

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
July 21, 2019

Attending: Laura Claghorn, Pat Sweet, Bill Sweet, Greg Casillas, Pam Spurgeon, Marian Carter, Julia Hitz, David Hayes, Fernando Gomez, Leah Lindeke, Tessa Martinez Pollack, Carol Redfield, Greg Koehler, Peggy Dial, Stephen Shearer, Katherine Fitzgerald-Hernandez, Ben Fitzgerald-Hernandez, Michelle DiGiacomo, Sally Dunlap

For Reflection: Thomas Kelly: *The life that intends to be wholly obedient, wholly submissive, wholly listening, is astonishing in its completeness. Its joys are ravishing, its peace profound, its humility the deepest, its power world-shaking, its love enveloping, its simplicity that of a trusting child.*

Agenda preview: Jim Spickard

June 2019 Minutes had not been sent out due to difficulties in attaching to announcement emails. June approval postponed to September Business Meeting. Jim will send link to draft Minutes rather than send out attachment.

Treasurer's report: Pat Sweet

Balance Sheet

- ✓ Received semi-annual distribution from Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC) in the amount of \$4,733.39, half of which was deposited in the RAICES Bond Fund and the other half of which was deposited into the General Maintenance Fund. In July, the Migrant Center, Interfaith Welcome Coalition, and La Posada Providencia will each receive 25% of the funds deposited to the Bond Fund as a result of this distribution.
- ✓ The balances in the FFC accounts will be updated in July when the quarterly statement for the period ending June 30 is received.
- ✓ No other activity to report.

Statement of Activities

- ✓ Childcare is \$480 in June because it covers May and June expenses.
- ✓ All other expenditures were routine.

Faithfully submitted,

Bill Wilkinson, Treasurer

There were questions as to whether the money deposited into "RAICES Bond Fund" was going to RAICES or the smaller organizations. Greg Casillas explained that the FFC amounts went to the RAICES Bond Fund and that other funding streams were going to the other groups. Jim Spickard explained that the Meeting had decided long ago to give half of the income from FFC investments to the RAICES bond fund, but after RAICES got a large windfall, we had decided that the January amount was going to go to other groups. It needs to be clarified as to whether the January amounts did go to the other groups or whether it had been put on hold until this disbursement. Finance committee will look back through Minutes around Nov-Dec 2018 for this clarification. Pat Sweet will clarify with Bill Wilkinson. Kellie Price will check Minutes. Greg Casillas will check Peace and Social Concerns.

Report accepted.

Update Reports:

Homeless Visitors: Jim Spickard

Regarding the Minute last month with wording for signage. Laura Claghorn and Jim Spickard had separate conversations with the insurance agent. The insurance will be satisfied with signage that tells a reasonable person that things like camping are not allowed. Putting the signs where we want them matches the reasonable person standard. The question is regarding whether the words “inviting” people to use the space for contemplative visits makes us liable for whatever happens to them while they are on the property.

It was asked whether the language “you are entering” is implied invitation, but it was generally agreed that it was not enough of an invitation to get in trouble with liability. Another question was what do other houses of worship use for signage and there were examples given. It was pointed out that this can be an ongoing question and we can begin with stronger language and can adjust the language as we feel led in the future. Friends are comfortable with the bold faced language on the report for now.

MINUTE 2019.7.1: FMSA approves the following updated language for signs to address our homeless visitors: “This is private property owned by Friends Meeting of San Antonio. It is place of worship and contemplation. Camping, overnight stays, and weapons are not allowed.” Approved.

Property committee is charged with deciding how many signs and where they will be placed. There are no objections to immediately updating the signs with this language and David Hayes will do so. It is important to let those groups who regularly use our space of the issue and the reasons for the signs as some were upset by them.

Solar Energy Purchase: Bill Sweet

In July 2018, the Meeting minuted the creation of an ad hoc committee to evaluate the next offered program for community solar electricity generation, sometimes called roofless solar. This committee was authorized to spend up to \$40,000 to buy into community solar, if the terms were appropriate for Friends Meeting of San Antonio. Such a program opened in June of this year. The ad hoc committee determined that this program met the desires of the Meeting as expressed in the 2018 Minute and subsequent forums.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Community Solar met by conference call on 18 July. Present were Stephen Shearer, James Mize, David Hayes, Joe Redfield, Bill Wilkinson and Bill Sweet. Member Joni Mize was out of town. Jim Spickard was present *ex officio* as Acting Clerk and as a resource. After discussion, the purchase of 45 photovoltaic panels, replacing a calculated 87% of our annual electricity consumption, for \$39,420 was minuted.

To meet the requirements of our By-laws, the ad hoc committee proposes a Minute.

MINUTE 2019.7.2: The Treasurer is designated the authorized agent to enter into a contract with Big Sun Community Solar and to sign the check to expend the necessary funds. Approved.

Community Engagement: Greg Casillas

Members in attendance Bill Sweet & Greg Casillas

“The best recreation is to do good.” William Penn 1644-1718

Greg Casillas will schedule meetings with the FMSA committees with regard to contact information and content for the website.

Bill Sweet has placed a copy of the directory in the FMSA online storage for access and safe keeping.

Greg Casillas has meetings scheduled with the local organizations that FMSA financially supports so that we can add a brief introduction to the organization on our website. Additionally, for those visiting the website that would like more information about the organizations, there will be a link.

No update on the phone / internet options other than the phone is currently not working. Bill Sweet has handed this responsibility over to Colin Malone and we will continue to search for solutions.

Val Liveoak brought to the committee "Do you think Meeting ought to obtain an AED and perhaps offer CPR and other (stroke assessment, epi pen and naloxone administration)?" Is this something we could request from the Eagle Scouts and could we make it a community workshop/training?

Our next meeting will be August 5, 2019 @ 5:45pm

Report accepted.

Peace & Social Concerns: Greg Casillas

Members in attendance, Katherine F-H, Ben F-H, Gretchen Haynes & Greg Casillas

"The little unremembered acts of kindness and love are the best parts of a person's life." William Wordsworth

Greg Casillas shared P&SC mail and has posted newsletters and flyers on the community board.

Collectively we discussed ideas for the "A Day in My Life" forum. As we presented the information, we will distribute the action items and solicit other actions items from the Meeting in the August Newsletter. Once we receive these action items, we will present an Action Minute to MfB regarding ways that we as a Meeting will strive to reduce waste and live responsibly.

Gretchen Haynes presented information about the Lunch Ministry for IWC. This involves purchasing the necessary supplies, assembling the lunches and delivery to the bus station on the scheduled day. The cost is between \$125-\$150 per event. Greg Casillas mentioned that the yoga money he has collected (\$320) could be used to support this effort. We present this Minute for discussion and approval.

MINUTE 2019.7.3: Friends Meeting of San Antonio approves the Peace & Social Concerns committee request to participate in the Lunch Ministry of the Interfaith Welcome Coalition for asylum seekers who are traveling to their family/sponsor in the U.S . This participation involves purchasing supplies, volunteers assembling and delivering the lunches to the bus station in downtown San Antonio on the designated day. Greg Casillas will use the money he collects from Meeting House Yoga to fund this participation. In the event Meeting House Yoga money will not cover the cost of the supplies and additional funds are needed, Greg Casillas & John Rayborn will donate the difference. Approved.

Gretchen Haynes shared information from FGC about racism and asked if we would like to learn more. We resoundingly said, "YES." Gretchen will provide more information soon.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, August 8, 2019 5:15pm

Once the dates are determined, they will be announced and volunteers can sign up. A number of Friends are interested in volunteering a few hours on a monthly basis to cover this effort.

Report accepted.

Nominating: Laura Claghorn

Gretchen Haynes, Greg Casillas, and Laura Claghorn met on July 18 and discussed the needs of our committees, the current responsibilities of members and attenders who are actively involved in the life of our Meeting, and plans to get to know our new attenders to learn more about their interests and wishes.

On another note, Bill Sweet has agreed to serve as treasurer for our Meeting. This will be a first reading.

It was noted that for past positions such as recording clerk, the second reading was waived and it was suggested that we waive the requirement for a second reading if allowed. The handbook says it is not meant to be taken as a rigid guide. There was a concern as to whether Bill Sweet was clear on this leading, and he indicated that he was. He will be taking on the full role, so there would be no need for separate book keeper. The Meeting was clear that a second reading was not necessary and Bill Sweet was accepted as Treasurer for Friends Meeting San Antonio.

Report accepted.

Signage: Peggy Dial

On June 23rd, it was brought to our attention by Pam Spurgeon that the small tree being removed for placement of the monument sign was a Blue Condalia. They are Texas natives and very few "tree" specimens still exist.

On June 24th, we met with Pam Spurgeon and Debbie Reid to view the tree and discuss options. Debbie shared a story about how the specimen had been saved by Ruth L. when the original sign was placed.

On July 2nd, we met with Paul Rolf of Budget Signs to discuss new placement options, if the tree were to be saved. Several possibilities were discussed. Afterward, we met to discuss all options and decided the tree should be saved. To move forward with placement changes we would need a survey to confirm property lines. After a search of the Library no survey was found. We also discussed the idea presented by Property Committee of a "Meadow" fence being installed around the property. If Meeting chose to move forward with the fence, due to recent talk of insurance requirements, Property would also need a survey. A decision to place the installation of the sign on hold until the existing survey was found or a new one was done and a decision was made on the fence, was made.

On July 15th, Peggy D. spoke with Property committee regarding a survey and the possible fencing.

Sign committee feels the pressing issue of our visitors, insurance requirements and the unity of Meeting are of foremost importance. Once these items are clarified we can move quickly toward sign installation.

Report accepted.

Property Committee: Bill Sweet

1. A mini-workday was held on the 11th of July from 4 to 6 pm. About 6 people cleared the courtyard of weeds, spruced up the children's room and organized their supplies, watered the butterfly garden,

swept walkways and cleaned the bathrooms. About 15 people, Meeting folks, friends of Meeting folks, and folks from groups who use our space weekdays – including one who brought celery and cucumber spears and watermelon wedges - weeded the butterfly garden and adjacent areas, trimmed the trumpet vine arbor, organized the storage closet where tables are kept and also the children's room, a crack in the parking lot was patched - and more - was done on the regularly scheduled workday on the 20th. Donuts, breakfast tacos, and coffee were welcome sustenance and break from our labors. A big shout-out to all who participated. Thank you!

2. The two-part bid from Alamo Gutters was evaluated. Part I is to clean, level, and add a support bracket to the courtyard gutters for \$375. Part II, costing \$2832, consists of two tasks: (1) add gutters to the porch roof to minimize reoccurrence of the recently repaired water damage and rot and (2) replace the rusted-through gutters on the back of the Phase I building. Property Committee minuted bringing to Meeting for Business for consideration, to contract for both parts, per the Handbook limit of \$3000. The following Minute is proposed:

MINUTE 2019.7.4: Friends Meeting of San Antonio will contract with Alamo Gutters, 10207 Sommers Dr, San Antonio TX 78217 per their bid of 5 June 2019, at a total cost of \$3207. Approved.

3. Etter Tree Service removed tree limbs downed by storm and tree limbs lying on the roof of the Phase I building. The work was done on 18 June at a cost of \$425.
4. The insect- and water-damaged porch door was repaired by Dan Guarjardo. The cost was \$500.
5. As a specifically named constituent of the Ad Hoc Committee, which was minuted in July 2018, to evaluate community solar for the Meeting, Property Committee discussed the program offered by Big Sun Solar in conjunction with CPS Energy during its meetings on 27 June and 15 July, and with the full committee by conference call on 18 July. The Ad Hoc Committee has reported separately.
6. To help with security and property protection, the committee is gathering and evaluating information on fencing to better delineate boundaries.

Stephen Shearer, James Mize, David Hayes, Joni Mize, Bill Sweet

A number of Friends had serious reservations regarding any fence, including a meadow fence. There was an objection to the property committee even looking into the question because fences are so easy to climb over. Another mentioned that Property Committee members have indicated feeling stretched and that if there are objections to the fence, perhaps that was a burden we could relieve them of. The Property committee indicated that the fence is not meant to keep anyone out, which is why a meadow fence is recommended, and that it is simply meant to direct traffic to the main entrances.

Report accepted.

Religious Education: Gretchen Haynes

Present: Ben Hernandez, Oliver Gerken, Colin Malone, Greg Koehler, Gretchen Haynes, Karen Ball, guests Patsy and Lidia Ramirez, regrets Joni Mize, Gary Whiting

Patsy and Lidia joined us and shared valuable insights as first time visitors. Lidia has attended Celebration Circle and was curious about Meeting. She invited her mother; both felt welcome and asked about the seeming informality – no dress code, no pastor, open to personal messages.

We then went to the agenda. Quaker Orientation: we moved the topic of Meeting for Worship to week 1 on Sept 11, followed by Origins on Sept 18. Other topics will be Oct 2, 9, 16 & 23. Ben is considering facilitating Quaker Process. We discussed the intended audience and decided to leave it to self-selection but aiming for the newer F/friends. We will circulate a flyer describing the series with a sign up in the Community room. If the sign up goes beyond 8, we will consider what to do.

Way has opened for Joni to attend a training for teachers of “Godly Play,” a curriculum for children. Once trained, she can help our volunteers with a more focused program for the children in our Meeting. The Quaker version of this program, “Faith and Play,” deals with applying our testimonies to every day life.

Prepared by Gretchen Haynes, clerk

It was requested that information about the Quaker Orientation be sent to the Newsletter.

FGC Gathering: Gretchen Haynes

South Central Yearly Meeting was this year’s official sponsor for Gathering at Grinnell College, Iowa, with the theme Peace in our Hearts; Justice in the World. Three F/friends from San Antonio attended, along with over 800 from around the world. The opening worship led off with a request that F/friends begin with wordless humming. While it obviously calmed restless children in the front of the chapel, some thought it went on too long and one expressed disapproval for a “contrived” event.

The plenary on Tuesday set the tone for balance of the week: five members of the Institutional Assessment of Systemic Racism [IA] within FGC held a conversation with each other, and with F/friends. They sought to redefine the term racism, to review the findings of the IA, and to make recommendations for the organization. Ample opportunities followed with afternoon sessions devoted to exploring the issues, time in the various workshops, and informal conversations throughout the week.

My workshop on Welcoming Newcomers was sensitive to how the best intentions can sometimes be hurtful to people of color, without our being aware of the results. These “microaggressions” can be in body language, tone of voice, dismissal of suggestions. Beyond considering this failure, the workshop offered many helpful ideas of inclusion.

Another plenary offered joyous and thought-provoking songs performed by John McCutchin, many for children and many for all to join in. Tony Fish illustrated the program he directs for Native Americans in Oklahoma reentering society from prison. And Friends Committee on Legislation staff and volunteers described their work in Congress to pass realistic immigration laws and in the community to support immigrants.

The Peace Place, in innovation this year, offered different slide presentations each day illustrating climate crisis, the Mid East conflict, African diaspora, Central American asylum seekers. Viewers were encouraged to find ways to stay with the horrific images rather than turn away. Deep discussions followed each. The peace flags here were made after the various presentations.

Prepared by Gretchen Haynes

Report accepted.

Long Range Planning: Joni Mize

On June 23, 2019 a second conversation/discussion about our future was held. (Notes from this discussion are available on our website.) A data collection effort is being developed to seek clarity on interest and concerns.

Submitted by,
Joni Mize

June 23rd: A 2nd Forum on Long-Range Planning
Reported by Gretchen Haynes

We extended the process begun in May: exploration without the need to come to any conclusions. We began by finding there is no passion for starting a Friends School at this time. An alternative would be ESL and citizenship classes, and programs for neighborhood children during the summer and breaks.

The history of the present facilities was outlined, and the process of creating what we have now. One possible multipurpose building layout could contain a caretaker's apartment, a conference/classroom, and a library/office space. The possibility of finding organizations to move their offices here needs more research, re interest, and transportation. Ditto an outreach volunteer.

We were reminded that Meeting's growth and health comes from the Spirit. Whatever we do depends on listening for Spirit.

Hesitations regarding a new building included the observation that younger F/friends have different economic circumstances than our current F/friends and this may cause fiscal problems in the future. Any new building[s] lay a burden on the future.

Does growth require a physical build-ing? Can we see transformations in our existing facilities, such as that in the Community Room? The current meeting room has a capacity of 130, per fire department regulations. The ideal number for a meeting is around 75. If our attendance grew beyond that, we could establish a second Quaker meeting in another part of town. When we have 10 or more children, we can use the Library for the older group.

One F/friend asked for more details of the financial side. What would various building plans cost? What would be the maintenance costs? What are our priorities [perhaps in list form]?

The focus shifted from the more practical to the more spiritual. We were asked to suspend our own will and practice religious forbearance. Is there a middle way – to put our resources into our passions? Leading to the question: What is the purpose of Meeting? The social mission of Friends?

What is the difference between what we want and what we need?

In conclusion, two F/friends will collect data as outlined above. No one volunteered to join the Long-Range Planning committee.

We will wait in the Light for a leading and be guided by the Light

Other Concerns

Katherine Fitzgerald-Hernandez shared a passage from a book with regards to Quakers setting up hedges around themselves that she felt moved by.

Gretchen raised the idea of a yard/garage/parking lot sale in the fall. Friends expressed interest in doing so.

Marian Carter would like the children to be encouraged to eat with the adults at potluck and encouraged committees to hold meetings at other times so that everyone can participate in the communal time.

David Hayes brought up how much work is able to get done on workdays when we work as a group and suggested that this same dedication and energy could also be used to help members of our own community in similar ways.

Greg Koehler raised a concern about the fact that cell phones go off during Meeting for Worship every Sunday and would like to make the space more worshipful.

Announcements

Jim Spickard reminded everyone to send in newsletter content and of the request from a Friend in New York who is looking for a place to park a truck and trailer.

Midweek meeting for worship is actually Wednesday, July 31.

Closing worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie Price, Recording Clerk

Jim Spickard, Clerk