

NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING
Trustees Meeting
Sunday, January 4, 2015
Held at Purchase Friends Meeting

Present: Jeffrey Aaron, Spee Braun, Frederick Dettmer (Recording Clerk), Linda Houser (Clerk), F. Peter Phillips, James Whitely, Mary Williams (Treasurer).

The meeting opened with worship.

1. Spee distributed and reviewed a further revised draft NYYM Trustee Financial Guidelines. Jim described his efforts to investigate and draft an investment policy section of the Guidelines. Friends discussed the need for a statement of investment policy as long as all funds under our care are invested through Friends Fiduciary Corp., but reached no conclusion. *Jim is asked to have a draft statement of investment policy for our consideration by our next meeting.* Suggestions were made as to specific statements and information that should be included in the Financial Guidelines. *Spee will make further revisions to the Guidelines in light of suggestions made during the meeting.*
2. Friends **agreed** that all recipients of funds under Trustees' care should be asked to complete Grantee Accountability Reports. Friends further **agreed** that recipients will be advised in the Report form that subsequent distributions to a recipient could be delayed or withheld until it has submitted a completed Report.
3. Jeffrey reported on his work on determining property values for use in the audit. He advised that Stamford/Greenwich Meeting is sold, but Yearly Meeting holds a mortgage in the principal amount of \$120,000, which is a financial asset rather than a property asset. Morris Cemetery is considered abandoned and therefore has no value. He noted that there is a fund (of over \$30,000) for the Cemetery under our care, which we may want to consider turning over to the town which maintains the Cemetery. The Monkton (Vermont) Meeting property is appraised by the municipality and insured by us for \$450,000, exclusive of foundation and the lot (which are valued at around \$50,000). Jeff noted that Trustees previously offered the Monkton property to the tenants, the Methodist Church, at no cost, which declined to take it. NYYM continues to pay ½ of the insurance costs and might be responsible for some expenses of maintaining the property. He proposed that we make clear to the tenant that either it assume ownership, with attendant legal requirements, or we will put the property up for sale. *Disposition of the property will be included in the agenda of our next meeting.* The Yorktown parsonage building was appraised at \$340,000 replacement cost; but given terms of the lease with Calvary Bible Church, we should value the property at \$-0-; if sold to the Church, the value would be the agreed sale price, which is \$150,000 (with a reversionary clause that the Church apparently considered

unacceptable); appraisals have been conducted of the property, but did not assign value based on any limitations of use that can be made. Friends suggested that a further discussion should be held with the Church. Friends **approved** assigning the following values to these properties for the purpose of the audit: Stamford-Greenwich mortgage = \$120,000; Morris Cemetery = \$-0-; Monkton property = \$500,000; Yorktown property = \$150,000. *Disposition of properties still held by NYYM will be included in the agenda of our next meeting.*

4. Jeffrey raised some questions regarding the audit to be performed in 2015. First, he proposed that Trustees pay the entire cost of the audit as the Yearly Meeting faces financial constraints. Second, he posed questions about whether a full audit needs to be performed, or how often it needs to be done. Finally, he posed the question who should make these decisions. Friends spoke to our fiduciary responsibility to manage prudently funds under our care, including assuring that funds are properly spent and accounted for, and improving transparency around how funds are utilized and managed. Proposals were made that, if we pay for the audit, the audit process should be overseen by Trustees and the report should be addressed to Trustees. This would necessitate changes in the function of the Audit Committee. A proposal was also made that we should explain the background, reasons and oversight of the audit in a report to the Body so that there are not misunderstandings surrounding the process and actions. *Trustees directed Linda to bring to Audit Committee our concerns and proposals for management over and responsibility for audits.*
5. Linda reported on her investigation of trust terms. Her findings confirm the existing descriptions of the trusts she has examined so far.
6. Spee reported on research of the Lindley Murray Fund. She noted that there does not appear to be reasons for its separate management, that there are concerns about accountability with its management, and that a question can be raised why distributions from the Mosher Fund is also included in the function of the Lindley Murray Fund Trustees. A question was raised whether we want to undertake the work of managing the Fund, as it is substantial. *Responsibility for managing the Lindley Murray Fund will be included in the agenda of our next meeting, particularly as there does not appear to be any basis for having a separate set of trustees for the Fund. Spee will report to the Fund's Trustees that we are open to considering changes in the responsibility for overseeing the Fund.*
7. Peter reported on the annotated draft By-Laws he had prepared. Friends addressed the proposed description of "attenders" and limits on attenders' participation in the management of the Yearly Meeting. Questions were raised regarding whether there is ambiguity in references to the "Clerk" in the document; whether additional titles should be included utilizing terms familiar to society as a whole, such as "president"; how to allocate certain formal responsibilities, such as authority to execute documents on behalf

of the corporation. Friends agreed that the document needs to be clarified to specify duties and authorities of certain officers of the Trustees and officers of the Body. *Peter will make revisions in accordance with these points and distribute the revised draft for comment and approval by Trustees via email.*

8. Mary presented an interim Trustee Treasurer's Report as of December 31, 2014, a copy of which is attached. *Monies from the Agnes Lawrence and Ellen Congdon Funds are still being held back from World Ministries because of specific conditions relating to how the monies can be used and questions whether WMM's proposed uses of the monies are consistent with those restrictions; Fred will follow-up with WMM.* If those monies cannot be distributed to WMM, they should be distributed to other groups whose activities are within the conditions specified by those Funds. Funds under management for constituent meetings have been fully distributed to those meetings. Mary described her plans to consolidate funds into a general fund to the extent consistent with trust instruments. Mary proposed disbursing unallocated monies in the Administrative Fund, totaling \$6,504. Friends **approved** a 2015 dividend of \$2.90/share, and an administrative fee of \$0.07/share, yielding a net dividend of \$2.83/share.

9. We will next meet at Spring Sessions.

The minutes were approved.

Linda Houser
Clerk

Frederick Dettmer
Recording Clerk