

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – November 15, 2009

Attendees: Joanne Go, Peggy McDonald, Alvin Pruett, Karen Vargas, Jimmy Pryor, Cathy Guttentag, Dee Rogers, Steve Miller, Flip Koch, Bob Stecker, Mark Herranen, Barbara Cowan, Eleanor Hammond, Andy Miller, Kimberly Nelson, Allison Copony, Hiram Butler, Jann Barr, Peg Nosek, Sam Cashion, Leslie Cauffman & Bailey, Joan Stewart, Susan Long (acting recording clerk), Larry Marcotte (clerk).

Centering Reading: A Note On Sense Of The Meeting, Consensus, And Unanimity

Unanimity implies that everyone agrees with a decision.

Consensus is variously defined but has a general sense of a decision to which all present can assent, sometimes arrived at through horse-trading and compromise. Perhaps not everybody agrees wholeheartedly, but it is a decision that they are prepared to accept.

Sense of the meeting is subtly different from these. It is a sense that the meeting is approaching the decision that is most in harmony with the leadings of the Spirit. In reaching the sense of the meeting Friends are not called to “agree with” the direction of the meeting, but after prayerful searching to be at ease with it, to feel that it is “rightly ordered.” The sense is modified not so much through compromise as through deep listening. Often there is not unanimity, some Friends may prefer a different course of action. They need only feel at ease in trusting the movement of the Spirit in the meeting.

*Prepared by Patricia McBee for Pendle Hill interns, June 17, 1996
Revised June 1998, June 1999, June 2005.*

Approval of October 2009 minutes:

The minutes for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business for October 18, 2009 were approved with no changes.

Care and Concern (Steve): The clearness committee for membership for Connie Garson recommends approval of her membership. After the usual one month of discernment, C&C will propose a membership minute for Connie in December.

Care and Concern and Worship and Ministry will have Adult First Day Schools and December 6 and 13 to discern the state of the meeting for the yearly report. Clerks are still asked to submit their committee reports to Steve on December 6.

Anna Mueller and Julio Postigo will be married here at the meeting house on January 9 at 2 p.m. There will a clearness committee for marriage clerked by Bette Drexler.

There will be a memorial meeting for Jim Barr on December 5 at 10:00 a.m. in the Meeting House.

Finance (Susan): pledge letters have gone out and several responses received. Confirmation letters will also be going out for the financial review to all who have contributed in 2009.

Communications (Susan): We have received permission to continue to improve what is still a Provisional Directory. We will separate the list of emails from the telephone and mailing list so that cell phone numbers can be added to the directory and it still be printable one landscape page wide. A fourth type of directory called the Email directory will be added with just names and emails. The directory will be sorted by last names, which may result in families with multiple last names being separated - for now. A numbering system may later be implemented to reunite families. Changes should continue to be sent to listkeeper@friendshouston.org.

A request was made for the telephone trees to be revived. Steve of Care and Concern said that the committee was going to start them again.

Worship and Ministry (Dee): we have changed meeting location to home of Jann Barr and Joan Libby. Next one is Tuesday, December 1.

Caroling and candlelighting December 18: caroling 6-7 pm (bring flashlight), Break 7-7:30 pm (hot chocolate and finger food, bring finger food) and then at 7:30 we will start the candlelighting (bring your own candle and holder). Joanne said she would write up a blurb for the blog explaining it more fully.

W&M would like to consider a meeting-wide retreat in the early spring, and we are open to suggestions for places.

Property (Flip): we have had a structural engineer examine a preliminary design, and it has been approved. The details of the design are being drawn up into a full-fledged design that can be bid out and built. The complete design is expected any day. Odds are good that it won't be completed this calendar year. We are due to report to the Houston Endowment what we have done this year and what the plans are.

Outreach (Bob): we are at the halfway point roughly on the Quaker Process sessions; the feedback is sparse, but positive. More than just looking at Quaker process, there is a desire to continue to have meetings like the Friendly 8's. Bob thanked the committee: Barbara Cowan, Eileen Penland, and Kathryn van der Pol.

Clerk's Concerns: Larry asked for all the committee clerks to please send agenda items prior to business meeting; he had gotten very few this week for planning this meeting.

Larry also brought forward the request from SCYM for a minute supporting FLGBTQC concerns at a local meeting level - to be considered by Peace and Social

Action with recommendation at the December 20th 2009 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (see attachment).

News of Friends:

May is out of the hospital and will be welcoming visitors in a few days.

Rehoboth Beach in Delaware was really hit by the hurricane, where Alison Libschitz lives.

Nell Warnes and Dee attended the Quaker Women's Conference, and Nell gave a workshop on the Iraqi refugee situation. The overall theme was the "ocean of light and love".

Calendar:

November 16 Communications Committee meeting 7:00 p.m. at the home of Susan Long

November 19 Planning Committee in meeting house at 7:00 p.m.

November 21 Meeting for Healing 10 a.m. in the Little House

November 20-22 Representatives' Meeting at Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, Texas

November 26 (Thanksgiving Day) 5-ish at Peg Nosek's house: potluck for Thanksgiving; all are invited!

November 27 Buy Nothing Day Barter Fair; 1-4 pm; under the eaves of the Meeting House.

December 1 Worship and Ministry Committee 7:00 p.m. at the home of Joan Libby and Jann Barr

December 2 Earthcare Witness Committee at 7:00 p.m. in the Little House

December 5 10:00 a.m. at meeting house – Meeting to remember and celebrate the life of Jim Barr

December 6 Children's Worship in the Little House 10:30 – 10:50 a.m.

December 6 Deadline for Annual Committee Reports to be turned in at lofm_archive@yahoo.com

December 8 Care and Concern 7:00 p.m. at the meeting house

December 13 Potluck Sunday

December 18 6:00 p.m. Caroling followed by Candle Lighting Worship at 7:30 p.m.

December 19 10:00 a.m. Meeting for Healing in the Meeting House.

December 20 Holiday activity for Children's First Day School

December 20 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business at rise of meeting

December 25: Christmas morning breakfast at Joan Libby and Jann Barr's; potluck,

10 a.m.

December 27 no Children's First Day School

January 9 Saturday 10 a.m. to noon – Joint meeting of Worship and Ministry and Care and Concern to consider the State of the Meeting report

January 10 Potluck Sunday

January 12 Care and Concern Meeting 7:00 p.m. at the meeting house

January 17 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business at the rise of meeting

February 13: fundraising concert for the Peace Fair (more details to come from Lidney)

Attachment:

Proposal from SCYM - South Central Yearly Meeting

SCYM's Peace and Justice Committee offered this minute to SCYM and its Quarterly and Monthly meetings as a guide for actions that can be taken in response to the Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC) mid-winter 2009 epistle. That epistle read:

“More and more our families fear that they will not be allowed to make medical decisions about their loved ones, or they fear that authorities may not recognize their adoptions, civil unions and legal marriages. We continue to face the nightmare that loved ones may find themselves alone, while we are prevented from being with them at the times they most need us.”

Our minute reads:

The Yearly Meeting is invited to consider FLGBTQC equality and same gender marriage as a possible theme for YM. Quarterly Meetings are encouraged to provide discussions and workshops on LGBTQ equality and same gender marriage.

Meetings are invited to provide support committee for LGBTQ members and their families. We encourage Meetings to consider how they can socially, politically and spiritually support LGBTQ members. This support can include, but is not limited to, support for legal and religious marriage equality. We encourage Meetings to care for Friends and attenders who have been made vulnerable because of discrimination in any form. (note: “attenders” is our addition.)

Meetings are invited to participate fully in civil discussions and legislative activism to help speak Truth to our experience of God's Love for all. Our work can minister to others as we share our own ongoing process as models for other faith communities. This is an opportunity for our meetings to speak publicly to our deeply rooted experience that God calls us to lives of Love and that Love takes many forms.

Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings are invited to pass a minute of support or publicize their previous minute(s) of support on these issues to the general community and legislative bodies.