

BUCKS QUARTER RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
MEETING FOR BUSINESS
AUGUST 26, 2012
HELD at BRISTOL MEETINGHOUSE

Clerk: Amy Ward Brimmer (Fallsington MM)

Recording Clerk: David Rose (Lehigh Valley MM)

Friends gathered around the appointed hour of 1:00 PM and settled into a period of worship.

Agenda reviewed and accepted.

Roll Call of Meetings:

Bristol: 4, Buckingham: 1, Doylestown:3, Fallsington: 2, LehighValley: 2, Makefield: 3, Middletown: 3, Newtown: 4, Plumstead: 0, Quakertown NJ: 2, Solebury: 1, Southampton: 2, Wrightstown: 2, Yardley: 1

Minutes approved with corrections noted

Stories of Vitality and Growth”

- Wrightstown MM Outreach committee has noted that numbers have declined in both first day school and worship. They implemented a suggestion made by a younger Friend to have a separate snack table for young friends to allow parents time to meet other adults. An example of a simple idea making a big difference.
- Doylestown MM has found the energy to revitalize the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. Members of Doylestown, Buckingham and Plumstead and Middletown meetings to joined in a vigil that was held on the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Doylestown.
- Lehigh Valley MM is working on the care of the Grounds though workdays involving the community.
- Middletown MM’s new sign focuses on the meetinghouse being the location of “Quaker Worship”.

Quarter Coordinator’s Report given by Holly Olson (Middletown). (Complete written report available). She prefaced her report with the suggestion that Annual Reports presented to Quarterly Meeting should also be included in meeting monthly newsletters.

- Inreach portion listed the various activities throughout the Quarter that Holly participated in or attended. Special importance placed on the Aging Workshop, called “Spirit and the Final Third of Life: A Friends Approach”, that will be held on November third at Buckingham Meeting House and School. All present were urged to publicize this program at their monthly meeting.
- Outreach listed the various festivals throughout Bucks County that will have a Quaker presences, provided a report on the just completed Grange Fair outreach tent, and highlighted the upcoming Peace Fair at Buckingham on September 22

The Clerk provided an opportunity for Friends to discuss their experience at Annual Sessions after a quick poll indicated that almost all in attendance at BQM had also attended Annual Sessions. A Friend commented that the expected lack of air conditioning caused her to not attend and was disappointed that provisions made were not publicized. Another Friend, who wanted to attend the discussion on the budget, was frustrated on the lack of a specific time slot for budget discussion. The outstanding support of PYM staff in helping arrange a presentation under difficult conditions was noted. The Arch Street Meetinghouse is difficult for some to get around in, especially if lights are kept off. Another noted that the Business Sessions went very well, perhaps due to discomfort experienced. There is an ongoing discussion about charging for attendance at a Business Meeting session for those not registered. Doug Meaker is the liaison between Annual Sessions Planning Committee and the General Services Standing Committee and will keep the Quarter informed of any developments.

Buckingham MM Annual Report was given by Bethann Morgan, Co-Clerk. (Complete written report attached) She highlighted the excitement of receiving three new applications for membership, the enjoyment of working on Snipes Farm, and the success of “Games Night” on Saturday evenings.

Southampton MM Annual Report was given by Carolyn Eckel, Clerk. (Complete written report attached) Currently first day meeting for worship at Southampton Meeting House is held on the fourth Sunday of the month. Meetings on other Sundays are held with Friends who are at Pennswood. Weekly evening Meeting for Worship is held on Tuesday. The Meetinghouse is also used by a number of other groups, including a Swedenborg congregation. Tenant for apartment found after much work on renovation. The work that the Meeting has done to continue with so few active members was recognized.

Solebury MM Annual Report was given by John Kellogg, Clerk. (Complete written report attached) Betsy Cotton has been doing a wonderful job preparing lesson plans for young Friends, however, there is a lack incoming young children which may necessitate closing the First Day preschool program. Upgrade to heating system has resulted in cost saving. First Day Adult Discussion has been focusing on Geoffrey Durham’s book “The Spirit of Quakers”. Annual Pancake Breakfast focused on program and fund raising for Mercer Street Friends. Meditation garden has been created out of a memorial tree garden as an Eagle Scout project. Attendance overall has been very steady without significant increases or decreases.

Amy Ward Brimmer provided an update of the changes to applying to the **Friends Education Fund**. Administration of the Fund has been transferred from the Yearly Meeting to Friends Council on Education. Purpose of the fund is to give scholarships to children of Quaker families attending the approximately forty Friends schools in the PYM area. Flat rate has been established of \$600 per child (\$1000 per child for schools for learning differences) This year, forty-four children in Bucks Quarter are receiving assistance from this fund. Fund does need to be replenished with contributions. Any questions should be referred to the Website, www.friendseducationfund.org.

Treasurer’s Report: Tim Dwyer (Bristol MM), Treasurer, and Betsy Bayardi (Wrightstown MM), Clerk of Budget and Nominating, gave report. Betsy reported that we are in good shape with \$21,000 in checking account at the end of the fiscal year. All commitments were met and all bills were paid. Treasurer now has a computer that will be passed to next Treasurer with QuickBooks loaded on it. All transactions have been updated and books are audit ready. A shortcoming of QuickBooks appears to be that checks deposited after the end of the fiscal year cannot be created to the prior year if so intended. Question was asked if the Quarter can accept electronic transfers. Prior Treasurer Karen Shaudys said that accounts were set up to accept electronic transfers. Determining the correct amount of money to be held in reserve was discussed. Budget and Nominating committee takes into account the changing economic and market situations in establishing reserve amount desired. It was the sense of the meeting that the Clerk of Budget and Nomination provide a report giving factors considered in establishing current reserve amounts. Report will be provided at February Business Meeting.

Tim Dwyer gave the Treasure’s Report. (Complete report attached) New QuickBooks format will require some adjustments to make reports printed clearer. Some amounts provided will be rechecked to insure that entry was made correctly. Appreciation was expressed for the clarity with which the reports are presented. Budget comparison, missing in the new format, will be changed to include them. Tim announced that he will be available for Quaker money questions all day on Thursday due to changes in his work schedule. Training offered for Quicken Books training but will not be taken due to high cost and time. The Clerk expressed for the Meeting the willingness to support Tim Dwyer in getting the information he needs with a Friend who taught courses on QuickBooks volunteering to assist.

Proposal: A Fivefold Path to Peace. Bethann Morgan reported for the Ad Hoc Group formed at last Quarterly session. It has considered the proposal created by Paul Kester and titled Conflict: Causes, Consequences and Cures Peace Proposal and reported that the group supports it. She then read the proposal which included the Fivefold Path to Harmony. (Complete proposal attached) The Clerk asked for response from the Meeting. It was pointed out that Interim Meeting is going to need clear instructions as to what they are supposed to do. It was suggested that the minute be referred to the PYM Standing Committee on Peace and Social Concerns and then forwarded to Interim Meeting with their suggestion for action to be taken. A Friend noted that the issue of sexual orientation was not included in the list of “without regard to”. Paul Kester agreed to add this to the proposal. With this change incorporated, Friends supported Paul Kester to carry forward his Peace Proposal.

Wrightstown MM Annual Report given by Leo Fitzpatrick, Clerk. (Complete written report attached) He noted that three dear members passed away this year. Renovation of the Meetinghouse is done. Nursery School director Kate Lightfoot is recruiting for the Nursery School and still has some openings. He also reported that the Outreach Committee is addressing the downturn in attendance in First Day School and Worship and shared some of their ideas. In response to a question, it was clarified that the Nursery School is separate from the Meeting with its own reserve funds. It has not proven to be the hoped for feeder for Meeting attendance or membership.

Middletown MM (Middletown Friends Meeting at Langhorne) Annual Report was given by Bill Daly (Complete written report attached). Report focused on strengthening meeting for worship and highlighted the variety of programs that are being held at the Meetinghouse.

Yardley MM Annual Report was not read. . (Complete written report attached)

Quaker School at Horsham Annual Report was given by Ruth Joray. (Complete written report attached) Small specialized schools are facing many difficulties in the current economic climate and the school has had to re-budget due to declining enrollment. The school has reserves but needs to maintain certain balance against its debt. Many difficult issues are being confronted. This will be a difficult year but there is more optimism now than there was just one month ago. The school provides services to help students deal with a broad spectrum of learning disorders. Mission of school is a wonderful meld of the values of Quakerism and dealing with the Learning Disabled. Some new concepts being introduced are therapy dogs. School should be recommended to any parents in the Quarter who have special needs students. Twelve Board Members currently, of which seven are Quakers, and they need additional Board members with experience in Marketing and Development.

Minute on Separation of Church and State: The following minute, approved by Lehigh Valley Meeting for Business of August 5, 2012, and HR 771 which it refers to, was read by David Rose.

MINUTE 1: Lehigh Valley Quakers call for a vote on HR 771 declaring 2012 “Year of Religious Diversity in Pennsylvania”. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has a three hundred and thirty two year history that goes back to the founding of Pennsylvania by William Penn, a Quaker. Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends considers an important legacy that William Penn left is the value that he placed on religious toleration and freedom from any dictates by government in matters of personal faith. This value is still expressed in the Pennsylvania Constitution Declaration of Rights which states: “no preference shall be given by law to any religious establishment or modes of worship”. Pennsylvania, and the United States, have greatly benefitted from our heritage of religious toleration and freedom of conscience. Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends therefore supports House Resolution 771 declaring 2012 “the Year of Religious

Diversity”, introduced by Representative Mark B. Cohen on June 13, 2012 and referred to the House Committee on State Government. We urge that it be release from committee and voted on its adoption by the House.

David Rose indicated that the process upon approval of the minute by Bucks Quarterly Meeting would be to have it considered by PYM Interim Meeting with the intention of having the approved minute forwarded to the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, Pennsylvania House of Representatives leaderships, sponsors and cosponsors of HR 771, and members of the Committee on State Government. Meeting approved minute as presented and recommended its consideration by Interim Meeting.

Bucks Food for Friends: Holly provided an update on the program that started three years ago and now has seventeen churches involved. The level of cooperation and giving is outstanding with additional volunteers always appreciated.

After Announcements, **Meeting ended** with a period of silence at 3:55 pm.