

SESSIONS COMMITTEE, DAY ONE
Powell House • Saturday, January 28, 2017

PRESENT: Jeffrey Aaron, New Brunswick; Lucinda Antrim, Scarsdale; Cheshire Frager, Flushing; Linda Houser, Purchase; Robert (Sunfire) Kazmayer, Easton; Melanie-Claire Mallison, Ithaca; Dawn Pozzi, Rochester; Ellie Rosenberg, Ithaca; Helen Garay Toppins, Morningside; Doug Way, New Brunswick; Deborah Wood, Purchase

REGRETS: Martha Gurvich, Jennifer Lindop, Christopher Sammond, Claire Simon

VISITORS: John Cooley, Central Finger Lakes; Irma Guthrie, Perry City; Lu Harper, Rochester; Anne Pomeroy, New Paltz; Emily Provance, 15th Street; Gabi Savory Bailey, Chatham Summit

201701-01. The meeting opened with silent worship. Clerk Melanie-Claire Mallison welcomed all, and all introduced themselves.

201701-02. **Summer Program Committee:** Dawn introduced two questions to be considered this evening: Nadine Hoover, Alfred Meeting, had agreed to be our speaker at Summer Sessions 2017, scheduled for Monday evening. Nadine had asked for guidelines for her topic, which would amplify the theme we had chosen. Nadine suggested, "Is Peace Possible?" Friends were in unity with the topic, and felt it would be important for her to present some tools for transforming conflict. She could also speak to spiritual roots, how we manifest peace, ways to develop Spirit-led behavior, and ways to enlarge our circle so as to be more inclusive. Friends approved Nadine Hoover as keynote speaker for Summer Sessions 2017. The Summer Program Committee will work with her on the topic.

Dawn had distributed a draft of the Summer Sessions Week At A Glance (WAAG) 2017, similar to previous schedules. Dawn asked if Friends felt the need for scheduling an hour of Rest & Relaxation (R&R) every afternoon. Doug Way had drafted a schedule without R&R, dividing the afternoon hours into two equal time periods. This would allow more time for interest groups, and perhaps even more time for business. On Sunday evening, a time could be scheduled for a taste of all scheduled interest groups. A number of other suggestions for changes were made. Friends were encouraged to send further suggestions to Dawn. Dawn will redraft the WAAG, and send it to the Summer Program Subcommittee. The WAAG needs to be approved at Spring Sessions.

201701-03. **Pay as Led:** Melanie-Claire reminded the committee that we had been exploring the possibility of Pay as Led for Summer Sessions 2018. If that were to happen, the decision would need to be made at Spring Sessions 2017. A meeting of Financial Services, Trustees and the clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) had been proposed for Friday afternoon, and Sunday afternoon if needed, at Spring Sessions, March 31 and April 2, to explore its feasibility. Melanie-Claire will update the Pay as Led chart using Silver Bay room rates for 2018 by Spring Sessions. Doug Way and Linda Houser were approved to work with Melanie-Claire and Dawn. When a new general secretary is hired, he or she will need to be part of the process.

Pay as Led would be very difficult at Silver Bay because of the variety of housing costs. Melanie-Claire said that the only possible alternative site for Summer Sessions would be Niagara University, where the 2017 FGC Gathering will be held. The clerk will be attending this year's Gathering partly to research how the site might work for NYYM in 2019.

201701-04. **Accountability Queries:** Friends approved having the clerk respond to the Accountability Queries off line. She will send the document to Sessions Committee before forwarding it to GSCC. (See attached....)

201701-05. **January Spark Article:** Melanie-Claire pointed out the article in January Spark encouraging Friends to attend Summer Sessions. She had attached to an email a copy of the draft post card to be sent to all Friends on the NYYM mailing list. Gabi will receive some to send to young adult Friends who are not on that list. Friends approved mailing the post card.

201701-06. **Internal Nominating Committee:** Deb reported the following names for Summer Sessions coordinators;

Displays Coordinator – Karen Snare
Evaluations Coordinator – Melanie-Claire Mallison
Food Coordinator – Martha Gurvich
Golf Cart Coordinator – Carol Mallison
Interest Group Coordinators – Helen Garay Toppins, Martha Gurvich
Letters to Absent Friends Coordinator – Kate Lawson
Microphone Runner Coordinator – Anne-Marie Scheidt
Newcomers/Welcome Table Coordinator – Jeffrey Aaron

At the time of this meeting, she had not heard from the possible 12 Step Program Coordinator (*Roseann Press has subsequently said yes*) or the YM Office Assistant. She will follow up. Deb said that the call for volunteers to assist with these positions would be emphasized in May Spark and the Daily Minute at Silver Bay if not all slots were filled.

Melanie-Claire reminded us that the at-large membership of Sessions Committee currently has two vacancies in the class of 2018, and that at least three new members will need to be nominated at Summer Sessions for the class of 2020. Suggestions should go to Dawn who is a member of the NYYM Nominating Committee.

201701-07. **Finance Subcommittee:** Linda Houser said that the 2016 financial report had not yet been completed. As soon as that happens, Linda will send it to the committee. Linda will investigate whether we could buy insurance for Pay as Led if we do not meet our quota of payments to a conference venue.

A draft of the 2018 budget will be distributed to the committee in mid-March for approval at Spring Sessions. The Finance Subcommittee will find out when we need to submit a 2019 budget.

201701-08. **Online Registration Form:** Helen spoke to her experience with registration forms for Spring and Fall Sessions. Each person who is a member and/or active with NYYM, and who has registered on line in the past is already in the database. For those who have attended Spring or Fall Sessions and registered on line, the only change that needs to be made to update the registration form is to change the year of the event. Of course, changes of contact information or food preferences also need to be recorded. Helen is very careful to keep confidential all the information on registration forms.

She said that now 80% of the registrations come in electronically. Helen contemplates changing on-line registration forms so that they are easier for registrants to use. If a method of on-line registration that is adopted has a cost, Sessions may be asked to help cover that cost. The Meeting for Discernment registrations for March 11 at Poplar Ridge Meeting are on line as a test. Helen will report on that experience at Spring Sessions.

201701-09. The minutes were approved. The meeting concluded with a quiet circle.

SESSIONS COMMITTEE, DAY TWO
Powell House • Sunday, January 29, 2017

PRESENT: Jeffrey Aaron, Cheshire Frager, Linda Houser, Sunfire Kazmayer, Melanie-Claire Mallison, Dawn Pozzi, Doug Way, Deb Wood

VISITORS: Angela Hopkins, Ithaca; Enoch Nixon, Poughkeepsie

201701-10. The meeting opened with silent worship, during which the clerk the following quote:

Let's develop our ability to see and hear things for what they are:

“Hannah Arendt, in her book *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, provides a helpful guide for interpreting the language of fascists. She noted how decent liberals of 1930s Germany would “fact check” the Nazis’ bizarre claims about Jews like they were meant to be factual. What they failed to understand, Arendt suggests, is that the Nazi Jew hating was not a statement of fact but a declaration of intent. So when someone would blame the Jews for Germany’s defeat in World War I, naive people would counter by saying there’s no evidence of that. What the Nazis were doing was not describing what was true, but what would have to be true to justify what they planned to do next.

Did 3 million “illegals” cast votes in this election (as Trump tweeted)? Clearly not. But fact checking is just a way of playing along with their game. What Trump is saying is not that 3 million illegals voted. What he’s saying is: I’m going to steal the voting rights of millions of Americans. Fascism is the opposite of conservatism because it refuses to acknowledge reality as a limitation on the scope of human will.”

– Elliot Lusztiq

201701-11. **Sessions Committee Handbook:** Melanie-Claire distributed a revised version of the Sessions Committee Handbook page for the NYYM Handbook and an abridged revision of the Sessions Committee Internal Handbook. Friends read through both documents without commentary, noting any substantive changes to be considered after the reading.

Several substantive changes were recommended, including Melanie-Claire clarifying the role of the Spring Fall Sessions Coordinator. That role involves actually doing the work of making arrangements for Spring and Fall Sessions as well as acting as the liaison with the Host Task Group, especially their clerk. The committee approved changing the name of this role to “Spring Fall Sessions Coordinator & Liaison (SFSCCL)”. The clerk asked that grammatical and punctuation changes be sent to her and to Deb Wood. Deb will make the changes, and attach the new revision to the minutes.

Friends approved the Handbook page and the Sessions Internal Handbook. (See attached....) Melanie-Claire will forward the Handbook page to GSCC for their approval.

201701-12. **Other Opportunities to Write!** Doug Way and Melanie-Claire were working on the advance postcard for Summer Sessions. The draft for the text will be sent to the committee for approval before going to the printer. Melanie-Claire asked for volunteers to help creating the Advance Report. Dawn agreed. Melanie-Claire will work with Helen so that February InfoShare will include the registration fees and room rates for Summer Sessions. Melanie-Claire is working on the Sessions portion of May Spark. She will send requests to Arrangements Subcommittee volunteers for their input. The deadline for May Spark is March 3. The keynote speaker will be introduced in the May Spark. The Summer Program Subcommittee is responsible for working with Nadine Hoover on the text and photo needed for Spark.

201701-13. **Summer Sessions Plenary Speaker Compensation:** Dawn noted that Nadine Hoover, who has agreed to be our keynote speaker, can only attend Summer Sessions for only half of the week. Sessions will cover her housing costs at Silver Bay, and in addition, Friends approved an honorarium for Nadine equivalent to the remaining cost of a full week room and board at Silver Bay (at the 2nd Floor Inn, private bath rate).

As discussion continued, Dawn agreed to ask Nadine if she would be willing to have her keynote presentation videotaped and/or live streamed. If Nadine agrees, this information will be included in all advance publicity and in her introduction.

201701-14. **Spring Fall Sessions Coordinator & Liaison:** SFSCCL reported that she had received all of the statistical reports from Fall Sessions 2016 Host Task Group. Two items from the evaluations were noted. Scarsdale Meeting has a newly installed elevator that was not known to attenders at Fall Sessions. One of the vegetarians had an allergy to chicken. When the servers were dishing out chicken, some of the sauce fell into the rice. The chicken allergy was not noted on the registration form. We need to encourage everyone with any food allergy to make that clear on the registration form.

Spring Sessions 2017 will be held at Friends Academy, Glen Cove, Long Island, hosted by Long Island Quarter. Melinda Wenner Bradley is working on the children's program. The Host Task Group is on track for Spark publicity. As an early warning, Sessions Committee will meet over Friday evening dinner.

Fall Sessions 2017, hosted by All Friends, will be held at Caldwell University, Caldwell, New Jersey (near Montclair). Friday evening program will be held at Chatham-Summit Meeting. All Saturday and Sunday events will be held at Caldwell University.

Spring Sessions 2018 will be hosted by New York Quarter. Our SFSCCL will be in touch with them soon to start planning.

All of Fall Sessions 2018, hosted by Farmington-Scipio, will be held at Holiday Inn in Rochester. The youth will be going to a commemoration of the Treaty of Canandaigua on November 11. This was a treaty signed by the Grand Council of the Iroquois Confederacy (Haudenosaunee) and Timothy Pickery, official agent of President George Washington on November 11, 1794. The youth may also be visiting Gonondagon, a Seneca site south of Victor.

201701-15. **SFS Hospitality:** Home hospitality for events not being held at Powell House is often problematic for those who are responsible for organizing it. Gabi volunteered to bring to the next YM staff meeting the suggestion that a database be created with all relevant housing information throughout NYYM, similar to the FWCC Traveling Friends Directory that is available on line. Gabi will report back.

201701-16. **Canadian Yearly Meeting & 2017 Summer Sessions:** We have invited and are hoping that a number of Canadian Friends will attend NYYM Summer Sessions 2017. They may need space for their business sessions. JYM is considering having one fewer group this summer, so Munn Hall may be available. In addition, Melanie-Claire will talk to Martha about finding times that the Chapel or other space might be available. (<http://quaker.ca/quaker-blog/invitation-from-new-york-yearly-meeting/>)

201701-18. The minutes were approved. The meeting closed with a period of silence holding a family in the light.

Deb Wood, Recording Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison, Clerk