

## NEYM Nominating Committee Report to Permanent Board

15 July 2025

In order to begin sessions in a timely way with a complete Clerk's Table, we are bringing forward two names for **first reading** in this document. Because of the timing, both these Friends have graciously been meeting with the Clerk's Table to support preparation for sessions in August. We look forward to the called Permanent Board meeting on 29 July when names will come forward for a second reading. Please contact me immediately with any concerns.\*

### Sessions Recording Clerk

**Current situation:** *This is the final year of our current Presiding Clerk, and the Rising Presiding Clerk began the transition in August 2024. The other Recording Clerk is serving in her third/final year. There will be an Interim Reading Clerk this year. This year will be an exciting opportunity to transition and prepare for something new as we revision how we will gather for annual sessions in 2026.*

#### **Description of Service for the Sessions Recording Clerk:**

*The heart of the recording clerk's job is to write minutes which record the sense of the meeting on items considered in meetings for business at Yearly Meeting. First and foremost, this means recording decisions clearly and accurately, with enough background and detail to make the decision and its implications intelligible to a Friend not present — including Friends in the future. The recording clerk should be comfortable with word-processing and telecommunications (email and using the Web). This person should know Faith and Practice well, and be experienced with Friends' business practices; it is best that this person have some experience with Yearly Meeting committees, and have attended Yearly Meeting business sessions for several years.*

*See the approved **Role Description** [here](#).*

#### **Gifts and Skills hoped for in the Friend serving in this role:**

- *Experience with recording in a meeting for business in Friends tradition*
- *The ability to listen beyond the words that have been said, and to move from summarizing what individuals have shared to the crafting of a minute that conveys the sense of the body.*
- *The ability to work as part of a team, and openness to feedback and discussion as part of the minute writing process.*
- *Depth of knowledge of the current state of the Yearly Meeting (including recent business, and decisions that have been made) and a willingness to contribute to the clerk's discernment about the agenda for Annual Sessions.*
- *Willingness to communicate with the clerk and to ask for help (from the clerk or from the body) when needed while writing the minutes.*
- *Comfort with pausing to listen for how the Spirit is moving, and the ability to stay grounded when difficult issues arise, when Friends express strong emotions, or when things feel tense.*

### **Sessions Recording Clerk – Mark Conley, Providence Friends Meeting, to begin immediately**

Mark became a member of the Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting when he was an undergraduate student. By his senior year, he had served as the meeting's clerk for two years and had been the registrar for Illinois YM. He transferred to Ann Arbor MM while doing graduate studies there and served as the resident staff of the monthly meeting. Later moving to Rhode Island, he transferred his membership to Providence. At Providence MM he has served as clerk as well as on Ministry and Counsel, Religious Education and Peace and Social

Concerns committees. Additionally, Mark has twice served as local arrangements coordinator of FGC gatherings: once in Grinnell, IA and once in Kingston, RI.

Professionally, Mark is the Chair of the Music Dept, Univ of RI. You may remember hearing him sing the role of George Fox in the oratorio "Fire and the Hammer" at NEYM (2011) and FGC (2012).

### **Interim Sessions Reading Clerk**

**Current situation:** *This year we have a situation that calls us to find new ways to support someone who is called to serve. Nominating Committee had a very strong leading about whom to ask to serve as our next Sessions Reading Clerk. This person, Sarah Bickel (Bhil) felt called to serve but is not able to begin until after sessions this year. An Interim Reading Clerk would serve this year and make it possible for Sarah to serve faithfully in the future.*

#### **Description of Service for the Interim Reading Clerk:**

- *Reading materials [epistles, announcements, etc.] to the gathered body at Annual Sessions.*
- *Serving as part of the "Clerks' Table" team, which consists of the Presiding Clerk, two Recording Clerks, and two Reading Clerks.*
- *As a part of the Clerk's Table team, the Reading Clerks contribute to the formation of the agenda for Annual Sessions, and serve as a sounding board for the Presiding Clerk in their discernment leading up to Annual Sessions.*
- *The time commitment for this interim role is several months. The bulk of the work of the reading clerk happens spring and summer months (June-August).*

#### **Gifts and Skills hoped for in the Friend serving in this role:**

- *Ability to read and articulate clearly*
- *Ability to be and model a prayerful presence during business sessions*
- *Good listener; welcoming presence; clear boundaries*
- *Capacity to engage with, and redirect Friends at the rise of the business sessions, in order to create space for the Presiding and Recording Clerks when the Session is over.*
- *Knowledge of the yearly meeting and current concerns to inform conversations about shaping the agenda.*
- *Ability to see how what's happening in the business meeting fits in the larger picture of the yearly meeting.*
- *Ability to work well with the other members of the Clerks' Table; be a team player.*

### **Interim Reading Clerk – Beth Bussier-Nichols, Portland Friends Meeting, to begin immediately**

Beth is a spiritually grounded and well-seasoned Friend, familiar with the yearly meeting at many levels, and an excellent former Sessions Reading Clerk.

Faithfully,  
Jacqueline Stillwell  
Clerk, NEYM Nominating Committee  
(603)933-2608 or [nomclerk@neym.org](mailto:nomclerk@neym.org)

Nominating Committee members: Sara Smith (Concord), Beth Hansen (Westerly), Chris Gant (Beacon Hill), Tim Lamm (Worcester), Martha Schwoppe (Wellesley), Leslie Manning (Durham), Sadie Forsythe (Putney)

\* The process for approving nominations by Permanent Board during the year is to send *first readings* in a written report a week or so in advance of the Permanent Board meeting. Any concerns, questions or affirmations should be communicated immediately to the Nominating Committee clerk. The clerk will follow-up with a nominee to share concerns without naming who brought them forward. The focus will be on the concerns and how they may be addressed. Depending on the outcome of this exchange, the nominee will either be brought forward for second reading, or withdrawn from the nomination. Depending on the situation, there may be a brief mention of the concerns and response.