

**New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
Permanent Board Minutes
August 6, 2011
Bryant University – Smithfield, RI**

11-57 Opening Worship: We opened in waiting worship.

11-58 Roll Call: The recording clerk called the roll.

Present: Edward Baker, Holly Baldwin, Debbie Block, Susan Davies, Jeremiah Dickinson, Eric Edwards, Andy Granell, Dorothy Granell, Jan Hoffman, Sandy Isaacs, Allan Kohrman, Dwight Lopes, Christopher McCandless, Sara Sue Penell, Karen Sanchez-Eppler, Suzanna Schell, Patricia Shotwell, Carolyn Stone, Philip Stone, Ruah Swennerfelt, Jane Van Landingham, Donn Weinholtz, Rosemary Zimmermann

Regrets: Jennifer Baily (Personnel Committee, Clerk), Aimee Belanger, Eileen Cummings (Finance Committee co-Clerk), Sarah Gant, Judy Goldberger, Beth Gorton, Ben Guaraldi, Galen Hamann, John Humphries, Mary Knowlton, Rebecca Leuchak, Donald Mick, Carl Williams

Ex-Officio: Travis Belcher (Finance Committee co-Clerk), Linda Jenkins (YM Presiding Clerk), Ed Mair (Treasurer), Jonathan Vogel-Borne (YM Secretary)

Guests: Chris Doehlert, Nancy Haines, Betsy Kantt, Marcia Mason, Jean McKnight, Gerald Sazama, Dinah Starr, Roland Stern, Jackie Stillwell

11-59 Minutes of 5/14/2011 were **approved** with changes.

11-60 Minutes of 7/9/2011 were **approved**.

11-61 Report from Coordinating and Advisory Committee: YM Presiding Clerk Linda Jenkins reported for the Coordinating and Advisory Committee:

- YM Sessions – Linda noted that we are off to a running start, with 240 Friends participating in the events at the Great Meetinghouse in Newport, RI, on Friday. The business agenda will include consideration of PB's recommendations concerning contributions to FUM (PB Minute 11-27) and disposing of the Friends Home property (PB Minute 11-55). PB clerk Edward Baker will hold an afternoon session for Friends to discuss possible changes to the YM governing structure (PB Minute 11-41). Incorporating many items within the Unity Agenda will provide additional time for worship and discernment, but Linda will be open to further consideration of any items on the Unity Agenda that may need additional discernment.
- Support for YM Presiding Clerk - Linda shared her concern about Purpose and Procedures for the Clerks Nominating Committee. While possible changes were discussed at the May meeting (PB Minute 11-45), they remain unchanged in the Advance Documents for Sessions. Further discernment is needed about how to establish a new support structure for the presiding clerk, and Linda expressed her gratitude to Clerks Nominating Committee for giving this concern additional attention during the coming months.

- Continuation of Employment for Yearly Meeting Secretary - The Coordinating & Advisory Committee has completed its performance review of the YM Secretary and is pleased to recommend continuing employment for Jonathan Vogel-Borne as the YM Secretary. **Friends expressed unity with that recommendation and approved bringing that recommendation to Sessions for approval.**
- Continuation of Employment for Friends Camp Director - The Friends Camp Committee has completed its performance review of the Camp Director and recommends continuing employment of Nat Shed as the Camp Director. **Friends expressed unity with that recommendation and approved bringing that recommendation to Sessions for approval.**

11-62 Report from Yearly Meeting Secretary: YM Secretary Jonathan Vogel-Borne expressed enthusiasm about having Richard Frechette serve as Sessions Coordinator this year, which will allow Jonathan to be more of a pastoral presence at Sessions. The staff has been at Bryant since Tuesday. Patricia Ewen is in her second year as office assistant and Lisa Wagner is our games coordinator. Organizing for Sessions has gone very well this year, staff morale is high, and the staff was able to participate in the Great Meetinghouse event on Friday.

Last year attendance at Sessions fell below 700 for first time in many years, possibly indicating that people did not understand the new Jubilee structure. This year's attendance is up, and interest in the Anchor Groups seems to be leading people to stay the full time.

An online post-Sessions survey will allow us to seek feedback about programs and format (paper versions will also be available, but online is easier to tabulate). Last year's evaluations contained no mention of workshops, and we want to find out if people miss the workshops.

Jonathan reported on the hiring of the following new YM staff:

Frederick Martin (Monadnock) has been hired as the YM Accounts Manager. He is moving to Boston to attend Andover Theological Seminary for the next 2 years.

Jodi Goodman is the new YM Archivist. Jodi has a Master of Library Science degree, is a trained archivist, and has family connections to Quakers although she herself is Jewish. She feels a calling to this work and lives within walking distance of RI Historical Society.

11-63 New England Friends Home Update: Chris Doehlert and Betsy Kantt reported on behalf of the Friends Home Committee. Chris, who serves as the treasurer, reviewed the Friends Home finances, as outlined in an advance document. The Home will have a financial shortfall because the projected costs associated with closing the Home and disposing of the property will be greater than the combination of existing resources and anticipated income. Income will dwindle as residents are relocated. There will be ongoing maintenance and security costs, and because we are self-insured for unemployment benefits, there will be ongoing payments to laid-off staff. NEYM will be responsible for covering the shortfall, anticipated to be at least \$60,000.

Betsy Kantt and Alice Schaeffer have been serving as the acting co-directors for the Home. Following PB's July meeting, the Committee hired Atlantic Retirement Group

(ARG) as consultants to provide guidance during the closure process. The announcement of the closure went more smoothly than expected, and residents are actively looking for new situations. Of the 15 residents who were living at the Home, only five will remain after September 1. A total of 18 staff will be laid off; three were let go last week. The official date for closure is October 23, 2011. The Committee is creating a staff fund to which Friends can contribute, helping to ease the transition for staff members who may have difficulty finding alternative employment.

The Committee is clear about the scope of its responsibility. The Committee is concerned with closing the home, placing the last residents, and letting staff go. The sale or lease of the property after closure is not the responsibility of the Committee. In addition, the Committee will not take responsibility for: archiving papers or clearing out the office; disposal of antiques, other valuable items or things that residents leave behind.

Edward Baker reported that he has already been contacted by an interested party that operates a hospice center. We need to appoint a new group to take responsibility for the process of selling or leasing the building once the Home is closed. No legal opinion has been sought, yet, regarding the language in the will of Polly Thayer Starr, who donated the house to NEYM.

Jean McKnight (Wellesley) said that while she provides pro bono counsel as the YM's legal advisor, the work related to disposing of the Friends Home property would be more than she could do pro bono. PB would have to decide whether to engage her firm.

Chris Doehlert reminded friends that we currently have no director, and Betsy will not be available beyond the end of August. When Alice and Betsy stepped forward to take on the responsibility of director during this time, Betsy had declined compensation. The Committee recommends that Alice be compensated for her work.

Jonathan Vogel-Borne suggested that the Personnel Committee could consider the question of compensation and report back to PB on Thursday with a recommendation. He also expressed gratitude to Betsy, Alice and Chris for their leadership during this difficult time.

Edward Baker read the text of a trial minute to be shared with the Sessions recording clerks. Friends agreed that the draft text accurately describes the actions needed from Sessions to empower PB to move forward with disposing of the property.

11-64 Treasurer's report: Ed Mair, YM Treasurer, offered good news tempered by the Friends Home report and the recent decline on Wall Street, which will affect our Pooled Funds and donations from individual donors. Our financial picture is one of cautious optimism.

11-65 Finance Committee Report: Travis Belcher, co-Clerk of Finance Committee, reported that the Committee will be meeting this afternoon for a final look at committee budgets and to consider questions related to Friends Home. The FY 2012 budget, as reported in the Advance Documents and posted online, is a more conservative and balanced budget than last year's due to the Committee's uncertainty about financial contributions.

11-66 Development Committee Report: Nancy Haines, Clerk of the Development Committee, reported that this has been a year of transition, with many new committee members. She clarified that the Committee's focus is on individual contributions, not contributions from monthly meetings. Individual contributions for the current fiscal year are below the budgeted level. The new budget will be a serious stretch for the Committee, but they plan to be very visible this year, with a focus of increasing the number of donor households. Currently, 300 households (less than 10% of the YM), contribute. The Committee will continue to talk to major donors, but those donors cannot meet the full need. A "Why I Give" column, featuring people who are giving monthly or have named NEYM in their will, will continue to appear in the NE Friend and on the website, and the daily newsletter at Sessions will have similar blurbs. The Committee will be giving special attention this week to speaking with people serving on committees, including PB, as they are the people who understand the YM.

Nancy read an August 1, 2011 minute of gratitude from the Development Committee, thanking Jerry Sazama for his service on the Committee.

One Friend expressed a concern that we not lose sight of the importance of contributions from MMs and asked which group has charge of cultivating those relationships. The Finance Committee has contacted every MM treasurer in each of the last two years. Contributions from MMs are roughly three times the total contributions from individuals.

11-67 Listening Committee Report: Jerry Sazama, Clerk of the ad hoc Listening Committee presented a report on the work of the Committee (see PB Minute 11-10), as summarized in the Sessions Advance Documents. Drawing upon conversations with MMs about their relationship with the YM, the Committee has provided some useful insights and recommendations. Friends spent some time reflecting on the report and suggested that a broader conversation is needed. The YM Presiding Clerk agreed to discuss with the PB Clerk how to proceed in ensuring a deeper exploration of the ad hoc committee's findings.

11-68 Internal Nominating Committee Report: Donn Weinholtz, Clerk of Internal Nominating Committee, reported the following recommendation:

- YM Nominating (At Large): Helen Carpenter (Beacon Hill), class of 2014

Friends approved this recommendation.

11-69 Bank Resolution Minute: Friends approved the addition of Jeff Adelberg, acting director for Friends Camp, to the Bank Resolution to be presented at Sessions. Jeff will be stepping in for Nat Shed during Nat's sabbatical period (August 1, 2011 through January 1, 2012).

11-70 Closing Worship: We closed in waiting worship, planning to meet again on Thursday, August 11, 2011, at 1:30 PM at Bryant University in Smithfield, RI.

Edward Baker, Clerk
Suzanna Schell, substitute Recording Clerk