

BUCKS QUARTER RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
MEETING FOR BUSINESS
First Day, Second Month 15, 2012
HELD AT SOLEBURY MEETINGHOUSE

Clerk: Amy Ward Brimmer (Fallsington MM) **Recording Clerk:** David Rose (Lehigh Valley MM)
Friends gathered at the appointed hour of 1:00 PM and settled into a period of worship during which the business meeting queries from Faith and Practice were read.

Agenda reviewed and accepted.

Roll Call of Meetings: Bristol: 9, Buckingham: 0, Doylestown: 7, Fallsington: 7, LehighValley: 1, Makefield: 2, Middletown: 5, Newtown: 4, Plumstead: 0, Quakertown NJ: 1, Solebury: 6, Southampton: 1, Wrightstown: 3, Yardley: 3

Clerk's Comments: The new Quarter Clerk, Amy Ward Brimmer, introduced herself and reviewed some ground rules for conducting business in the manner of Friends. .

Minutes from November 2011 reviewed and approved with the following clarification offered: Abington Quarter was invited to the New Year's Day Skating Party, not the New Year's Eve Skating Party.

Stories of Vitality and Growth:

- Bristol Preparative will be sending a minute to Fallsington MM requesting to be changed from a Preparative Meeting to a full Monthly Meeting.
- Fallsington MM has a Web Page and will be expanding its presence on Facebook.
- Wrightstown MM will be having a Yard Sale in May. Announcement will be made through the Quarter. Funds raised will be forwarded to PYM.
- Pennswood Worship Group is meeting with a large group of regular attenders.
- Makefield MM doing long range planning and has had two called meetings to review plans for the coming year.

Coordinator's Report given by Holly Olson (Middletown). Complete report is available. The Inreach portion of the report covered the busy visitation period during the holiday season and the report of annual New Year's Day Skating Party. Outreach portion included the program that was given at Chandler Hall "Experience Quakerism" and the upcoming "Quakerism in a Nutshell" to be held at Makefield on April 21st. The report also noted the effect to other Quarters of the elimination of Coordinator funding by PYM. Holly shared the many interesting programs that she has attended with the wider Quaker community. Holly requested whenever possible, all articles for Quakerphernalia be sent to her one and a half months in advance. At the least, give Holly advance notice that something is planned so that she can hold space. Report received.

The clerk took a moment to thank **Quakertown MM** for hosting last quarter's meeting in November, and apologized for not doing so at the top of this meeting.

Quakertown (NJ) MM Annual Report was given by Gerry Kirwan. Complete report is available. He announced that the recently published book on the history of Quakertown MM will be given to all meetings in the Quarter. This book, "The History of the Religious Society of Friends, Quakertown Monthly Meeting" has turned out to be a major form of outreach. Quakertown is a small meeting with arrival of a new family and wedding being major events this past year.

Doylestown MM Annual Report given by Elizabeth Eschallier (outgoing clerk DMM). Complete report is available. The Meeting is hosting many programs which are open to the public and has held a number of events which strengthen the bonds within the Meeting Community.

Carol Ashton-Hergenhan (Newtown MM) gave the report **for Friends Home and Village**. This past year, a marketing study was commissioned in an attempt to deal with unused capacity. Survey indicated that name recognition of FH&V is very low. Another concern during the past year has been to improve its governance and to make clear to all the responsibilities of board membership. The current term limit is 3 three-year terms. The Clerk urged Meetings to visit their members who are living there.

Friends were released for a much appreciated **Stretch Break**.

Budget and Nominating: Betsy Bayardi (Wrightstown MM) gave the report.

- Rich Friar and Betsy Bayardi were presented for re-nomination to PYM Nominating committee. APPROVED.

Treasurer's Report given by Tim Dwyer (Bristol MM). Complete report is available.

- The Treasurer reviewed the **current financial situation**. There is one line item in the Operating Budget which shows as over 90% of its allocation spent, with only half the year gone. Situation was explained—this is due to some expenditures that are front-loaded every year--and reassurance given that Quarterly Meeting will be kept informed. The Treasurer is not concerned and does not anticipate that this line item will go over budget.
- **Preliminary Draft Budget** for 2012-13 presented for consideration. Complete draft budget is available. The Treasurer reviewed the guidelines that were used for the creation of the budget. First priority was to present a balanced budget. Next was to make sure that the programs and staff expenditures of the quarter were provided for. Then revenue was considered. Last was the covenant to PYM. Current budget is balanced but does not include covenant pledges from two meetings.

Question was raised about extent of liability coverage since the budget line is quite small.

Proposed draft budget, in order to be balanced, reduces the PYM contribution by \$690 from last year. The distribution of the monies received from the Quarter and to Yearly Meeting is around 65% to PYM. Currently (2011-12) is at 67.5%. Suggestion made that there be a discussion about the portion that goes to PYM with possibility open for either a decrease or increase.

- **Doylestown MM announced that they had a minute** regarding PYM financial stewardship with suggestions for improvement. Several Friends shared their concern about this issue as well. A Friend from Newtown Meeting lifted the concern that their Meeting had approved an increase in the covenant specifically to make sure that PYM gets more next year—how will that happen if overall the Quarter is not sending an increase?
- The Clerk recognized that many questions and concerns are being held by Friends about the issue of the Yearly Meeting's financial needs and its stewardship going forward, and since there was not time in this business meeting to consider them all, she suggested that we schedule a Called Meeting to discuss the issues, at which time Doylestown's minute could be presented. Friends approved this plan.
- PRELIMINARY BUDGET ACCEPTED, RETURNED TO BUDGET & NOMINATING FOR FURTHER REFINEMENT AND LAID OVER FOR FINAL APPROVAL AT THE MAY MEETING FOR BUSINESS.

United Friends School Annual Report given by Nancy Donnelly (Head of School, member Unami Meeting, Abington Qtr). Complete report is available. Report written especially for the Quarter and highlighted the Annual Exploration of a specific theme. This year the theme was the Testimony of Equality as revealed through the school's increasing diversity. This exploration has resulted in a year of significant growth.

Makefield MM Annual Report given by Boris Simkovich (Clerk). Building for the Future was the theme that he wanted to highlight with examples from the report given. Question was raised about the ways that outreach was done. Response was that first internal review and changes needed to occur.

Outreach Committee Report given by Kellie Schluskel-Edens (Yardley Meeting). Complete report is available. She started by thanking Friends who participated in the brainstorming session at last year's February Quarterly Meeting. The Grange Fair, as usual, was the major outreach effort for the year. The "God Box" is now in a tabletop version, thanks to craftsmanship of Jeffrey Bishop of Yardley MM. She also highlighted the new pamphlet that provided a short response to the question, "What is a Quaker?" As is her practice, she concluded with the open invitation for anyone with ideas to share them with the committee, and that there is always the need for additional volunteers, especially

someone willing to monitor a Facebook page for the Quarter.

A Friend from **Quakertown MM** asked why there is no Peace & Social Concerns committee for the Quarter, and wondered if one should be formed. The Coordinator explained that it had been attempted before, but it was difficult to find a core issue or project that met the needs of all MMs. Friends expressed the general sense that the time is ripe to revive our efforts in this area. The clerk suggested that perhaps we could create a support group for the clerks of Peace committees from monthly meetings which have them, in the same way that pastoral care and religious education clerks have started to gather. The Coordinator agreed to pursue this possibility.

After Announcements, **Meeting ended** with a period of silence at 3:05 pm.