest members and their families, and to foster vibrant multi-generational community in our monthly meetings. For the past four years, we have had a part time staff member in the position of Young Adult Field Secretary. She has traveled throughout the Yearly Meeting, involving young adults in the life of their local, regional, and yearly meetings. Her work has been very successful and we see young adults involving themselves in the life of their meetings. She has also been overwhelmed by requests for help and support in spiritually nurturing children and young families. While this has been beyond the limited scope of her job description, it has helped this committee in its clarity that the needs perceived fifteen years ago have not gone away. If anything, they have intensified.

Currently, children and youth have the opportunity to participate in Junior Yearly Meeting during summer sessions. We now also have a growing program for teens and tweens at spring and fall sessions. Tweens and teens can attend the vibrant youth program at Powell House. The limitations of geography impact the number of children who participate. Powell House programs do not include children under the age of ten. Many of our monthly meetings have been unable to maintain a viable First Day School. We feel strongly that religious educational programming on the local level is essential to the spiritual growth of our children and young families. Our First Day Schools need to become vibrant and engaging opportunities for children and youth.

**Our Proposal:** We are seeking funding to support a .6FTE Children and Youth Field Secretary position within the staff of New York Yearly Meeting. The position would be designed to address the needs of children and youth under the age of

eighteen at a monthly meeting level. We would hope to provide religious education and spiritual care to our children, youth, and their families. We would hope to increase the participation of children and their parents in the lives of our monthly meetings and thus, revitalize the life of our Quaker community.

**Children and Youth Field Secretary:** The position would be .6FTE and would focus on serving children from birth to 18 and their families. Responsibilities would include

Work with Meetings on developing resources and support for First Day School, multigenerational worship, and other local programming for children and youth.

Work to create multigenerational involvement in the life of our Meetings.

Develop a resource library for use in First Day School programming.

Work with Junior Yearly Meeting, Powell House, relevant staff and committees to coordinate programming for children and youth.

Advocate for the spiritual nurture of children, youth, and their parents.

Work with local and regional meetings to create programs for children and youth.

Serve as a catalyst, drawing together Friends who carry a concern for spiritually nurturing our children and youth, and supporting them in their leadings.

Help to create networks of Friends committed to the broader work of nurturing children and youth.

**Rationale:** With few exceptions, Religious Education and spiritual care of our youth is not being addressed on a regional level. Our field staff have heard repeated pleas for help and support in the spiritual nurture of young children. Many monthly meetings are unable to maintain an active First Day School. Meetings are struggling to keep young families involved. On a Yearly Meeting level, there are no programs which serve ages birth to six. Powell House serves ages ten to eighteen but is not universally perceived as accessible to all youth due to distance from their local area.

We see the spiritual nurturance of our children and their families as essential to the life of a vibrant Quaker community. A staff person devoted to supporting and

assisting our local Meeting in their care and support of our children and youth is essential to begin the process of strengthening our local Meetings and Friends presence in our communities.

## **DRAFT [January 2015]**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION: CHILDREN AND YOUTH FIELD SECRETARY**

#### ***Overview***

The Children and Youth Field Secretary's major responsibilities are to work with families with children (ages 0-18), their meetings and Religious Education Committees, serving as a locus and a catalyst for networking and community building; doing mentoring, coordinating, outreach, and helping meetings to develop and sustain First Day School Programs or other programs which nurture the spiritual life of children. This work will necessitate considerable travel, meeting face to face with young families where they live and worship. In addition, the position will provide logistical support for related retreats and activities, and serve as a support and focal point for life change efforts. This is a .6 FTE position including many weekend commitments.

#### ***Supervision/Oversight***

The Children and Youth Field Secretary works for the Yearly Meeting under the supervision of the General Secretary; working closely with the Associate Secretary, and the Youth Committee. She/he shall be in frequent communication with Junior Yearly Meeting, Powell House Youth Program Directors, and relevant staff and Yearly Meeting Committees.

#### ***Qualifications***

The Children and Youth Field Secretary shall be a member of the Religions Society of Friends (or a committed and active participant in a Friend's Meeting) with a strong understanding of Quaker testimonies and practice. This Friend must have strong verbal and written communication skills, including public speaking. Also be skilled at supporting and investing the gifts and energies of others, be personable, and have a firm grasp of current electronic communication technologies and social media. It is expected that this Friend would worship regularly with a NYYM monthly Meeting.

#### ***Responsibilities and Duties***

##### **Primary Responsibilities**

1. Engage in substantial visitation of Monthly, Quarterly, Regional and Half Yearly Meetings, engaging with Friends to facilitate deeper community and spiritual growth while also gaining insights as to how the Yearly Meeting as a whole can better integrate

and support programs for children and their families. Attendance at all Yearly Meeting Sessions will be expected.

2. Support the work of Youth Committee, as needed.
3. Tend to the spiritual needs of children and their families in the Yearly Meeting; provide individual and group support; develop leadership.
4. Maintain a database for families and RE Committees for resource and connection purposes including child safety. Provide resources to meetings to start and/or maintain Religious Education for Children and committee members responsible for those activities.
5. Provide logistical support and coordination for retreats or workshops, as needed.

#### **Secondary Responsibilities**

1. Serve as a focal point for youth transition to school age, middle school, high school, and college.
2. Provide consultation and support to local meetings as needed including information about how to welcome visitors/seeker families.
3. Maintain communication with clerks of YC, Nurture Coordinating Committee (NCC) and the Advancement Committee.

#### **As Time Permits**

1. Maintain appropriate liaison relationships with youth programs of Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, and similar staff or volunteers in other Yearly Meetings.
- . Other duties as assigned by the General Secretary and /or the Associate Secretary.

#### **Review of Responsibilities and Priorities**

The Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the General Secretary and YC, will review these responsibilities every six months, adjusting as experience dictates. The need for this position will be reevaluated at the end of the first and second years, on the basis of its effectiveness and on the other needs for staff support in the Yearly Meeting.

#### **Accountability**

The Friend serving in this position will:

1. Be accountable to the Personnel Committee through her/his supervisor.
2. Be familiar with the Personnel Handbook policies and procedures.

3. Communicate regularly with her/his supervisor and support/oversight committee.
4. Submit visitation reports and time-logs in a timely fashion.
5. Participate in periodic performance evaluations.

Children and Youth Field Secretary financing (shared at GSCC meeting 1-31-2015)

Source of Funding	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Increase to Operating Budget
Savings on Rent	5000	5000	4000	3000	3000	
From YRFIR Fund	5000	5000	5000	5000	1500	
From NYYM Trustees	5000	5000	5000	2500	2500	
From Outside Grants	7,500	7,500	7,500	2,500	2,500	
<b>Increase in the Operating Budget</b>	<b>4,600</b>	<b>4,600</b>	<b>5600</b>	<b>14,100</b>	<b>17,600</b>	<b>Total 2016-2020 \$46,500</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>27,100</b>	

Income from Annual Appeals

	Budget	Actual	%increase	
2012 Appeal	\$0	\$15,044		
2013 Appeal	20,000	22,960	52.60%	
2014 Appeal	34,000	35,521	54.70%	
2015 Appeal	40,000		12.60%	6000
Anticipated 2016 Appeal	50,000		25%	16000
Anticipated 2017 Appeal	55,000		10%	21000
Anticipated 2018 Appeal	60,000		9.10%	26000
Anticipated 2019 Appeal	65,000		8.30%	31000
Anticipated 2020 Appeal	70,000		7.70%	36000
				<b>Total 2016-2020 \$130,000</b>

