

**Bucks Quarterly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends
Minutes
August 21, 2016
Held at Doylestown Meetinghouse**

Clerk: Boris Simkovich (Makefield)

Recording Clerk: David Rose (Lehigh Valley)

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

Welcome given by Clerk who thanked Doylestown MM for providing a wonderful time for Quarterly Meeting.

Agenda reviewed and approved.

Roll Call of Meeting: Bristol: 0, Buckingham: 1, Doylestown: 10, Fallsington: 3, Lehigh Valley: 1, Makefield: 2, Middletown: 8, Newtown: 2, Plumstead: 0, Quakertown: 0, Solebury: 1, Southampton: 1, Wrightstown: 3, Yardley: 1

Minutes for May 15, 2016 approved as presented.

Stories of Vitality and Growth.

- **Newtown:** On July 12th and August 4th vigils were held in downtown Newtown (by Starbucks) to express support for both the police and for black lives. Many participants returned to the meetinghouse for fellowship following the vigils.
- **Middletown:** Benches have been moved and rug removed which had marks for where the benches were supposed to be placed. Some dismay expressed at loss of former bearings. Car wash fundraiser raised over \$600 for a safe haven parochial elementary school in Camden.
- **Yardley:** A year ago the meeting suffered the loss of Christopher Gage. A Black Gum Tree was planted in his remembrance. Last week a memorial service was held by the tree.
- **Fallsington:** The Outreach Committee has planned one public event per month. Looking forward to celebrating 333rd anniversary and publicizing the event by getting an official proclamation from the township.
- **Doylestown:** Ongoing peace vigil in downtown Doylestown (by Starbucks) with a number of other meetings and organizations participating.
- **Buckingham:** An interim head of Buckingham Friends School has been hired.

Annual Report United Friends School: Report presented by Nancy Donnelly Head of School (Unami MM, Abington Qtr.). (Full written report available) Nancy encouraged all to read her written report and used her time to tell the story of an event she was able to use to teach the skill of peacemaking to fifth grade boys.

Budget and Nomination: Betty Bayardi (WrightstownMM) reported that there are no nomination issues to present.

Treasurers Report given by Betty Bayardi. There is an interesting development in the closed 2015-2016 budget is that we made a “profit” even after prepaying some expenses. Question was asked regarding the duplicate requests from the Quarter and from PYM to individual meetings for annual financial commitment. Bucks Quarter is the only Quarter which processes the commitments to PYM and while this may create some confusion, it did not appear necessary to take any action.

Annual Report Yardley MM: Betty Steckman presented report. (Written report available) The Meeting is described as close knit, caring, and robust. Current number of members is 93

adult members and 18 under the age of 18. What has been the annual fall flea market is being transitioned to an arts and crafts and family friendly event called the “Autumn Market”. Ongoing events listed and events in planning stages shared.

Policy Regarding Public Statements by Quarter Representatives: Clerk Boris Simkovich (Makefield MM) introduced the topic with a handout giving the background to the rise of this issue, questions for Quarter consideration, and PYM related policies. The questions that he posed were: **1.** Should representatives of the Quarter issue public statements on certain current events? **2.** If such statements were permitted: Who should make them, who should create them, and what type of events should a Quaker response be created for? Discussion included expressions of the following: FCNL already provides a “Quaker” response on national issues. BQM statements should be limited to local events and issues. There would be a greater impact if each individual meeting, or even better, each individual Friend, would respond for themselves, either by writing letters to the Editor of newspapers or elected officials. Leadership should not feel muzzled if they feel a timely response is needed. Timeliness is an issue and keeping it at a lower level, such as a Meeting, could provide a quicker response. We need to remember that people may be looking for a group that responds such as we would and that may be the only way they would become aware of us. The Clerk concluded the discussion by stating it is his sense that the issue requires more seasoning and asked Friends to come to the next Quarterly Meeting with some responses from their Monthly Meetings.

Coordinators Report: Following break, Holly Olson (Middletown MM) gave her report (Full written report available) Inreach portion reported on her involvement with planning for events and her attendance at events around the Quarter and PYM. Outreach portion included a report on the current status of the Quarter Outreach Committee, which is doing very well. In response to her account of her attendance at Annual Sessions and her experience with the way the issue of “Undoing Racism” was brought before the session there was some discussion on whether there should be response from the Quarter or if the Quarter should become involved in finding a way forward. Members of Quarter are encouraged to attend PYM Continuing sessions.

Annual Report Middletown MM given by Clerk Kris Michael. (Full written report available) The final count for the car wash fund raiser, including additional donations, was \$1165. In addition to stories already shared, the written report included accounts on graveyard burials, Quaker Woman’s Social Hour, activities of Ministry and Nurture, First Day school and property committee. Current count is 99 members.

Annual Report Solebury MM given by David Smith for John Kellogg. (Full written report available) Current membership is 109 adult members and 42 minor members. Membership declined by nine members during the year. Account of activities included Family Day in June, annual Pancake Breakfast, the uses of the Mary Blackmar Educational Fund, and the involvement of a local Boy Scout Troop in creating signs for the graveyard.

Ad Hoc Working Group on Smaller Meetings in the Quarter: Bethann Morgan (Buckingham MM) reported that the group met with Southampton and Bristol meetings and will be continuing to meet with Bristol.

Annual Report Southampton MM given by Hans Peters for Carolyn Peters-Eckel. (Full written report available) Meeting is small, with generally five of the nine members attending monthly meeting. During the year, members helped with the Peace Fair and

participated in the Northampton-Southampton-Wrightstown Ministerium, held a Gun Violence Awareness prayer meeting, and endorsed the Citizens Climate Lobby Carbon Tax proposal. Meeting is sound financially with a variety of income sources, but does not feel it has the energy to look beyond its current concerns.

Bucks Food for Friends (BFFF) presentation introduced by Rich Richardson (Newtown MM). Video presentation of the work being done by this group included interviews with volunteers and partakers. (Full written report available)

Annual Report for Wrightstown MM given by Betsy Bayardi (Full written report available)

From the report she highlighted the issue of investment of assets between two types of funds offered by Friends Fidicary, over which there was a great division in the meeting. Discussion in meeting broadened and lead to the creation of an Environmental Stewardship working group which is addressing a number of issues related to the environment such as floor covering, energy consumption, reduction of disposable items, and reducing harmful chemicals. The written report included information on the Spiritual Exploration Group (SEG), nurturing Children and Youth, upgrades to building and ground, and community outreach. Current count is 212 members and 33 active attenders.

Following announcements, **Meeting closed** with a period of silence worship at 3:20 PM.