

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
June 17, 2018

Attending: Gretchen Haynes, Ken Southwood, Bill Wilkinson, Carol Redfield, Marian Carter, Janet Southwood, Peggy Dial, Stephen Shearer, Pam Spurgeon, George Feden, Colin Malone, Debbie Passey, Jim Spickard, Elizabeth Pitts, James Mize, Joni Thibault Mize, James H. Goslin, Bill Sweet, David Novogrodsky, Jessica Soto, Kellie Price, Val Liveoak, Geoffrey Gate (Visitor, Clerk of Duluth Superior Friends Meeting, Duluth, Minnesota)

“...We say that each and every decision facing the Meeting is a holy and sacred and sacramental opportunity. There is no secular work.”

--Eden Grace, “Sacred Decision Making” QuakerSpeak Video

Clerk opened MFB with the above quote, silent worship followed.

“May the words of the Spirit be spoken. May the words of the Spirit be heard.”

The Agenda was previewed and accepted.

Clerk’s Comments

Val informed the Meeting that FGC will be meeting in another location, so the previous request for FMSA to host has been withdrawn.

The May MFB minutes were amended with the following item added to/corrected in the Festival Report: Gathered Flowers 15% , NET \$45, TOTAL \$1028.94.

The May minutes were accepted as amended.

Treasurer’s Report: Bill W.

Balance Sheet

- No significant activity

Statement of Activities

- Total festival proceeds and contributions were \$1431.94 with expenses of \$395.00
- Most of the expenditures under Minor Repairs and Maintenance were for A/C repairs and our A/C maintenance contract
- All other income/expense categories were routine

Bill W. will be moving \$25,000 from Friend’s Fiduciary Fund. \$10,000 in contribution to FCNL that Meeting previously authorized. The remainder is because we are light in the savings account, there are anticipated expenses coming per the Property Committee. The money will most likely be pulled from short term investments, as it is the most liquid. Bill W. will discuss with finance committee for signature process. Currently second required signature is from Carol Balliet. She will sign for this transaction, but Bill will be asking finance committee to remove Carol as second signature and authorize one, preferably

two, other people. The change will require a minute, but he wanted to give a head's up. If any Friends believe \$25,000 is insufficient, please let Bill W. know via email.

Bill W. then reminded Friends that we are moving into summer with suspected decline in donations. Gretchen has sent him the info for the 4 organizations to receive festival proceeds, and he will be writing those checks this week. Minor repairs costs included renewing maintenance contract and repairing an A/C unit. Other expenses were normal.

As to whether contributions have changed under the new tax law, Bill W. said that it does not seem to have changed anything. Assumption was that donations would go down with the increase in the standard deduction, but the Meeting's contribution rate is exactly what it was this time last year and is tracking the same.

Bill W. indicated that Meeting is set up to receive direct transfer payments from people's 401(k) as is now allowed and can provide tax ID number to Friends who are interested in having donations made to the Meeting from their Required Minimum Distribution.

Report was accepted.

Property Committee Report: Stephen

5/27 - The Property Committee discovered a rotten beam under the stairs leading to the deck behind the Meeting House.

6/01 - The Property Committee met to 1) discuss options to replace the broken glass doors to the Library and the Children's room, 2) exploring security options, 3) a watering schedule for the garden and 4) the possibility of a work day. 5) discuss seeking bids to replace rotten beam under the stairs.

6/03 - A request for a mid-week volunteer to water was answered by Collin. He will also be using the Library, from time to time, to work on his thesis. He will give the meeting a pair of eyes on the property, when it is normally vacant.

6/10 - A Huisache tree behind the Children's room split at the trunk. Etter Tree Service was called. They submitted a bid for \$1,240.00, which included the trimming of other low hanging branches near the parking area. The work was completed the following day.

Stephen Shearer, Co-Clerk

Marian inquired as to whether Etter is still giving the Meeting a discount, and this was affirmed.

Report accepted.

Ministry and Oversight Committee Report: Jim

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO

Ministry and Oversight Committee

Report for June 2018 Business Meeting

M&O met on Tuesday, June 12, at Laura Claghorn's home. Laura Claghorn, James Goslin, Val Liveoak, and Jim Spickard attended. Peggy Dial attended for a portion of the meeting.

We discussed:

Various Friends needs for pastoral care, including follow-ups from last month's concerns. We held several Friends in the Light and made plans to meet with them.

A concern for the aftermath of vandalism at the Meetinghouse, along with the pressure brought on the Property Committee by the need for major structural repairs to the Meeting Room.

Our discussion of vandalism paralleled the following passage from last month's M&O report though at greater length. Quoting from that report:

- "We recognize the need to take action and trust that the Property Committee will bring forth a proposal.
- We are concerned about members' burnout over worry about this issue.
- We hope that Friends will remain open to various &/or multiple solutions to this problem rather than imagining that a single solution will solve everything – even as we take action.
- We urge Friends to remember our true goal of a peaceful and supportive community".

We propose to Meeting that we arrange a Threshing Session to listen to our individual and collective visions about our property, our relationships with our neighbors, and the various security issues we face. Giving everyone a chance to speak, listen, and reflect on these issues could give our committees guidance about the sense of the Meeting

We think it important to listen to each other and to the leadings of the Spirit before becoming attached to any particular outcome.

September 9th seems the earliest we could have this Session – especially as it will need preparation

[ASIDE: Jim came across a November 2016 report from the Working Group on Meetinghouse Security that called for a similar Threshing Session. He brought copies of that report to refresh Friends' memories.]

An expressed concern for Meeting's inability to fill the slots in our committee roster.

We recognize the issue, but we are concerned that we not ask members and attenders to serve beyond their Light. We have tasks to do, but we also need people to follow their leadings – even if some tasks do not get done.

We received a report about how a congregation in Houston operates a "Memorial Garden" for members' remains. This included a list of issues that we would need to deal with, were we to take such a step.

A committee member reaffirmed a willingness to speak with another congregation about its experience.

We planned three upcoming after-Meeting events:

July 22: Forum on "Seeking Deep Worship"

July 29: Worship Sharing on "How do we seek the truth by which to live?"

Aug 26: Forum on the topic of remaining open to the Spirit as we make decisions. (We tried on 7 titles for this one but are still searching.)

James G presented a list of possible queries, one of which we chose for August. We identified a topic for July's query, and will approve specific working via email.

Having spent over two hours on the above issues, we postponed discussion of the following:
We have received and are considering proposals to streamline closing Worship and post-Worship comments, without hindering the sense of fellowship currently generated. We will reflect on these further and may propose something at a later date.

- We wonder if it is time for some sort of "Quaker 101" course for newcomers (and others) – and if so, what would be the most appropriate.
- A longstanding need to attend to our roster/ mailing list.
This includes communicating with long-absent Meeting members about whether they wish to continue their membership.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Spickard, Clerk

Jim passed out copies of November 2016 M&O report with similar recommendations as to a Threshing session and there was a spreadsheet attached of proposed actions. Only item of business was for Friends to decide whether a Threshing Session should be set up. The purpose is to put suggestions from all sides on the table in a setting where decisions are NOT being made.

Peggy suggested accepting the proposal for a Threshing Session and calendaring for September 9.

MINUTE 2018.06-1: Friends will arrange a threshing session to listen to our individual and collective visions about our property, our relationships with our neighbors, and the various security issues we face.

It was inquired how do Friends join committees, and Peggy indicated that Friends can talk to her if they are interested in serving on committees.

Report was accepted.

Peace and Social Concerns: Update Only

The proposed minute on the tithing of Meeting funds: the committee is still working on meeting with the Finance committee.

Nominating Committee: Peggy

Item 1. To fill the vacant post of Recording Clerk, Nominating Committee offers for consideration this Minute:

Minute: Nominating Committee presents Kellie Starr Price to fill the unexpired term, through December 2018, of Recording Clerk, and proposes this appointment to take effect immediately, without a second reading.

Item 2. A BIG thanks to Bill Sweet for his time and leadership on this committee.

MINUTE 2018.06-2: *Nominating Committee presents Kellie Starr Price to fill the unexpired term, through December 2018, of Recording Clerk, and proposes this appointment to take effect immediately, without a second reading.*

Report and minute accepted.

Naming Committee: Val

Naming committee consists of co-clerks, and the clerks of the Finance and Ministry and Oversight committees. Purpose is to put forward names to serve on Nominating committee. Val brought forward Laura Claghorne and Greg Casillas, both of whom have agreed. It was determined that a second reading was not required.

This will be a full two year term, with the caveat that the term was supposed to have started in May. So they will start now and their term will run through May of 2020.

Friends enthusiastically accepted Laura and Greg to serve on nominating committee.

Other Concerns: Gretchen

Gretchen read aloud a draft letter of introduction for Ken and Janet Southwood as they depart for Minnesota. Requests were made for suggested changes and additions.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

To the Clerk and Members of St. Paul Monthly Meeting,

Religious Society of Friends

Greetings,

This will introduce Janet and Ken Southwood, who are moving to your area. They are beloved members of Friends Meeting of San Antonio who have shared their deep knowledge of Friends principles and practices. Janet has served as clerk of the meeting and on many of our committees. Ken clerked the development committee when we built our meetinghouse and has edited our newsletter.

As newly-weds in 1951, they moved from their home in England to Malaya, where Ken served as an official in the Survey Department in His Majesty's Colonial Survey Service and attended a Friends Worship group in Singapore. Their children Jane and Paul were born there. They moved to the United States, where they entered graduate school at the University of Michigan and they became active in the Friends Meeting of Ann Arbor, where Janet became clerk. Ken became clerk of the AFSC Michigan Area Committee, having been active in AFSC in Malaya.

They later moved to Urbana, Illinois, and transferred their membership in Friends Meeting when Ken became a professor of sociology at the University. They adopted two interracial children and Janet became a child welfare specialist for the state.

When Janet and Ken moved to San Antonio, they became active in the wider community and interfaith work, as well as in our meeting. We will miss their devotion to Quaker faith, as well as their wry sense of humor. We commend them to your loving care.

The letter was approved.

Gretchen indicated that for International Peace Day last year, Friends hosted a concert, which was beautiful and well attended, but a lot of work. She suggested a movie night this year, and that FMSA invite members, attenders, and groups who use the Meetinghouse to participate. Questions or concerns can be emailed to Gretchen and a more concrete proposal will be made in July.

Regarding the current administration's policy of separating children from parents seeking asylum, a proposed minute was read.

The minute will be transmitted to representatives in the legislature, Attorney General, President and other relevant office holders, the local newspaper, on the FMSA website. Letters will go out on letterhead and via email. Jim and Elizabeth volunteered to help Gretchen with the matter.

Minute 2018.06-3: Friends Meeting of San Antonio finds the policy of the present administration of separating children from their families at the border to be shameful and contrary to American values. Further, using the Gospel to claim that "God has ordained" such actions is appalling to us as a people of faith. We also insist that our government follow international law and open our ports of entry for people seeking asylum. We call on all government officials, from the President, Attorney General, Senators, and Representatives, to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection to cease and desist separating infants and older children from their parents. Compassion is called for in welcoming those who flee violence, seeking asylum in America. Val Liveoak & Gretchen Haynes, co-clerks

Val asked for any other items before closing meeting.

Marian asked about the status of a previous concern regarding shortening the end of Meeting portion when Friends shake hands. Val updated that Ministry and Oversight Committee will continue to consider this.

Kellie requested to be included on the electronic distribution of committee reports, and Val indicated that Kellie would be included on the request for reports, so a "Reply All" would ensure that she receives them.

The meeting closed with silent worship.

Val Liveoak, Co-Clerk

Kellie Price, Recording Clerk