

**Permanent Board Meeting**  
**August 1, 2015**  
**Castelton College, Castleton, Vt**

**1:00 Opening worship**

1. Roll Call
2. Minutes
3. Welcome new members and thank outgoing members
4. Friends Camp legal bill
5. Friends Camp Search Committee update
6. Internal Nominating Committee
7. Puente de Amigos: Delegation to Havana 15th anniversary and to Cuba Yearly Meeting's 115 celebration in November
8. Sessions debrief:
  - a. Public Statements next steps/celebration
  - b. Student Loan celebration & next steps
  - c. LTFPC next steps/celebration
  - d. Structural Review celebration & next steps
  - e. Archives next steps
9. Any last minutes from Sessions
10. Coming year:
  - a. **Ongoing initiatives and sub-committees**
    1. *Structural Review*
    2. *Good Governance of Friends Camp*
    3. *Student Loan*
    4. *MM relationship care*
    5. *PB Policies review*
    6. *Personnel*
    7. *Internal Nominating*
    8. *Clerks Nominating*
    9. *Those visiting Mattapoisset Friends*
    10. *By-laws revision*
  - b. **Upcoming Meetings:**  
*September 26, 2015*  
*November 21, 2015*  
*February 20, 2016*  
*May 21, 2016*

## **New England Yearly Meeting of Friends**

### **Permanent Board Minutes (draft)**

**August 1, 2015**

**Castleton College, Castleton, Vermont**

**15-49 Opening Worship:** Permanent Board Friends met in worship at Castleton College in anticipation of 2015 Sessions.

**15-50 Clerk:** Acting clerk Edward Baker introduced himself and reminded us that Holly Baldwin was at memorial service. Friends approved Edward acting as clerk for this meeting.

**15-51 Roll call:** The recording clerk called the roll:

**15-52 Minutes:** We considered the minutes from our May 9 meeting. With a few changes, the minutes were approved.

**15-53 Presiding Clerk Report:** Jacqueline Stillwell shared her excitement about the coming week; she feels full of wonder and mystery to see what unfolds.

We heard that the Bloody Tenent sold for \$175k, of which NEYM will receive \$128,800. C&A considered this windfall and offered the following minute:

We have sold the Bloody Tenent, a rare old book discovered in our archives, and have received \$128,000 from its sale. PB directs that this money be tracked separately until the future of our archives and future expenses related to the archives are clear. Friends approved this recommendation.

Jackie spoke about a recommendation which will come to Sessions. The clerks of FUM, FGC, and FWCC committees got together to consider how NEYM's allotment for these groups should be divided. Current practice uses a formula created in 19xx. The clerks agreed to recommend that the pool, approved each year in the budget, should be divided evenly.

In considering our time together, Jackie reflected that the agenda is usually focussed on the organization. She felt a yearning for the body to hear about our witness, about what individuals and groups are doing. In an effort to create balance, she invited two panels to share about their work. One will be on work around climate change, the other on creating Gospel order.

**15-54 YM Secretary:** Noah reported that the NEYM Sessions Staff relocated to Castleton on Tuesday. We understand that, due to the parade and football game, Castleton staff will be helping to direct people. Registration hours have been adjusted and expanded to accommodate a variety of arrival times.

We heard about a few changes this year, including an attempt to make the Campus Center be a center of connection and fellowship, similar to the role the Unistrukture played at Bryant. A gender inclusivity working group was gathered to consider how we might be more aware and welcoming of Friends who do not fit in the old binary gender model. They suggested allowing Friends to designate their preferred pronouns on their name tags, having gender-neutral bathrooms, and including gender awareness training for Anchor Group facilitators.

**15-55 Structural Review:** Lisa Graustein spoke for the Structural Review committee which was charged with looking at committee and staff structure. She pointed out that while the size and diversity of the committee provided a wide range of experience and viewpoints, the geographical distance and the group dynamics of this particular group both proved to be challenges. The group came to three points of clarity if not unity, and would like to present the following points to sessions for seasoning:

\*MM need more support. Some support is available but not widely known about, while the committee feels that other supports are not available. The committee proposes increasing resources for monthly meetings, which should include both communication and outreach.

\*Referring back to the Nominating minute which set this work in motion, the Structural Review Committee would like to see YM nominating be able to focus on gifts and leadership. They suggest putting similar committees in three clusters: Administrative, Pastoral Care, and Witness. Lisa presented this idea at committee day, and was encouraged that many found it exciting. Increased communication between committees within a cluster would allow them to discuss what roles and responsibilities need to go on in perpetuity, which ones can be done by a working group, and which ones can be done by resource people, with a shorter commitment. The cluster structure could form working groups for specific issues.

\*Structural Review repeatedly heard that people want more time to get together to know each other, yet August Sessions are not possible for some, and for others, business is not an effective entry point. We need opportunities for gatherings whose focus would be worship, spiritual growth, and community building.

When the committee did not discuss their future to any consensus, Lisa personally recommends laying the committee down. While they have done some good work in information gathering and imagining a new structure, she feels that the committee is dysfunctional. Perhaps we should appoint three working groups to carry on the work of the three issues.

Finally, she pointed to a non-structural issue which the committee recognized early in their work, and call the "culture" of Quakerism in New England. We are not friendly, we are not always nice, or welcoming. We can change that. Changing the structure will change nothing unless we change culture. Lisa shared the analogy of deck chairs on the

Titanic: changing the structure without addressing "culture" is as effective as rearranging deck chairs as the ship is going down.

Friends agreed that while laying the committee down may be the next step, we should wait until we hear what the body reflects after the Structural Review presentation. This fall, PB can discern how this work should be carried forward.

The clerk expressed thanks to Lisa and the committee on behalf of PB.

**15-56 Long term financial planning:** Chiris Gant, clerk of LTFP reflected That he feels like we are on the verge of something big.

He began with a brief review of their history (PB minutes xx,yy,zz), then spoke about the five themes they intend to present to Sessions:

Spiritual development

Outreach, including engaging with the world, witnessing, and welcoming those who come as a result.

Leadership: we yearn for leaders to help us accomplish the things we wish we were doing. How do we cultivate and develop leaders?

Accountability and integrity. Let's do what we say.

Relationship and communication. Friends want to meet, want to know what's going on with others. How do we share best practices? The YM organization is not good at letting meetings know what help is available.

Chris believes we can do a lot without spending money, by prioritizing differently.

The committee is looking for affirmation that they are going in the right direction, and that Friends agree with their sense that the purpose of the Yearly Meeting is not to build itself, but is to help MM be more effective at what they do.

The underlying theme is that we have a wonderful thing, let's be proud of it and share it.

One Friend reminded us of our (PB) role during sessions: we need to be knowledgeable and helpful, since we are more familiar than most with this work. He pointed to the potential for confusion, in the distinction between the mission and goals of the NEYM the organization, and of NEYM the "people"

**15-57 Student Loan repurposing:** Rebecca Leuchak spoke for the ad hoc committee which has been discerning the future of student Loan funds. We were reminded that their proposal suggests using funds currently allocated to student loans, to provide grants for post-secondary education. The money would be spent down over several years, providing grants in a maximum amount of 2k. the grant program would be administered by a named subcommittee of PB.

One Friend on this ad-hoc committee pointed out that our previous decision to discontinue accrual of interest did not make it into the advance docs. This should be announced during the verbal report.

**15-58 Legacy Gift:** Regarding the Legacy Gift Committee which will administer the new grant programs, we were reminded that we had previously taken three ex officio members off the proposal for this committee, noting that they are already busy Friends. Further reflection suggests that it would be important for these Friends to be aware of and affiliated to this work, even if they are not required to attend. Friends Approved adding YM secretary, Presiding Clerk, and PB Clerk as ex officio members of the Legacy Gift Committee.

**15-59 Personnel:** For the personnel committee, Bob Murray presents the names of Noah Baker Merrill for reappointment as Yearly meeting secretary, and Nat Shed for reappointment as Friends Camp director. Friends approved Bringing these names to sessions for final approval.

Bob also presented several changes to the Personnel policy manual, noting that more significant changes are likely in the future.

\*A more detailed description of the search process for a new Friends Camp Director, and a procedure for appointing an interim director if needed.

\*A provision requiring that Personnel files be locked and accessible only by the YM Secretary.

\* A change putting the YM secretary in charge of initiating discussions about salary range with YM personnel

Friends requested clarification about the timing of PB approval of an acting camp director. Bob will modify the language to make it clear that PB approval is not required before an acting director can begin their work.

Several Friends suggested that a former camper should be part of search committee. Bob reminded us that this concern can be added in later revisions. Friends approved the changes with adjustments.

**15-60 Finance Committee:** For the Finance Committee, Shearman Taber presented two policy changes for our consideration. The first is a revision to current policy for line item overruns, the purpose of which is to not have to come to PB for minor changes. Friends approved this change.

The second is a change to the grant application policy, which would revise a policy approved in 1991. The change moves oversight of grant applications from the finance Committee to the YM secretary and raises the level which requires PB approval to 10k.

Suzanna Schell, clerk of the Legacy Gift Committee, asked for clarification on whether this includes legacy gift applications. We understand that that is not the intent of the policy change, and that language will be added to the policy making clear that this is for application to "outside bodies" Friends approved this policy change.

**15-61 Travel minute:** The clerk presented a travel minute for Beth Gorton. Friends approved endorsing this minute.

**15-62 Friends camp search committee.** The ad hoc comm charged with naming a search committee for a new Friends Camp Director brought the names of Edward baker, Maggie Fogarty, Michael Griffin, David Marstaller, and Lise Wagner.

Friends voiced the wish that a recent former camper be involved. Friends approved this committee, and giving that committee authority to add new members. If needed, such additions would be reported to the next PB.

**15-63 Tax and legal issues:** Noah presented two issues for our consideration, one involving difficulties arising from the Friends Camp and the rest of NEYM using different payroll services while one NEYM employee is a resident of Maine. Noah requests authorization to transition to a single payroll provider, including CPA expenses which may require anntnnt overrun of contractual services. Friends Approved. We also understand that some questions have arisen regarding multiple MM's using the NEYM Employer Identification Number (EIN). Noah requested authority to engage a CPA to help resolve these questions and allow us to give clear advice to MM about such issues. Friends approved.

**15-64 Friends camp mortgage elimination and tax exempt status:** Noah reported on Nat sheds efforts to incorporate the recently purchased waterfront property and cottage as part of the tax exempt larger property of the camp. Significant legal work was involved in bringing this about. We also heard from Nat that he understood that the YM would fund these legal expenses.

We thank Friends Camp for doing the work of transitioning to tax exempt status, and for engaging legal services for this process. What remains is an accounting question: should the funds come from the 100k legacy gift grant, from YM reserves, or from the Friends Camp budget.

While some Friends feel that legal expenses of the camp should be covered by the YM, others felt that in this case, expenses related to transitioning this property to tax exempt status should be covered by the 100k grant from the legacy gift.

While the camp has paid the bill, we understand that no one wants an unbudgeted legal expense affecting their bottom line.

We look forward to the continuing Discernment of the Friends Camp Committee on Good Governance for guidance on a better understanding of the legal and financial relationships of the Camp and NEYM as a whole.

We ask Ben Guaraldi and Elias Sanchez Eppler to speak with Nat Shed this week in hopes of finding a resolution to this accounting question.

**15-65 Closing Worship:** We closed in worship excited at the prospect of our coming days in Spiritual community, and pursuing to meet again at the close of Sessions.

**Internal Nominating Committee  
Report to Permanent Board  
August 2015**

Currently, Internal Nominating Committee is submitting three names for approval by Permanent Board. They are:

**Marion Athern** - Clerks Nominating Committee Class of 2018

**Donn Weinholtz** – Clerks Nominating Class of 2017

**Marian Baker**– YM Nominating Committee Class of 2018

All current appointments are included in the attached table.

The committee has several offers pending. Some individuals may accept appointments during Sessions. If so, their names will be brought forward at the Permanent Board meeting immediately following Sessions.

Also, Internal Nominating requests some clarification regarding finding appointees to inhabit the Ad. Hoc Scholarship Disbursement Committee. (Sorry if I butchered the name.) How many people are needed, and by when?

As I will be in Rwanda teaching Help Increase the Peace skills during Sessions, **Carolyn Stone** will present the Internal Nominating Committee report.

Wishing you all a wonderful Sessions.

Warmly,

Donn Weinholtz  
Clerk – Internal Nominating Committee

P.S. The table that we have submitted will have to be updated to accurately reflect recent changes in the Permanent Board assignments.