

New York Quarterly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends

14th of Seventh Month 2007, 1:00 p.m.

Meeting at Friends Cemetery, Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York

Present: Nancy Black (B), Clerk; Andy von Salis (B), Assistant Clerk; Mary Alexander (Germantown [Pa] MM), Beverly Archibald (Ma), Dulcie D. Barlow (B), Ahmet Baydur (NYQM General Manager), Michael Black (B), Charles Brainard (15), Linda Hill Brainard (15), David Britton (Mo), Nancy Britton (Mo), Sally Campbell (Mo), Patricia Chernoff (Mo), Margery Cornwell (15), JoAnne Dally (15), Miguel Davis-Dacio (Mo), Melvin Dennis (15), Del Eberhardt (SI), Mary Eberhardt (SI), Ted Ehrhardt (B), Charlotte Ehrman (Mo), Ed Elder (Mo), Tom English (F), Elizabeth Enloe (15), Patricia Frascatore (15), Elizabeth Gilmore (B), Naomi Paz Greenberg (F), Maureen Healy (15), Marna Herrity (B), Katherine Ch'iu Hinton (Mo), Carol Jackson (15), Chris Japely (15), Sheila Leeds (B), Corona Machemer (Mo), Jim Morgan (B), Mararet Mulindi (Ma), Sheila O'Hara (B), Lorcan Otway (15), Elizabeth Powers (B), Tom Rothschild (B), Mary Rusnak (B), Ingrid Schwarzkopf (B), Robert Segal (Friends Seminary Committee), Steve Smith (15), Janet Soderberg (15), Suzanne Stout (15), Carol Summar (15).

Totals: Brooklyn 14, Fifteenth St. 15, Flushing 2, Manhattan 2, Morningside 9, Staten Island 2, others 3; total 47.

2007.07.01 The meeting commences in silence at approximately 1:00 p.m. The Clerk reads a passage from page 50 of New York Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice regarding active nonviolence in our lives. Nancy Black, beginning her first term as our Clerk, introduces herself and offers an agenda. The agenda is approved.

2007.07.02 We hear the periodic reports of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting, Flushing Monthly Meeting, Manhattan Monthly Meeting, Morningside Monthly Meeting, Staten Island Executive Meeting, and Downtown Manhattan Allowed Meeting.

Staten Island Meeting has been continuing to support the Arthur Kill Worship Group, but its ongoing concerns include a delay of over 8 months in gaining entry of new Quarterly Meeting members to the prison.

The reports are accepted.

2007.07.03 The Clerk introduces the current business of our Handbook Revision Committee, which is presented by its Clerk, Mary Eberhardt. This Spring, a revised draft was circulated; more copies are now made available. With very few exceptions, it includes only an improved description of the Quarterly Meeting's committees and operations, rather than any new procedures. Comments and suggestions have already been received, and the Committee now presents a four-page chart of those that it recommends to us. Yet another correction is to state the name of our corporation as "New York Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends."

Each section's changes are considered in order, and its proposed revisions are approved.

Some additional changes are discussed on the floor, and Friends decide as follows:

- The new introduction that precedes the first Committee description will read: “The conduct of Quarterly Meeting affairs in accordance with decisions of the Quarterly Meeting is assigned to the following committees:”
- The “Purpose” of the Audit and Budget Committee is restated, after discussion, as: “The Audit and Budget Committee is responsible for monitoring, assessing and providing oversight of, the financial management practices, budgeting, and accounting and bookkeeping operations of the Quarterly Meeting.”
- The Cemetery Committee’s description will not have numbered categories of responsibilities, but only a single list of its responsibilities.
- No term limit for a Nominating Committee appointee will be determined now, but Friends are open to considering a recommendation that may be prepared for us at a later time.
- In the Relief Committee’s description, “Responsibilities” 1(c) is rephrased to read: “Requests by regular attenders who are not members will be considered;”
- In the Trustees’ description, the word “moral” is deleted from “Responsibilities” item 8; and the last sentence of “Purpose” will read: “They are bound by all instructions of the Quarterly Meeting that are consistent with the Religious Corporations Law of New York State, except where such laws conflict with Quaker principles.”

Repeated concern is expressed that various Handbook language not purport to require Friends to act regardless of their practical limitations or contrary to their conscience and principles. A quotation attributed to Mary Dyer is added to conclude the body of the Handbook: “Truth is my authority, not some authority my truth”

2007.07.04 The Handbook Committee reads and distributes copies of a proposed procedure for future Handbook revisions. After consideration of the need for the standing position of appointed Handbook Coordinator, the proposal is approved.

2007.07.05 The Handbook Committee, having completed its work, is laid down.

2007.04.06 Upon our returning from a break, the Clerk reads a passage on the effect of individuals’ faithfulness and love on the Meeting, from “Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends,” published by Friends United Press in 1960, #282.

2007.07.07 The Nominating Committee reports the name of Mary Eberhardt to fill the newly created and described position of Handbook Coordinator for a two-year term expiring April 2009. The report is accepted and the nomination is approved.

2007.07.08 The Audit and Budget Committee reports orally that the 2006 Audit is completed except for two items of concern to our auditors: our receivables and any possible liability of the Quarterly Meeting for loans assumed by Friends Seminary. These are expected to be resolved soon. Meanwhile, a preliminary statement of 2007 operations through May is distributed for our review, as requested at our called meeting on February 18, 2007. Committee clerk Jim Morgan explains certain aberrational line items. He concludes that our present fiscal position is very good.

2007.07.09 The following minute from Fifteenth Street Meeting, regarding its concern for peace with the earth itself, is read. Friends approve Fifteenth Street Meeting's minute, and its request that we forward the minute to New York Yearly Meeting:

As members of the Religious Society of Friends, we have witnessed for peace for almost 350 years. Over that time, our witness has grown and widened; we have worked for the end of war, for the end of the African slave trade, for equality for women, civil rights for African Americans, human rights around the world.

Now we are led to widen our witness again to work for peace between humans and the whole earth community. Our culture has considered the earth our property to be exploited, and we have all, knowingly and unknowingly, been complicit in this violent appropriation of world resources. We must now search for the seeds of this war in our possessions and our lives and work to nurture a new, mutual relationship with the earth in all of our actions.

In our 1660 peace declaration we declared, "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever: this is our testimony to the whole world." That statement is still true, but its meaning has deepened beyond what those early Quakers would have understood. Let us now work to nurture peace on earth and peace with the earth.

2007.07.10 Suzanne Stout, Clerk of the Cemetery Committee, reads and comments on its report, of which copies are made available. Numerous initiatives of the committee are described, and Friends are encouraged to make greater use of the Cemetery in several suggested ways. The report is accepted.

2007.07.11 The Educational Concerns Committee established earlier this year submits an initial report. Lorcan Otway, as clerk, answers questions and offers further information about the Committee's work. The report is accepted. Friends clarify that the Committee is free to consult with others, including our Schools Committees, on its recommendations, and is encouraged to do so.

2007.07.12 The content of a recent letter to our Clerk and Trustees, in which the Friends Seminary Committee discusses its decisions regarding the recent naming of a Friends Seminary building, is explained by the Committee's clerk, Elizabeth Enloe. A four-page report to us from an "Ad Hoc Group of 15th Street Monthly Meeting with a Concern for the Friends Seminary School Committee" who are troubled by the process of naming the building, which includes four specific proposed Quarterly Meeting actions, has also been distributed among us.

After numerous expressions of concern, we determine that these communications need to be digested by Friends, discussed between the Friends Seminary Committee and the *ad hoc* group of concerned Friends, and perhaps considered by our Educational Concerns Committee, before we can proceed. We encourage each of these parties to meet worshipfully and seekingly with each other before our next quarterly meeting.

2007.07.13 The Great Lakes Region (Africa) Education Committee presents its report, and shows photographs of children at Kisangura Friends School enjoying the fruits of the support raised. Delivery of the raised funds is now effective and secure. Friends accept the report.

2007.07.14 The Committee for Ministry and Counsel distributes its interim progress report, as corrected, regarding development of our web site and e-mail list. The Committee asks us to authorize our clerks and our committees to post their work as they see fit. Friends approve. The Committee asks that Quarterly Meeting authorize our monthly meetings' directories to be used in the development and testing of a Quarterly Meeting e-mail management system. The proposed e-mail opt-out system is explained. Friends approve.

2007.07.15 Mary Rusnak, Clerk of our Trustees, presents an interim report in which Trustees address their newly approved Conflict of Interest Policy for themselves. It also explains Trustees' ongoing study of the long-term financial future of the Quarterly Meeting, including ways of increasing stability, security, and sources of financial support. The Trustees welcome Friends' inquiries and suggestions going forward. The report is accepted.

2007.07.16 We receive word that the New York Yearly Meeting subcommittee on representative meetings has approved accepting our invitation to hold Yearly Meeting's Fall Sessions at Flushing meetinghouse in an upcoming year, and they have selected Fall 2010 as the occasion.

2007.07.17 Friends conclude in buoyant worship at 6:00 p.m.

Andrew Mead von Salis,
Recording clerk 10/15/2007

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Quarterly reports from the following:
 - Brooklyn Monthly Meeting
 - Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting
 - Flushing Monthly Meeting
 - Manhattan Monthly Meeting
 - Morningside Monthly Meeting
 - Staten Island Executive Meeting
- Annual report of the Downtown Manhattan Allowed Meeting Committee
- Handbook Committee report, including full text of re-drafted Handbook
- Handbook Committee's proposed further amendments to Handbook
- Handbook Committee's proposed minute on future Handbook revisions
- Nomination for new position of Handbook Coordinator
- Preliminary Statement of 2007 financial operations
- Fifteenth Street Meeting's minute regarding peace with the Earth
- Annual report of the Cemetery Committee
- Report of the Educational Concerns Committee

- Letter to the Clerk and the Trustees from the Friends Seminary Committee
- Report of an *ad hoc* group of Fifteenth Street Meeting with a concern regarding the Friends Seminary Committee
- Annual report of the Great Lakes Region (Africa) Education Committee
- Interim Progress Report of the Committee on Ministry and Counsel regarding Website and E-mail List
- Interim report of the Trustees
- attendance sheets