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Permanent Board Meeting Held Over Zoom Video Conference July 11, 2020

20-53: Opening Worship

Friends opened with a period of worship.

20-54: Role Call

The recording clerk called the role:

Present: Leslie Manning, Clerk; Hannah Zwirner Forsythe, Recording Clerk; Travis Belcher, Peter Bishop, Martin Zwirner Forsythe, Chris Gant, Ben Guaraldi, Ian Harrington, Rebecca Leuchak, Ed Mair, Christopher McCandless, Jean McCandless, Gina Nortonsmith, Anna Raddochia, Carole Rein, John Reuthe, Martha Schwope, Sara Smith, Will Taber, Bill Walkauskas, Tom Vargo, Mary Zwirner

Ex Officio: Noah Merrill (Secretary); Bob Murray (Finance Clerk); Bruce Neumann (Presiding Clerk); Elizabeth Reuthe (Secretary's Supervisor); Shearman Taber (Treasurer)

Visitors: Clarence Burley, Marian Dalton, Sophie Forsythe, Sarah Gant, Lisa Graustein, Beth Hansen, Janet Hough, LouAnne MacDonald, Frederick Martin, Phebe McCosker, Jane Griswold Radocchia, Jackie Stillwell, Nia Thomas, Morgan Wilson, Honor Woodrow, Kathleen Wooten, Rod Zwirner

Regrets: Fritz Weiss (Former Presiding Clerk); Deana Chase, Darcy Drayton, Kim Harvey Garcia, Elizabeth Szatkowski

20-55: Minutes

Minutes from the Permanent Board's June 6th meeting were circulated in the advanced documents for Friends' comments and questions.

Friends approved the June 6th minutes.

20-56: Nominating Committee Report

Jackie Stillwell, clerk of Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee (NC), shared a brief update from that committee. Her written report is appended. When the COVID-19 pandemic began NC chose to focus their attention on a smaller number of essential roles and committees in light of the short supply of energy. Members of NC checked in with committees about what they were

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specifically in need of and responded to those requests. The full slate of nominations to Yearly Meeting committees is appended.

Friends approved the slate of nominations.

Leslie Manning, clerk of the Permanent Board, acknowledged that Honor Woodrow's service as clerk of Ministry and Counsel will end at the close of Sessions 2020. Leslie thanked Honor for her service to the Yearly Meeting in this role and requested that the Recording Clerk write a minute of appreciation for her contributions.

20-57: Minute of Appreciation

Members of the Permanent Board recognize the deeply faithful work that Honor Woodrow has contributed as clerk and recording clerk of Ministry and Counsel. During her term as clerk the Yearly Meeting has wrestled with the form and function of Ministry and Counsel and struggled with maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of spiritual life that our members so deeply desire. Throughout this Honor has been a steadfast listener and an authentic communicator of the truth. We are grateful for the integrity and dedication that Honor has shown and in awe of the unwavering love that Honor has for our community.

20-58: Nomination of New Treasurer

Jackie Stillwell, clerk of the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee, brought the nomination of Robert Murray for the role of Yearly Meeting Treasurer, to begin at the close of Sessions 2020.

Friends approved this nomination.

Leslie Manning, Clerk, thanked Shearman Taber for his service as Treasurer and requested the writing of a minute in appreciation of Shearman's contributions to the Yearly Meeting.

20-59: Minute of Appreciation

Friends of the Permanent Board note with great appreciation the service of Shearman Taber. Shearman has given careful attention to the financial concerns of the Yearly Meeting, serving for many years as treasurer. To this work he has brought a well ordered balance between spiritual visioning and practical concerns, and helped us to find our way faithfully. We give thanks to God for Shearman's willingness to serve Friends in New England.

20-60: Internal Nominating Report

Will Taber, clerk of Internal Nominating, shared the slate from that committee.

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Dawn Tripp for Yearly Meeting Nominating at Large, Class of 2023

Elizabeth Reuthe renominated as Supervisor to the YM Secretary, Class of 2023

Friends approved these nominations.

Will informed Friends that Betsy Kantt has resigned from the Permanent Board.

Will noted that with the completion of his term on Internal Nominating, Allan Kohrman has decided to step back from service on Yearly Meeting committees. Will and Leslie Manning, Clerk, thanked Allan for his years of dedicated service and asked for a minute of appreciation to be written.

20-61: Minute of Appreciation

Insert minute of appreciation for Allan Kohrman

20-62: Clerks Table Nominating

Ed Mair, member of Clerks Table Nominating, brought the nomination of Gordon Peters for the role of reading clerk, class of 2023.

Friends approved.

20-63: Budget Process

Robert Murray, clerk of the Finance Committee (FC), informed the board about a change to the process for approving the FY2021 budget. Typically the budget is approved at Sessions but in order to reserve our limited time at Sessions for programming, the budget will come to the September meeting of the Permanent Board. The FC will hold a number of listening sessions between Sessions and the September meeting so that the wider body has an opportunity to ask questions, and express comments and concerns.

20-64: Treasurer's Report

Shearman Taber, Treasurer, spoke to his written report, which is appended. In his report Shearman expressed significant concerns about the current financial situation and the wider economy in general. Friends had the opportunity to share questions and concerns.

20-65: Bank Letters and Resolutions

Bob Murray, clerk of the Finance Committee, brought forward bank letters and resolutions for Friends approval. These are typically approved by the body at Sessions but the Permanent

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Board is approving them this year to avoid extra items on the agenda during our virtual Sessions.

The following resolutions are brought by the Finance Committee:

1. That Robert Murray be appointed New England Yearly Meeting treasurer for the ensuing year or until a successor is appointed and qualified.
2. That Robert M. Spivey be appointed Friends Camp treasurer for the ensuing year or until a successor is appointed and qualified.
3. That Robert Murray, Yearly Meeting treasurer; and Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting secretary; be individually authorized to open and close bank accounts in the name of New England Yearly Meeting as needed.
4. That Robert M. Spivey, Friends Camp treasurer; and Anna Hopkins, Friends Camp director, be individually authorized to open and close bank accounts in the name of Friends Camp as needed.
5. That Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting secretary; Robert Murray, New England Yearly Meeting treasurer; and Bruce Neumann, presiding clerk, be designated as alternate signers, individually, of all bank accounts of New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, except those checks for greater than \$10,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.
6. That Anna Hopkins, Friends Camp director; Robert M. Spivey, Friends Camp treasurer; and John Reuthe, Friends Camp Committee clerk, be authorized, individually, as signers of the Friends Camp bank accounts, except those checks for greater than \$10,000, which shall require the signatures of two signers from the list above.

Friends approved the bank letters and resolutions.

20-66: Comment from the Secretary on Finances

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, shared his take on the current Yearly Meeting (YM) financial situation. We are slightly behind on individual giving, but Noah does not feel that we are facing an unprecedented deficit. The decision was made this spring to not send out a spring appeal letter for donations in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its financial repercussions for individuals and families. We will have more information about the YM financial situation after the appeal letter goes out and after we know about Sessions registration.

The Finance Committee is prepared to revise the FY2021 budget, as necessary, before the September meeting. Care and caution is good, but we haven't seen dramatic changes in giving that causes significant concern, and our current deficit is not substantially larger than other years.

20-67: Sessions Update

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Bruce Neumann, Presiding Clerk, shared a brief update on the planning for Sessions. His report is appended. Bruce has spent a lot of time in discernment about how we can best use our time together at Sessions. As the uprisings in support of racial justice have swelled across the country this summer it became clear to Bruce that our limited Sessions time should be focused on the anti-racism work being done in our meetings and communities. The specifics of the week are still being determined but Friends affirmed this direction for the week.

20-68: Apology Letter to Native Americans

At our June meeting a proposed letter of apology to Native Americans was discussed. Friends had numerous comments and concerns about the letter and requested that a new draft be brought to this meeting. That draft is appended.

Friends expressed concern that the revised draft of this letter did not reflect the recommendations made at June's meeting. This current draft centers us and not the pain that we have caused.

Facing a lack of unity with the current letter, it was proposed that the Reparations Working Group work with Sara Smith, Peter Bishop, Martha Schwope, and other interested individuals, on a further revision of the letter of apology with the goal of finalizing a letter at a separate meeting prior to Sessions. They will meet by July 25th.

Friends approved of this path forward.

20-69: Secretary's Report

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, reflected on the ways the Yearly Meeting has been working to connect and support Friends.

How can the heart of our tradition be lived out today? We will be new people after this pandemic; we are being changed both as individuals and as a society of Friends. We don't have to wait until we've arrived in the new place to live as if the truth is true. We have the opportunity to live into the current changes even if where we are isn't where we will eventually be.

20-70: Land Swap

Noah Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary, shared a proposal from the Lincoln School in Providence, RI, to swap a small piece of unusable land with the city of Providence for an equivalent amount of land that the city owns. This proposal comes to the Permanent Board because New England Yearly Meeting owns the land on which the Lincoln School sits. The details of the land swap are in the appended proposal.

Friends had the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the proposal.

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Friends approved the proposed land swap.

20-71: Friends Camp Budget

Anna Hopkins, Friends Camp Director, brought the first quarter budget for Friends Camp to the Permanent Board for approval. The proposed budget is appended. Because of the pandemic Anna and the camp committee have proposed a slightly different budget proposal timeline for FY2021. We anticipate receiving a proposed budget for the remainder of FY2021 at a later meeting.

Friends approved the proposed budget for the first quarter of FY2021.

20-72: Report from Ministry and Spiritual Life Work Group

Sarah Gant, clerk of the Ministry and Spiritual Life Working Group, spoke to the written report from that group. That report is appended. This working group anticipates reporting to the Permanent Board this fall.

20-73: Resources Supporting Volunteer Leadership

Nia Thomas, Quaker Practice and Leadership Facilitator, presented a draft charge for a working group to examine resources to support volunteer leadership. The request for this working group comes out of the approved recommendations from Sessions 2019 to address inclusive leadership development.

This working group is asked to explore how NEYM might responsibly and consistently reduce financial barriers to our most essential volunteer leadership roles, specifically Presiding Clerk, Clerk of the Permanent Board, Clerk of Ministry & Counsel, and Treasurer. They will report to the Permanent Board at the end of October.

Friends were asked to approve the creation of this group, giving Leslie the authority to name its members.

Friends approved.

We are reminded that barriers to leadership don't just arise when someone is being asked to take on a leadership role. There are barriers to participation in the Yearly Meeting which make certain people less likely to be noticed as potential leaders. Who would benefit from changes to barriers to leadership? Let's focus this work on specific people.

20-74: Travel Minute

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Sarah Gant, a member of Lisa Graustein's support committee, read a travel minute for Lisa's work with Niyonu Spann to "co-facilitate a two-year collaboration with US and Canadian Friends to develop a racial-justice consultation/training program for Friends".

Friends approved Lisa's travel minute. We look forward to hearing from Lisa and her organizational partners about this important work.

20-75: Israel/Palestine Working Group

Leslie Manning, Clerk, reminded Friends that we, the Permanent Board (PB), are charged with doing the work of Sessions. At Sessions 2017 the body approved a minute naming our concern with the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine. Carl Williams, clerk of Northwest Quarter brought a concern and request from that quarter that Sessions, and the PB as its representatives, reaffirm the 2017 minute and appoint a working group to discern future actions for the Yearly Meeting (YM). The recommended proposal is appended.

Friends expressed concerns about whether this is work that we are actually engaged with corporately. There are additional concerns about how this group interacts with and is related to the current self-appointed working group whose relationship with the YM has been complicated.

Friends approved this working group to be carefully overseen by C&A.

20-74: Memorial Minutes

Throughout the meeting we heard excerpts from the memorial for Mary Manglesdorf, Paul Manglesdorf, Greg Williams.

Friends approved forwarding the memorial minutes to Sessions.

20-75: Closing Worship

Friends closed with a period of worship. We will meet again on September 19th.