

Minutes
FMSA Meeting for Business via Zoom
June 16, 2021

Attending: Pat Sweet, Bill Sweet, Laura Claghorn, David Hayes, Val Liveoak, James Mize, Joni Mize, Greg Koehler, Gretchen Haynes, and Suzanne Cole Sullivan, Donna Dickerson

Query: What do the choices we make say who we are?

Opening Worship: *Jim Spickard*

The meeting opened with silent worship.

Clerk's Comments: *Jim Spickard*

Prior Minutes

Edits to make: Clerks Comments: What does IT mean...; Add Val Liveoak and Greg Koehler to the Attendance List

Friends approved May 2021 Minutes.

Treasurer's Report: *Bill Sweet*

Balance Sheet

- ✓ The Sinking Fund is reduced by \$1,769.50 for the first of two equal payments for the new monument sign.

Statement of Activities

- ✓ Contributions in May totaled \$1215.00. Thus, contributions were 31% of the 2021 budgeted general contributions, at 43% of the year.
- ✓ The first of two equal payments for the monument sign were charged to Major Repairs.
- ✓ The invoice for security patrol service, StateWide Patrol, Inc., was received and paid in May. As of 31 May, total expenditure for security services in 2021 is \$2,271.78.
- ✓ The CPS bill in May is for \$226.48 for 1.870 MWh of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave us a credit of \$209.52. After charges for additional services, the bill was for \$39.87.
- ✓ The leak in the water supply during the November-December 2019 billing period resulted in a charge of \$3,391.52, adjusted to \$2,199.15. The invoice for May showed a credit of \$527.66 remaining after deducting \$137.79. We expect to resume paying for water in the October-November 2021 timeframe.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine or less than typical, given the current pandemic conditions.

Faithfully submitted,

William D. Sweet, Treasurer

Report accepted.

Committee Reports:

Ministry & Oversight: *Val Liveoak*

M&O met over Zoom on June 8, Attending were Gretchen Haynes, David Bristol, Val Liveoak, and FMSA Clerk, Jim Spickard. Regrets from Joni Mize.

- 1) We postponed to next month a discussion of changing the Committee name.
- 2) Concerns about the Porch Meeting were expressed:
 - There was a great deal of ambient noise from the street last Sunday and attendance has dwindled significantly.
 - Also, summer heat will soon make outdoor meetings less viable.

We approved suspending the porch meetings until an indoor solution is developed. [Since then the Ad Hoc Committee has offered the suggestion of meeting inside the Community Room, which we will try.]

- 3) The Ad Hoc Committee reported the expectation that they would present 2 Minutes to MfB regarding upgrades to the Meetingroom that would be needed for future indoor meetings there. M&O agreed that these proposed Minutes could be brought to MfB.
- 4) We considered the plans for a Memorial Garden and approved asking Property Committee to add this to its list of projects.
- 5) Concerns of individual Friends were considered. A Friend who has been very generous to FMSA in the past is running short of funds for her care, and we discussed ways the Meeting could support her and others' financial needs. We approved the following proposed Minute:

MINUTE 2021.6.1: FMSA authorizes the withdrawal of \$11,500 from our investment account to be added to the Relief fund for the purposes of assistance to the costs of care of Friends while they seek other ways to reduce their expenses. We will also ask Friends to consider individual donations to the Relief fund for this purpose. At the September MfB, M&O and the Finance committee will make a recommendation about where to use any extra money if it is no longer needed for immediate relief. **APPROVED**

- 6) We will continue to invite Friends to test the Last Wishes form and to consider how we can resume a program for children at Meeting for Worship.

Our next M&O meeting is July 13 at 1 pm. We invite Friends to bring issues of concern to us before that meeting.

Discussion:

There was lots of conversation about the minute. First, why this amount? This is 3 months of support for this Friend. What happens if not all of the money is used or if additional donations come in and there is money left over, does the money just stay in the M&O Relief fund. Currently there is about \$1500 in the Relief fund. Friends seem comfortable with the request of support, however we want to make sure that not a lot of extra money is left in the Relief fund after this Friend finds other accommodations. The Investment account has a limit of two withdrawals a year so there was some hesitation about making sure we don't withdrawal hastily and that we make a large enough withdrawal to cover any additional money we may need for other project this year. However, we are able to re-invest with no limitations. Friends amended the minute to help alleviate some of this concern. Friends asked that the Finance Committee and Treasurer think about any other additional money we might need this year, so to make a reasonable withdrawal now and not need to make another one later in the year.

Report accepted.

Ad Hoc Reopening Committee: Laura Claghorn

May 27, 2021, 6:00 PM

Members present: Kellie Price, Pat Sweet, Jim Spickard, Oliver Gerken, Suzanne Cole Sullivan, and Laura Claghorn

June 4, 2021 6:00 PM

Members present: Kellie Price, Jim Spickard, Oliver Gerken, Suzanne Cole Sullivan and Laura Claghorn

June 8, 6:00 PM

Members present: Pat Sweet, Jim Spickard, Oliver Gerken, Kellie Price, and Laura Claghorn

In our first committee meeting, we discussed the importance of community and inclusion, our children's program, our relationships as members of a faith community and what fosters those ties, and finally, how best to serve everyone in our community. In our second committee meeting, we opened with the question: how do we nurture a loving and inclusive community by accommodating the various needs of our Friends and attenders in our Meetings for Worship? And in our third meeting, we evaluated various ideas about opening our Meetings for Worship with and without Zoom and reviewed possible survey questions about what would be a conducive environment for worship, what might be disturbing, and what would make members/attenders comfortable in returning for in-person worship along with space for additional comments. The survey would be distributed to our regular attenders and members.

As we continue to seek ways forward in opening the meeting room for in-person worship, there is progress in opening our meeting house property. We recommended re-instituting tailgate parties; we contacted the Religious Education Committee about the possibility of starting a trial children's program; and because of the heat and noise, we suggested to the M & O clerk that Porch Meeting become Community Room Meeting on Sundays.

Finally, we have spoken in the past about adding discreet microphones and speakers or hearing coils. A properly designed system would solve an existing problem (that some members have difficulty hearing spoken ministry) and also let us accommodate those who cannot attend our in-person events--forums and business meetings even if not Meeting for Worship.

The wifi signal on the porch and in the Phase 1 building is strong, but it is weak in the meeting room because it has to pass through several walls. This makes it hard to use video when we have guest speakers or as conversation starters in forums. Running a Cat6 or Cat6a ethernet cable from the modem in the Phase 1 furnace room to the northwest corner of the meeting room would solve this problem without the use of wifi, to which some Friends have objected in our worship space.

As construction takes time, the Committee believes that we should begin to install ethernet and hearing-assistance microphones and speakers now. This will make it easier for Friends to return to using the meeting room, no matter which path we choose in reopening.

We therefore recommend the following two minutes to be approved by Meeting.

- **MINUTE 2021.6.2:** FMSA authorizes ____ in the solicitation of designs for the installation of a microphone and speaker system to provide hearing assistance to Friends and others using the meeting room. We authorize customary and usual cost of bids for this task. The system should be as discreet as possible so as not to disturb Meetings for Worship. **APPROVED**
- **MINUTE 2021.6.3:** FMSA authorizes the purchase and installation of a Cat6 or Cat6a ethernet line to provide a fast connection between the meeting room and our internet modem at a cost not to exceed \$500. **APPROVED**

Note: Jim Spickard is willing to assemble a small advisor group to take on the task.

Discussion: Friends asked that the committee look into how and if Friends could use the Community Room for the Hatchback Parties.

Minute 1 Discussion: Friends shared concern of how large of a transfer we may need. Also have we every had the conversation if we want a speaker system. Friends asked that instead of soliciting and implementation on the sound system, we are asking that the committee solicit bids for a proposal to come to next business meeting. Suggestion that Community Room sound dampening to be looked into as well. We are not sure who is going to take the lead on getting bids for this project as property committee may have too much going on to take this on this month.

Minute 2: Question arose clarifying the proposal about if we are extending the WIFI or just a putting in a wall connection in the meeting room. This minute is recommending that we set up a wall plug so that a wifi extender could be plugged in when needed, or someone could also hardwire a computer with an ethernet cable.

Report accepted.

Property: David Hayes

The Property Committee met on June 14, 2021. All members were in attendance.

- The security patrol service stopped on May 31 2021.
- The old sign has been taken down and the new sign is now in production.
- We have accepted a bid to restore the wooden gate at the entrance and are looking forward to the completion of the work as soon as possible.
- We are working to obtain bids for removal of dead trees in the property.
- We had a successful workday on June 12th and our next one is scheduled for July 10th from 8am to 12pm. All are welcome to help in any capacity to keep the Meetinghouse beautiful.

With gratitude:

Pam Spurgeon, Joni Mize, James Mize and David Hayes

Discussion: With the removal of the old sign, one post is still up. A Friend wondered if that pole might be used as a peace pole. The property committee will take this under their consideration. Another Friend asked if there are any plans for the two removed signs? Not currently, they are in storage and available though. They might be useful at far parts of the property and Gretchen would be willing to help re-paint the background.

Report accepted.

Religious Education: Greg Koehler

The Religious Education Committee Met on Sunday, June 13th, at 11:30am, via Zoom: Karen Ball, Joni Mize, and Greg Koehler [convener] were in attendance.

- 1) Joni Mize will take a turn as the convener for the committee starting June 13th.
- 2) The committee discussed how to begin the process of re-starting the Children's Program in light of the impending re-opening of the Meeting House for Meeting for Worship. Some things we will consider:
 - a) Safety protocols

- b) Identifying families with children who intend to attend Meeting to estimate the number of children who might participate
 - c) Talking with those families about their needs
 - d) Recruiting volunteers from the Meeting to help conduct Children's Program
 - e) Recruiting new members for the Religious Education Committee to support Children's Programming, Adult Religious Education, and the Library
 - f) Contacting and re-hiring a childcare professional to assist volunteers from the Meeting
- 3) We are considering having a Wednesday evening forum later in the summer in order to gather ideas and support from the Meeting for re-starting the Children's Programming.

We set a date for an additional June meeting for the committee on Saturday, June 19th, 10am in person.

Report accepted.

Peace and Social Concerns: *Oliver Gerken*

We met on June 3, 2021. In attendance: Val Liveoak, Donna Dickerson, Oliver Gerken

1. The Peace and Social Concerns Committee convened to conduct the business of determining the best allocation of budgetted funds. The committee made an effort to prioritize organizations that are local and are known to have more limited budgets. Efforts were also made to support organizations associated with Friend(s) that are members/attenders of San Antonio Friends Meeting and for whom work with those organizations is compelled by a strong leading.

For the Meeting's consideration, the below allocations were made:

- 2021 Quaker Organizations: \$1000
 - Quaker Voluntary Srv \$350
 - Friends Peace Teams \$200
(for the general program)
 - Friends Peace Teams \$450
(Peace Building en las Americas)
- 2020 Local Organizations: \$1000
 - Esperanza Center \$100
 - P.E.A.C.E. Initiative \$100
 - Catholic Worker \$100

Peace & Social Concerns will have \$700 left in the projected budget for local organizations.

Funds coming from Immigrant relief fund. Immigrant Relief fund (~\$5000)

- Migrant Center for Human Rights \$1,000
- RAICES \$100
- Interfaith Welcome Coalition \$1000

2. The committee also would like to offer and support the idea of San Antonio Friends Meeting Affinity groups. P&SC's envisions Affinity Groups as small teams of individuals working together to support the leadings of various Friends. It is noted by the committee that the Meeting could do more to cultivate and support service in the line of social causes.

For example: There is a possible opportunity to engage with and support the work of Friends Peace Teams known as "Toward Right Relationships with Native People." Oliver has a leading in this space and is engaging with Friends Peace Teams to coordinate possible programming. Those interested in engaging with this cause or supporting Oliver's leading could form an Affinity Group to advance that work.

Peace and Social Concerns committee is scheduled to meet again July 5th at 7pm. We encourage Friends to reach out to the committee with their leadings and needs so that P&SCs can offer support."

Discussion: Questions arose about if the meeting needed to approve the disbursements. Friends were reminded that the Quaker organization and Local organization lines are already budgeted so Peace and Social Concerns can make those disbursements without approval. They are just reporting their current requests to the meeting for transparency.

Upon review of the minutes in April, it is not clear who has to approve the disbursement from the newly created Immigrant Relief fund. Friends decided to accept the recommendation of \$2100 from the Immigrant Relief Fund for the immediate disbursement of the funds and minuted their approval.

MINUTE 2021.6.4: FMSA authorizes the treasurer to disburse \$2,100 from the Immigrant Relief Fund: \$1000 to Migrant Center for Human Rights, \$100 to RAICES and \$1000 to Interfaith Welcome Coalition. **APPROVE**

Report accepted.

Community Engagement Committee: Gretchen Haynes

The committee met on 6/7/21. Present: Bill Sweet, Gretchen Haynes, Regrets: Kellie Price, Megan Pope, Jim Spickard

1. Media Coordinator: Suzanne Cole Sullivan is currently posting on our Facebook & Instagram pages. We suggest continuing this arrangement for the time being. We referred to the NYYM report on a 2017 Media Ads experiment. It gives data on 6 meetings' outreach but gives no measure of productivity. FMSA needs to develop a metric of success for the current efforts, and to address what to do when we do get responses.
2. Directory: We suggest making the availability known via the newsletter, with individual requests coming to our committee for vetting. The guideline for sharing the directory is only to members and regular attenders.
3. Clerk or Convener: Gretchen requests to resign as convener. Bill will act as interim convener.

Next meeting, July 12 at 7:00.

Report accepted.

Nominating: Gretchen Haynes

Second reading: Suzanne Cole Sullivan nominated to Community Engagement.

Suzanne will serve as the Facebook and Instagram manager but will not be joining the formal committee at this time.

Other Reports:

Ad Hoc Fair Working Group: Gretchen Haynes

After two cancellations due to rain predictions, we chanced it and set up on May 22. While there was intermittent drizzle, shoppers did come all morning. Books, donated baked goods and the Meeting information set up in the parking lot, along with member-sellers. Other member-sellers were on the lower level, under cover. Pictures are posted on the website. Fifteen Friends helped before and during the event. The Fair gave us the opportunity to build and rebuild relationships in person. It was small, compared to former Fairs, but announced to the world, "We're Back!"

Report accepted.

Quarterly Meeting: Person who Gives Report

Maybe you knew, or maybe you didn't: Quakers organize ourselves into Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings. These are named for how often they meet for business and for conviviality. Each covers more territory and unites more Friends.

FMSA is part of Cielo Grande Quarterly, which also includes Austin, Dallas, Coastal Bend, Hill Country, and Rio Grande. Together with Arkansas/Oklahoma Quarterly, Bayou Quarterly, and a few unaffiliated Monthly Meetings, we comprise South Central Yearly Meeting, which meets for three (or more) days over Easter weekend.

This year, our Quarter is responsible for planning the SCYM Program. Sixteen of us met by Zoom on Saturday morning, May 29th, to share ideas about possible themes and to have a chance to get to know each other better. Theme ideas revolved around social change and how Quakers can help improve society (and ourselves) in a new era. Specific suggestions included:

- "Doing the Next Right Thing"
- "Where Are We Going?"
- "Bringing Our Threads Together"
- "Time for Change?"
- "Supporting Change"
- "Changing to Meet the Moment"
- "What is the World Telling Us to Do?"
- "How is the World Telling Us to Change?"
- "Comfortable Evils, Uncomfortable Goods"

A popular (and more general idea) was hearing from young Quakers and learning how we can support them in their social change efforts. The issue of supporting people as they make change came up in several places.

After a Meeting for Worship and much discussion, five people stepped forward to winnow these ideas and propose details. They will bring these back to a second Zoom meeting on Saturday, September 11th, from 9am-noon. **All Friends are welcome to attend.**

Announcements:

Val's FCNL Talk: June 23—any additional info

(Probable) Hatchback Party on July 8—any additional info

Closing Worship

Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Spickard
Clerk

Rebecca Cole Sullivan for Kellie Price
Recording Clerk