

**New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
Permanent Board Minutes
August 9, 2012
Bryant University, Smithfield, RI**

12-79 Opening Worship: Friends gathered in waiting worship.

12-80 Roll Call: The Recording Clerk called the roll.

Present: Holly Baldwin, Aimee Belanger, Travis Belcher, Susan Davies, Jeremiah Dickinson, Jan Hoffman, John Humphries, Maria Lamberto, Rebecca Leuchak, Christopher McCandless, Robert Murray, Bruce Neumann, Karen Sanchez-Eppler, Suzanna Schell, Sara Smith, Caroline Stone, Phillip Stone, Jane Van Landingham, Donn Weinholtz, Fritz Weiss, Rosemary Zimmerman

Regrets: Debbie Block, Deana Chase, Eric Edwards, Sarah Gant, Ben Guaraldi, Galen Hamann, Sandy Isaacs, Mary Knowlton, Allan Kohrman, Elias Sanchez-Eppler, Patricia Shotwell, Carl Williams, Hannah Zwirner

Ex-officio: Edward Mair (Treasurer), Jacqueline Stillwell (Presiding Clerk), Jonathan Vogel-Borne (Yearly Meeting Secretary)

12-81 Minutes: The Minutes from August 4, 2012 were **approved** with corrections.

12-82 New Members: We welcomed new members of Permanent Board: Sarah Smith (Concord MM), and (in absentia) Hannah Zwirner (Beacon Hill MM). Following our tradition of appointing mentors to assist new members' understanding of our work and their role in it, we appointed Phil Stone as mentor for Sara, and Suzanna Schell as mentor for Hannah.

12-83 Appreciation: We spent some time in worship-sharing, reflecting on the service of outgoing Clerk Edward Baker, and outgoing Recording Clerk John Humphries. Friends noted, with affection and respect, John's quiet and humble confidence, his attention to detail, and his sense of our current work as part of the on-going stream of the spiritual life of NEYM. It was noted that his service to Permanent Board and the Yearly Meeting was superimposed on a generous allotment of time and energy at Hartford MM. John is the model of servant leadership.

Reflecting on Edward, friends noted his remarkable faithfulness, stepping into the job with no knowledge of the enormity of work this position would encounter during his tenure. To the work he has brought a solid faithfulness, consistent grounded-ness, and a deep confidence in the body and the process. Our Yearly Meeting Secretary recognized that he felt delight in anticipation of their regular conference calls, and noted that these clerks have been ministers in their own right. Another Friend reported that upon thanking Edward for his conscientious service, Edward replied quietly, and characteristically: "A life of service is quite satisfying." We have been blessed.

12-84 Friends Home Property Committee: Noting that the work of this group is done (see PB Minute 11-78), **Friends approved** laying down the Ad-hoc Friends Home Property Committee.

12-85 YM Secretary Search Committee: For the Search Committee, Bruce Neumann, Clerk of the YM Secretary Search Committee, reported that although the primary responsibility of the committee was complete with Sessions approval of the new YM secretary, there is a small bit of useful work to be done: reflecting on the process, offering some detail about the process to the Personnel Committee for insertion in the Personnel Policy Manual, and final communication with candidates. The Search Committee will bring a final report to our November Meeting. Friends expressed their appreciation for the Search Committee's work, noting that there has been no recent precedent to guide the process.

12-86 Yearly Meeting Secretary Report: Jonathan Vogel-Borne, YM Secretary, reported that, while the 2012 Sessions were unusually restful from a spiritual vantage, they were the most demanding physically, in recent memory. A remarkable series of medical issues and property damage kept our on-site co-coordinator busier than anticipated.

12-87 Presiding Clerk's Report: Jacqueline Stillwell, YM Presiding Clerk, presented two minutes from Sessions for our approval: one acknowledging the epistles of our other Yearly Meetings in New England, and the Closing worship minute. These minutes were **approved**. A discussion ensued about Memorial Minutes. Friends noted that a number of this year's Memorial Minutes seemed overly long, and that a few of the individuals seemed to have marginal relationship with the YM, which in the past has been a qualification for inclusion. Jan Hoffman agreed to explore the recent trend in Memorial Minutes.

12-88 Internal Nominating Committee: For the Internal Nominating Committee, Donn Weinholtz, Clerk of the Committee reported the following nominations:

- Clerks Nominating: Rosemary Zimmerman (Putney), class of 2015
- Internal Nominating: Robert Murray (Beacon Hill), class of 2015
- YM Nominating: Christopher McCandless (Burlington), at-large member, class of 2014; Connie Kincaid-Brown (Quaker City/Unity), at-large member, class of 2015

Friends approved these nominations.

12-89 Legacy Gift: We continued our discussion (see PB Minutes 12-47 and 12-71) of Permanent Board's role in making a recommendation for the use of the profits from the sale of the New England Friends Home, a sum which we have come to refer as the Legacy Gift. Karen Sanchez-Eppler, with input from other PB members who had been present, reported on an interest group which had been held, during Sessions, seeking input on the question.

Friends **approved** laying down the ad-hoc committee charged with exploring a process for discernment. Friends **approved** formation of a new ad-hoc *Legacy Discernment Committee*, with the longer-range charge of encouraging wide discussion, receiving

ideas and proposals regarding the use of the money, and assisting Permanent Board in its discernment, with the ultimate goal of bringing recommendations to Sessions. Allan Kohrman, Nancy Haines (Wellesley, Clerk of Development Ctte.), and Suzanna Schell (convenor) were **appointed** to this committee. Recognizing conflicting interests of timely recommendations and thorough discernment, we refrained from setting a timetable. We also acknowledge that others may be called to this work, and that through its own discernment, the committee may find a shift in the nature of its work.

We ask the committee to bring, to our November Permanent Board meeting, 1) an intended process for this work, 2) a proposed timeline, and 3) Queries for distribution to the various constituencies, using the following points as a guide for their work:

- 1) The final decision about use for the legacy Gift will rest with Sessions, PB has been asked to discern and make a report.
- 2) Decisions about how to use these funds must arise from discernment that engages people from throughout the Yearly Meeting.
- 3) The process should include deep seasoning from across the YM. Monthly Meetings, Quarterly Meetings, and Committees should be encouraged to reflect and give feedback to Permanent Board, through the ad-hoc Legacy Discernment Committee. Input will be welcome from other discernment groups.
- 4) While it will be useful to begin the conversation with a focus on how we individually and corporately understand the role of money, ideas on how to use the money should grow out of discussion of the question, “What does NEYM need?” The question “What do Quakers in NE need?” may be more meaningful to those in our Monthly Meetings who have no particular relationship with the YM.

12-90 New England Friends Home Memorial Minute: Recalling a suggestion from the floor of Sessions, and recognizing the long history of the Friends Home, we discussed composing a Memorial Minute which would pay tribute to the Home. Ed Mair offered to take the lead in drafting a Memorial Minute.

12-91 Yearly Meeting Structure: Continuing our discussion (see PB minute 12-68) prompted by Nominating Committee’s minute (see PB Minute 12-49) asking us to look at the committee and volunteer structure, we acknowledge that we are being led to form a committee to explore a broad range of structural issues. Lacking time to properly discern the charge for this ad-hoc committee, we refrained from naming the committee, noting that a few friends have expressed interest to the PB Clerk. The Yearly Meeting Presiding Clerk quoted from a recent minute (Session minute 5); “What does God want us to do? How can we structure ourselves so as not to get in the way?” We were encouraged to be deliberate in this process – despite the urgency felt by YM nominating, we sense the importance of understanding the larger picture before suggesting change. Recognizing that various ad-hoc committees have done relevant work in the last decade, Jan Hoffman offered to review some of their reports and, with assistance from Holly Baldwin and Christopher McCandless, will consider how best to make this information available and useful for this on-going work.

12-92 Travel Minute: The Clerk has received the endorsed travel minute for Benigno Sanchez-Eppler’s travels to and within North Pacific Yearly Meeting earlier this

summer. She read several of the 22 messages appended to the minute. We sense that NPYM was deeply appreciative of the presence of our beloved Friend. One Friend suggested that an exploration of the tradition of traveling in the ministry might be a worthy topic for a future edition of the New England Friend.

12-93 Meeting Locations: The clerk spoke of her concern for smaller meetings with minimal participation in the Yearly Meeting, and the prospect that hosting a PB meeting might enhance their understanding and relationship with the YM. John Humphries, Rebecca Leuchak, and Ben Guaraldi will engage in conversation about particular locations, and potential benefits from such visits. Dates for this year's PB meetings will be:

November 17, 2012, Midcoast (tentative)

January 19, 2013, TBD

March 16, TBD

May 11, 2013, TBD

12-94 Quaker Organizations: Donn Weinholtz encouraged us to reflect on the Yearly Meeting's relationship with various Quaker organizations, such as Friends Association of Higher Education. We will revisit this.

12-95 Student Loan Committee: Sessions has asked PB to report on the status of the Student Loan Committee, and make a recommendation about its future. Currently the committee has no members, but we believe there are still outstanding loans. Travis Belcher and Christopher McCandless, both former members of the committee, will do some research in advance of a discussion at a future PB meeting.

12-96 Closing Worship: We closed in worship, with a quiet sense of joy at the movement of the Holy Spirit through the week. God willing, we will meet again on November 17.

Holly Baldwin, Clerk

Bruce Neumann, Recording Clerk