

**BUCKS QUARTERLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
MINUTES of May 17, 2015
Held at Newtown Monthly Meeting**

Clerk: Boris Simkovich (Makefield)

Recording Clerk: David Rose (Lehigh Valley)

Friends gathered in the meetinghouse at the appointed hour of 1:00 p.m. and settled into a period of worship

Friends welcomed by the Clerk

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

Minutes read and approved as read.

Stories of Vitality sharing:

- **Newtown MM** is celebrating 200 years. Friends were thanked for helping in the celebration.
- **Fallsington MM** has resolved the issue of proper use of Meetinghouse. Meetinghouse was being used for events and parties but this exposure was not translating into more seekers wanting to know about us and limiting the use of the facility by the Meeting itself. After discussion, Fallsington Meetinghouse will only be rented twice a month and at other times Meetinghouse will only be available for groups with values and purposes that Friends support.
- **Lehigh Valley MM** had received a request for use of meetinghouse by a house church. While many Friends did not share the church's literal biblical message, the Meeting did reach a decision to accept their request. Meanwhile, the church chose another location.
- **Newtown MM** has a project run by children where they host a dinner for the Meeting with proceeds going to a charity selected by the children. This year the charity was Mercer Street Friends.

Annual Report the Clerk of the Quarter to Yearly Meeting read by Boris Simkovich, Clerk and member of Makefield Meeting. (Complete report available) He noted that the report was his assessment of the health of the Quarter, rather than a list of the past year's activities. The report would also attempt to answer the question of whether the health was improving, stable or declining. Format of the report was divided up into two sections, one being the health of the individual Meeting which comprises the Quarter and the other being the health of the Quarter as an organization that is largely dependent on the participation of Friends from the constituent Meetings. Challenges and strengths of the Quarter as both individual meetings and an overall organization were listed with the concluding statement being a call to **"let us be grateful for what we have- a vibrant community of Friends who care for and support one another, and who together seek to be closer to the Light within us all"**. Issues raised in the report elicited a number of responses and suggestions. It was noted that any analysis of problems with the degree of financial support needs to take into consideration the increasing age of Friends involved with the Quarter. The issue raised in the report about smaller meetings which may need some assistance did not specify how the Quarter should become involved. While each meeting may have different issues, a common challenge by the smaller meetings is increasing attendance at worship services and that previous requests for assistance with this issue were not responded to. The concern that many Young Friends become more and more disengaged with meeting as they grow older was noted with the suggestion that Meetings could share their resources to keep Young Friends involved. After testing the sense of the Meeting, the **2015 Annual Report of the Clerk was approved**. After approval of the report, discussion on ways that the Quarter could assist

smaller meetings continued. After testing the sense of the meeting, the **Clerk received approval to organize an ad hoc committee** of three Friends to address this issue and report back to Quarterly Meeting.

Coordinator's Report given by Holly Olson, Coordinator and member of Middletown Meeting. (Full report available) Inreach portion provided update on efforts undertaken to provide resources to Monthly Meetings to help them reach compliance with the new Child Safety laws. Outreach portion provided accounts of "Quakerism in a Nutshell", Peace Fair and Grange Fair.

Break for stretching taken at 2:10 p.m.

Fallsington MM Annual Report given by Jonathan Snipes. (Full Report Available) He highlighted what he considered the important message. Fallsington was faced a declining membership a few years ago which necessitated that the remaining Friends needed to step into leadership roles. The revitalized Outreach and Property committees brought about some necessary changes that have brought about increasing participation and feeling of recommitment to the Meeting.

Quaker School at Horsham Annual Report given by Ann Reece (Newtown MM and board member). (Full Report Available) She highlighted that the school has successfully completed the search for a new Head of School to replace Ruth Joray. Alex Brosowsky will be starting July 1, 2015. The report contains information regarding enrollment, financial health, changes to the physical plant and program highlights. She concluded her report with an invitation to visit the school and that the school is looking for suggestions for potential Board Members.

Lehigh Valley MM Annual Report given by Ted Morgan. (Full Report Available) Meeting is joyfully accepting the membership requests from a number of long time attenders. George Shaffer, (Care and Aging Coordinator for PYM) provided an Aging Retreat to help Friends help Friends in this transition phase. Meeting is also making adjustments to a decline in First Day School numbers.

Buckingham MM Annual Report given by Pam Caprio. (Written report not available) Peace Fair working now with the support of the Quarter. Meeting for Worship continues to be spiritual satisfying. Hiring of First Day school teacher has been a wonderful experience. Challenges with relationship with the Friends School during the past year has resulted with both the Meeting and the School becoming better aware of the needs of the other.

Treasurer's Report given by Ed Snyder (Yardley MM). (Complete reports available) "Profit and Loss, Budget vs. Actual" sheet shows that we are generally where we expected to be at this time of the year.

Budget 2015-2016 presented by Betsy Bayardi (clerk for Budget and Nominating and member Wrightstown MM) and Ed Snyder. Budget and Nomination Committee felt that our budget should have a 2% increase in contribution to PYM as no increase had been granted for the past few years. There is a gap of a little over \$7,000 between what meetings have been willing to commit and the budget. The budget is balanced by listing the gap as income under "Additional Contributions". Proposed budget is for an amount of \$271,704.00. Treasurer has made a projection for current fiscal year that has a shortfall of \$1,866. Request was made to have the Quarter send to individual meetings the budget breakdown between PYM and BQM. It was noted that PYM will also be sending letters out to Monthly Meetings asking them to send all their commitment and that this may tend to confuse Bucks Quarter Monthly Meetings as all payments are processed through the Quarter. **Budget Approved as presented**

Chandler Hall Annual Report given by Allen Crossman (Newtown MM and board member). (Complete report available) He noted that the report indicated some change in accounting and demographics. Many residents are now coming for "Respite Stays" for recovery after hospital discharge. Continue need for fundraising to provide quality care. The revitalized Chandler Hall Auxiliary had a busy year with number of event put together for the residents.

Bristol MM Annual Report given by Paul Shaffer. (Complete report available) Meeting's involvement with Historic Bristol Day last October had a large number of people come through the Meetinghouse and participate in the activities. The passing away of Bob Atkinson is loss that is felt more and more as the Meeting realizes all the things that he took care of. Meeting is working with the Family Service Association to help provide for families moving from a shelter to apartments.

Oversight Committee Annual Report given by David Rose (Clerk for BQ Oversight Committee and member Lehigh Valley). (Complete report available). Committee has dealt with a variety of issues during the past year and will be meeting with Bristol, Fallsington, and Makefield meetings at the end of this year for the Coordinator's Annual Performance Assessment Review.

After Announcements, Meeting closed at 3:15 p.m. with a period of silent worship.