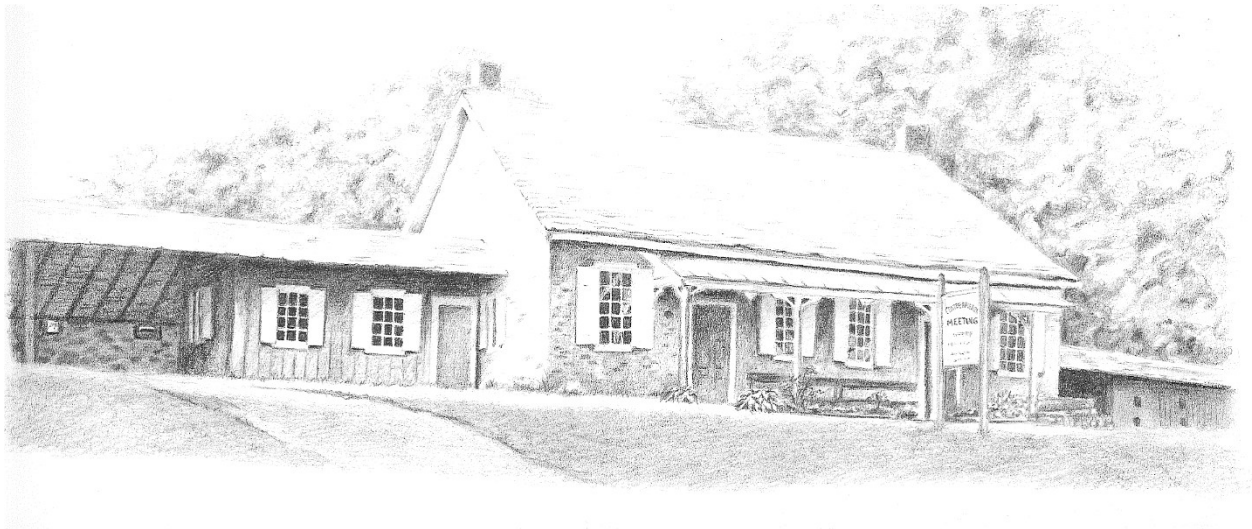


Centre Monthly Meeting Handbook



Centre Monthly Meeting
131 Center Meeting Road
Wilmington, DE 19807

<http://westernquarterquakers.org/centre/>

Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	4
1.1 Purpose.....	4
1.2 Maintenance and Revision.....	4
2.0 Responsibilities of Positions.....	4
2.1 Clerk.....	4
2.2 Recording Clerk.....	5
2.3 Treasurer.....	5
2.4 Assistant Treasurer.....	5
2.4 Recorder.....	6
2.5 Auditors.....	6
2.6 Caretaker.....	6
2.7 Facility Scheduler.....	9
2.8 First Day School Coordinator.....	9
2.9 Google Group Manager.....	10
2.10 Web Manager.....	10
3.0 Responsibilities of Committees.....	10
3.1 Children's Religious Education Committee.....	10
3.2 Contributions Committee.....	11
3.3 Fellowship Committee.....	11
3.4 Nominating Committee.....	12
3.5 Oversight Committee.....	13
3.6 Peace & Social Concerns Committee.....	13
3.7 Property Committee.....	13
3.7.1 Graveyard Subcommittee.....	14
3.8 Trustees Committee.....	15
3.9 Tuition Aid Committee.....	15
3.10 Worship & Ministry Committee.....	16
4.0 Responsibilities of Liaisons.....	17
4.1 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Western Quarterly Meeting, and Kennett Friends Home Liaisons.....	17

5.0 Annual Calendar.....	17
6.0 By-Laws.....	18
6.1 Corporation By-Laws.....	19
7.0 Policies.....	22
7.1 Centre Meeting Graveyard Burial Policy.....	23
7.2 Child Protection Policy.....	23
7.3 Schoolhouse Use Policy.....	27
7.4 Tuition Aid Policy.....	28
8.0 Procedures.....	29
8.1 Committee Procedures for Paid Contractors.....	29
8.2 Marriage and Commitment Procedure.....	29
8.3 Membership Procedure.....	32
8.4 Transfer of Membership Procedure.....	33
8.5 Memorial Service Procedure.....	34
8.6 Process for an Individual to Apply to Centre Friends Meeting for a Grant.....	35
8.7 Support Committee Procedures.....	36
9.0 Important Minutes.....	37
9.1 Marriage.....	37
10.0 Appendices.....	37
Appendix A: Clearness Committees: A Friends' Approach to Discernment, Simple Guidelines for Participation, Friends Council on Education.....	37
Appendix B: How to Do a Friendly Audit, by Jack N. Childs, Jr.....	38

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Centre Monthly Meeting Handbook is to make it easy for new attenders or seasoned members to understand how the Meeting is organized and functions. The Handbook is meant to be an evolving document that describes the Meeting's current understanding of how best to apply the guidance contained in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* to our local situation.

1.2 Maintenance and Revision

The official and most current version of the Handbook will be maintained by the Clerk and copies will be available in the Meetinghouse kitchen. The Handbook will be revised annually, if needed. Any member or attender may suggest changes to the Handbook by notifying the Clerk, preferably in writing. Changes to the Handbook must be approved by the Monthly Meeting.

2.0 Responsibilities of Positions

2.1 Clerk

The Clerk is nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting to a three-year term, with the option of continuing for an additional term. He/she must be a member.

Responsibilities include:

- Convenes and facilitates monthly and specially-called Meetings for Worship for Business. Arranges for a substitute clerk if he or she is unable to attend.
- Prepares an agenda and distributes it beforehand via email.
- Presents a query, Clerk's business and calls for committee reports.
- Maintains a sense of worship.
- Discerns when unity has been reached and states his or her understanding of the sense of the Meeting.
- Follows up on decisions made or arranges for this to be done.
- Serves *ex officio* as a member of Trustees.
- Maintains communication with members, attenders and committee clerks and sees that issues of concern are brought before the Meeting.
- Convenes an annual meeting of committee clerks.
- Receives, acts upon or forwards correspondence directed to the Meeting.
- Signs correspondence and other documents as directed by the Meeting.
- Coordinates the activities of the Meeting with those of Western Quarter and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

2.2 Recording Clerk

The Recording Clerk is nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting to a three-year term, with the option of continuing for an additional term. He/she must be a member. Responsibilities include:

- Takes minutes during monthly and called Meetings for Worship for Business. Arranges for a substitute if he or she is unable to do so.
- When the Meeting reaches unity, composes a minute of the sense of the Meeting as articulated by the Clerk and confirmed by those present.
- Reads a draft of minutes aloud when requested by the Clerk to make sure the language accurately captures the sense of the Meeting.
- Prepares and distributes via email a draft set of minutes prior to the next month's Meeting for Worship for Business.
- Following the approval of the minutes at the next month's Meeting for Worship for Business, records corrections and prepares a final, approved set of minutes.
- Places a copy of the approved minutes in the notebook in the Meeting House kitchen.
- Removes messages from the Meeting House's answering machine.

2.3 Treasurer

The Treasurer is nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting to a five-year term. Responsibilities include:

- Holds custody of the Meeting's funds and financial records.
- Receives, records and deposit all income given or entrusted to the Meeting.
- Issues checks for expenditures approved under the budget or as directed by the Meeting.
- Retains all bank statements, copies of invoices and other receipts.
- As able, presents a financial report at each Meeting for Worship for Business.
- Presents an end-of-the-year financial report for approval by the Monthly Meeting.
- Serves *ex officio* as a member of Trustees.
- Under the direction of the Meeting or its Trustees, maintains the Meeting's investments including adding or withdrawing funds from these investments.
- Distributes via email an annual appeal for contributions.
- Sends receipts to contributors prior to March 30th of the following year.
- Makes all financial records available to the Meeting's auditors for the annual financial review.
- Holds the key to the Meeting's bank deposit box.

2.4 Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer is nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting and serves a five-year term. He/she acts as the Meeting's Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer may also share the duties of the Treasurer as they mutually agree.

2.4 Recorder

The Recorder is nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting and serves a three-year term, with the option of continuing for an additional term. Responsibilities include:

- Serves as a member of the Oversight Committee.
- Maintains an accurate count of the Meeting's membership.
- Records changes in membership due to applications, transfers, withdrawals, births, deaths, and marriages.
- Periodically contacts inactive members and removes members from the rolls as directed by the Monthly Meeting.
- Presents an annual membership report to Meeting for Worship for Business.
- Submits an annual membership report to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

2.5 Auditors

The Auditors (2 or 3 preferred) are appointed by the Monthly Meeting for a two-year term. The Auditors may not be members of Trustees. Responsibilities include:

- Audits the records of the Treasurer as soon as possible after the close of the fiscal year and before the corporation meeting.
- Makes sure all the assets claimed on the closing date are there, in the proper accounts.
- Checks that the bank accounts have been reconciled on a monthly basis.
- Checks if there are any liabilities on the closing date.
- Checks to make sure that there is some system of checks and balances for income and expenses.
- Reviews all investments.
- Inspects and documents the contents of the safe deposit box.
- Reports findings at the annual corporation meeting.

2.6 Caretaker

The Caretaker(s) is nominated by the Property Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting for an unspecified term. Responsibilities include:

Oversight of the Meeting Property

- Walks the boundaries of the properties and inspects the exterior and interior of each building at least every other week, reporting concerns in writing to the Clerk of the Property Committee.
- Arranges with and opens the buildings to maintenance workers, appraisers, and others who need access to any of the properties.
- Oversees snow removal, tree removal, cesspool cleaning, and other property maintenance as directed by the Property Committee. (The Meeting pays for such major projects).
- Mows all grounds on the properties, including the Caretaker's residence, the Schoolhouse, the Meeting House, and burial ground.
- Waters flower beds as needed.
- Cleans gutters and downspouts as needed.

- Maintains the neat appearance and safety of all properties, i.e. pick up fallen tree limbs and litter, clear brush that impedes vision at the entrance/exits to the Meeting House, Schoolhouse, and Caretaker's home, etc.
- Informs the Property Committee Clerk, in advance when planning to be away from the property for more than three days (vacation, other travel, etc.)

(Note: A Caretaker may ask for approval to contract out part of the work, for instance cleaning the buildings or mowing the grounds. If the Caretaker is given permission to do so or receives approval from the Meeting to exchange particular duties for higher monthly payments, the Caretaker would be responsible for arranging and overseeing those services, to the satisfaction of the Meeting.)

Security of the Meeting Property

- Secures all buildings when not in use.
- Represents the Meeting in any event involving police intervention, initially and as further directed by the Property Committee Clerk (or other person representing the Property Committee, Trustees or Meeting for Worship for Business.)
- Deals with individuals who might consider committing or who have committed mischievous deeds on any of the properties. (This involves using ones best judgment in dealing with the situation directly by calling the fire company, police, or property committee Clerk, as appropriate.)
- Acts as the single point of contact for the alarm company.
- Is a "Good Samaritan" to those involved in traffic accidents and to drivers of disabled vehicles on the roads bisecting the Meeting's property.

Care of the Caretaker's Residence

- Cares for the home as you would your own. (Recognizes that the house is a valuable property that requires responsible attention. Uses initiative, consults on needs, and responds to any emergency, as appropriate.)
- Keeps yard, cellar, front porch, and garage neat and those and other areas free of fire hazard.
- In a timely way, alerts the Property Committee to needed services and expenditures.
- May keep up to two typical household pets. Beyond this approval is to be requested.
- May routinely park three vehicles, each of which has up-to-date registration. None of the vehicles should be over 10,000 pounds.

(Note: The Caretaker must obtain permission from the Meeting before sharing the house with others. [This does not apply to temporary guests.] He/she may not rent the residence or any other Meeting area to any other person without prior approval of the Meeting. If the Caretaker or Caretaker's guests damage the property, the Caretaker will promptly inform the Meeting and arrange for repairs. The Caretaker pays for such damage.)

Cleaning and General Oversight of the Meetinghouse, the East Horse Shed and the Schoolhouse

(Note: The following tasks are to be done on a weekly basis unless noted by “*” [every other week] or “#” [monthly]. It is preferred that work be done on Fridays or Saturdays, prior to Sunday, so that areas are clean for Meeting for Worship.)

The Meetinghouse

- Vacuums and damp mops the meeting room and entrance room floors, avoiding any damage to the floor or building. Wet mops the bathroom floor.
- Dusts surfaces (table, benches, and ledges), paying particular attention to spider-webs, etc., especially under the seats and footrests below the benches and the dusty area above the wood stove.*
- Dusts the high and low corners, light fixtures and paneling where dust and cobwebs tend to accumulate.#
- Cleans kitchen sink and counters.
- Thoroughly cleans the toilet, hand basin, and all surfaces in the bathroom, using appropriate scrubbing and antiseptic agents where necessary. (Environmentally friendly cleaners are desirable.)
- Collects all trash on Sunday afternoon or Monday and puts out for collection.
- Each Sunday, October through April, starts a fire in the wood stove, so as to bring the room to a comfortable temperature by 10:45 a.m. for Meeting for Worship; on the third Sunday of each month in both stoves, to bring both meeting rooms to a comfortable temperature by 9:15 a.m. for Meeting for Worship for Business; and at other times as requested by the committee clerks for meetings in the Meeting House. The Caretaker(s) may request up to six respite days (regarding starting the fire in the wood stoves). Each request should be made at least one week in advance, so that the Property Committee will be able to identify a volunteer to start the fire(s).
- Stocks and replenishes paper products, light bulbs, and cleaning agents.
- Moves sufficient wood indoors for the wood stoves in the Meeting House.
- Remove ashes from the wood stoves and, as needed, Meeting House.

The East Horse Shed

- Vacuums and wet mops the floor.
- Dusts chairs, benches and surfaces as detailed above for the Meeting House.

The Schoolhouse

- Dusts all surfaces, as described above for the Meeting House.
- Thoroughly cleans the kitchen, paying attention to the sink.
- Cleans the refrigerator.#
- Thoroughly cleans the bathroom, as detailed above for the Meeting House.
- Collects and puts out trash.
- Stocks and replenishes all paper products, light bulbs and cleaning agents.

2.7 Facility Scheduler

The Facility Scheduler is appointed by the Monthly Meeting to an unspecified term. Responsibilities include:

- Receives requests for use of the Meeting House, East Horse Shed and Schoolhouse by attenders, members and outside groups.
- Screens Schoolhouse requests according to the Schoolhouse Use Policy.
- Determines if a cost will be charged for the facility use.
- Alerts the Treasurer that a rental has been made and a check is forthcoming.
- Maintains a calendar of who is using the facilities and when.

2.8 First Day School Coordinator

The First Day School Coordinator is nominated by the Children's Religious Education Committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting for an unspecified term. Responsibilities include:

- Reads necessary materials and is aware of the Centre Meeting Child Abuse Prevention Policy. Provides Centre Monthly Meeting with a copy of his/her Delaware background check and requests that all those who work individually with Children's Religious Education Committee (CREC) children complete this requirement, too.
- Meets with the CREC at their scheduled meetings.
- Creates and teaches 3 lessons for each month, September-June. S/he will arrange for volunteer teachers for each First Day as they are needed.
- Buys or arranges for the purchase of necessary materials for lessons. Submits receipts first to the Clerk of CREC and then to the Treasurer of the Meeting for reimbursement.
- Collates past and current files of lessons to be included in the CREC archives so others can use or refer to this curricula. It is desirable that by the end of the teaching year (June) the Coordinator and CREC will propose themes or topics for the following year.
- Will be compensated for his/her time teaching, planning and attending CREC meetings at \$25.00 per hour effective as of September, 2013.
- Submits an hourly time sheet for each month itemizing hours spent with each activity in a form that the Treasurer's requests. A copy of this time sheet will also be provided by the Clerk of CREC.
- Keeps parents and the Meeting informed of what is being taught and when meetings or special events will occur for the children.
- Bi-annual reviews of his/her work will occur in December and June. The committee that provides feedback will include, if possible, the Clerk of CREC, two members of CREC, a parent of a child in the First Day school and a member of the Meeting who is familiar with the provision of children's care. The aforementioned 4 persons meet to create a summary of feedback. Then the group meets with the coordinator to provide feedback.
- Brings questions or concerns first to CREC and/or the Clerk of CREC.

2.9 Google Group Manager

The Google Group Manager is appointed by the Monthly Meeting for an unspecified term.

Responsibilities include:

- Is registered as the administrator for the Meetings Google group.
- Asks new attenders/members if they wish to receive emails from the Meeting.
- Adds new attenders/members to the Google Group.
- Assists attenders/members with problems related to the Google Group.
- Removes attenders/members from the group when necessary.

2.10 Web Manager

The Web Manager is appointed by the Monthly Meeting for an unspecified term. Responsibilities include:

- Serves as the liaison to Western Quarterly Meeting for matters pertaining to the Meeting's website.
- Keeps information on the website current.
- Ensures navigation and other links are working properly.
- Approves blog comments.
- Adds new documents, pictures or video as requested by the Meeting.

Approved 2013 (All Position Descriptions)

3.0 Responsibilities of Committees

3.1 Children's Religious Education Committee

This committee has the responsibility to design, maintain, supervise and assist a First Day School program for the families with children of the Monthly Meeting, and to provide childcare for children four years old and younger in a nursery setting.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Meets monthly, or as required, to oversee the operations of the First Day School, to plan future activities and programs and reports regularly to the Monthly Meeting on its actions and plans.
- Secures a Coordinator (paid position) and a staff of teachers or child care givers to carry out its programs.
- Keeps close oversight of educational activities in that most of the committee's members are also parents and teachers in the First Day School and are regularly present on First Days in teaching and supervisory roles. This is not a requirement for committee membership.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its plans for the coming First Day School year before this commences and thereafter regularly on accomplishments and issues as the year proceeds. It prepares an Annual Report for submission in September for the previous school year.

3.2 Contributions Committee

This committee allocates funds designated in the budget of the Monthly Meeting to various activities and organizations outside the Meeting community that exemplify Quaker testimonies, both to those in which members of the Monthly Meeting may be active and others in which Meeting members may have a special interest.

Allocations are based on suggestions from Meeting members, which are evaluated by the committee before it assembles a proposed list of contributions for approval by the Monthly Meeting.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Meets usually twice a year.
- Announces to the Meeting an invitation to submit suggestions of activities or organizations for consideration of a contribution by the Monthly Meeting. The invitation is usually given one or two months before the committee meets to assemble a final, proposed list.
- Meets, usually in October, to consider all suggestions before preparing its recommendation to the Monthly Meeting.
- Presents to the Monthly Meeting, usually in November, a list of recipients and recommended contributions for action at that time.
- Communicates the list of approved contributions to the Treasurer who prepares checks that are sent to recipients by year's end.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.3 Fellowship Committee

This committee has as its responsibility greeting newcomers and promoting fellowship within the Meeting.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Checks the guest book on a regular basis and makes follow-up contacts with visitors where appropriate.
- Sets up and announces to the Meeting social and fellowship events such as the monthly potlucks (Fourth First Day) and organizes a list of providers of post-Meeting for Worship snacks. In addition, the committee will create a list of birthdates of members and attenders and send birthday cards in a timely fashion.
- Provides meals for shut-ins and others in need.
- Greets visitors on every occasion and invites them to return.
- Plans farewell occasions, such as potlucks or snacks, for those who are leaving the Monthly Meeting family.
- Provides a "corner Friend" to respond after Meeting for Worship to visitors with inquiries about Center Monthly Meeting or about Quakerism.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.4 Nominating Committee

This committee is responsible for maintaining a record of all positions and committees of the Monthly Meeting and for keeping all positions and committees properly staffed by members and attenders for the discharge of their particular duties and responsibilities. When committees experience retirements or resignation of members, this committee begins at once a process of canvassing the current members and attenders list for replacements, secures the agreement of individuals to their appointment to a position and presents these recommendations to the Monthly Meeting for approval.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Keeps current lists of Meeting committees, their functions and requirements and maintains rosters of members together with their dates of appointment and anticipated retirement.
- Keeps a current list of members and attenders of the Monthly Meeting as the pool of candidates for appointment to positions and committees.
- Consults on a continuing basis with committees regarding their current or anticipated need for members.
- Regularly reviews membership/attendance list and current or anticipated needs of committees in order to make effective matches of persons and positions.
- Regularly brings to the Monthly Meeting nominations for vacant committee assignments.
- Conveys to nominees the approval of their nominations and helps them to be oriented to the new service.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.5 Oversight Committee

This committee has a general responsibility for the pastoral care of members and attenders of the Monthly Meeting.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Welcomes attenders and inquirers. Cares for the transfer of membership into and out of the Meeting.
- Provides attention to and clearness for those seeking membership, marriage, and other leadings.
- Responsible for the reconciliation of conflicts within the Monthly Meeting.
- Creates a list of members and attenders. This entails working with the Recorder, who is a member of Oversight, to keep records of members and attenders and report annually to the Monthly and Yearly Meetings.
- Receives and responds in strict confidence to requests for financial assistance from members and attenders.
- Initiates the close of Meetings for Worship and to oversee thereafter for afterthoughts, requests for those to be held in the light, announcements and for introductions.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.6 Peace & Social Concerns Committee

This committee is charged with encouraging members and attenders to participate in work for social change within the Meeting and through outside Quaker and other bodies, and to independently pursue leadings to social actions that are consistent with Friends' testimonies.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Develops proposals for consideration with respect to programs or actions that the Meeting might undertake and submits these to the Monthly Meeting for approval.
- Develops and oversees programs for the education of Meeting members and attenders in current or pressing social issues at all levels of local, national and world concerns. This may be done, e.g. through the invitation to outside persons to visit the Meeting with special presentations, working through the Adult Forum to develop increased sensitivity to social needs and opportunities, and the like.
- Meets monthly or ad hoc to oversee projects of social action, which are currently in progress in the Monthly Meeting.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.7 Property Committee

This committee is responsible for the general care of the Monthly Meeting's buildings, equipment, furnishings and grounds with the goal of seeing that they are kept in a good and serviceable condition. The committee also oversees and supports the work of the Caretakers.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Receives information from members/attenders regarding issues related to the buildings and grounds.
- Requests an annual budget for repairs and contract services based on an assessment of the buildings and grounds.
- Identifies needed repairs and improvements and develops a calendar for their completion.
- Determines if needed repairs and improvements should be undertaken by Meeting members/attenders themselves or contracted out.
- Researches options for the remediation of problems, possible contractors and obtains multiple cost estimates.
- Authorizes and incurs expenses for work without the approval of the Monthly Meeting within the limits of the committee's budget.
- Seeks approval from the Monthly Meeting for work that cannot be completed within the committee's budget.
- Hires, oversees and evaluates the work of contractors.
- Recruits, interviews and make a recommendation to the Monthly Meeting regarding the hiring of caretakers.
- Provides day-to-day oversight of the Caretakers.
- Performs an annual evaluation of the Caretakers.
- Ensures that the Meeting's buildings are kept clean and the grounds well attended.
- Authorizes the donation of or lending out of the Meeting's furnishings or equipment.

- Develops policies regarding the use of the Meeting's buildings.
- Schedules and coordinates the annual yard clean-up day.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.7.1 Graveyard Subcommittee

This Property sub-committee is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Meeting's graveyard.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Assigns and sells burial plots as instructed by the Monthly Meeting.
- Provides a contact person for families and businesses involved with burials and grave markers.
- Authorizes internments of bodies, ashes or the spreading of ashes.
- Accurately locates plot locations as needed.
- Contracts for grave openings.
- Maintains accurate records of internments and a map of the graveyard.
- Coordinates with the Treasurer the receipt of fees.

3.8 Trustees Committee

This committee is the legal body of the Monthly Meeting. The committee holds custody of the Monthly Meeting's property and is responsible for the management of its assets. The Clerk, Recording Clerk and Treasurer are members of this committee.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Ensures that the Monthly Meeting conforms to its by-laws and suggests changes to the by-laws as appropriate.
- Solicits annual budget requests from all committees.
- Projects the expenses and income of the Meeting and prepares a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. Presents proposed budget to the November Meeting for Worship for Business approval.
- Sets an annual goal for member/attender voluntary contributions.
- Conducts long-range financial planning.
- Notifies the Meeting of and conducts an annual corporation meeting in March.
- Reviews the Monthly Meeting's insurance policies to determine whether coverage is in line with current replacement costs and suggests changes as required.
- Oversees all real and personal property of the Monthly Meeting and reviews all investments. Ensures that investments are being conducted in accordance with the Monthly Meeting's investment guidelines.
- Receives and documents bequests and donations offered to the Monthly Meeting and determines whether the terms are legal and proper, and whether acceptance of such bequests or donations is in the best interest of the Meeting. Recommends a course of action to the Monthly Meeting.

- Receives requests for unbudgeted expenditures and presents them to the Monthly Meeting for approval.
- Oversees the Monthly Meeting's accounts including the General Fund and any special accounts. Makes a report regarding special accounts at the corporation meeting.
- Assists and provides guidance to the Treasurer.
- Appoints from its number one or more trustees to consult on financial matters with Western Quarterly or Philadelphia Yearly Meetings as required.
- Holds responsibility for the contents of the safety deposit box.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.9 Tuition Aid Committee

This committee is charged with providing confidential financial assistance to eligible families in the Meeting.

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Solicits requests for tuition aid from families in which the child or at least one of the parents is an active member of the Meeting. The child must have been accepted into a Friends School and the parents must have applied for financial assistance from the school and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.
- Makes a committee budget request to Trustees based on the number of families requesting tuition aid.
- Determines if the applicants are eligible according to the Monthly Meeting's Tuition Aid Policy.
- Divides the amount budgeted to the committee equally among the applicants.
- Coordinates with the Treasurer to prepare and deliver checks.
- Coordinates with the Treasurer the maintenance of The Education Fund (for college students).
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting when the tuition aid process has been completed, the number of children assisted and the total amount distributed.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

3.10 Worship & Ministry Committee

This committee has as its principal responsibility the oversight of the spiritual life of the Meeting community and especially for the quality and right ordering of Meeting for Worship. It is charged with paying particular attention to the "quality of the spoken ministry and of the ministry of stillness that springs from centered silence." (*Faith and Practice*, PYM).

In exercising its charge, the committee:

- Gives counsel, when it is sought, in "love and grounded in Light" and always as a good listener.
- Teaches by example "through the way Friends' testimonies are reflected in their lives." Members help others "to be ready and obedient should the leading come to enter into vocal ministry or prayer," and they help all who attend the Meeting for Worship to share responsibility for coming together in expectant waiting and prayer.

- Pays special attention to the needs of the young in helping them to feel welcome in and prepared for the experience of worship.
- Cares for the integrity of the Meeting for Worship by being sensitively aware of occasional inappropriate conduct and to speak to such instances of disruption with firm kindness especially as it relates to the appropriate exercise of vocal ministry.
- Serves on interfaith bodies as representatives of the Monthly Meeting and encourages “active involvement by the Meeting in ecumenical activities.”
- Initiates and supports various forms of educational activities, e.g. annual retreats for the deepening and freshening of our relationships with each other and adult forums, for the widening of Friends’ knowledge and experience of religious literature, including the Bible, and for deepening our experience of spiritual development and of the principles of Quaker faith, now and in the future.
- Reports to the Monthly Meeting on its ongoing activities and prepares an Annual Report.

4.0 Responsibilities of Liaisons

4.1 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Western Quarterly Meeting, and Kennett Friends Home Liaisons

The Liaisons are appointed by the Monthly Meeting for an unspecified term. Responsibilities include:

- Subscribes to the mailing list of the organization.
- Monitors the organization’s emails and website. Attends meetings as feasible.
- Keeps the Meeting abreast of the organization’s concerns, events and wellbeing by sharing announcements at the rise of meeting and placing materials in the Meeting House kitchen.

5.0 Annual Calendar

January

- Treasurer begins new fiscal year
- Clerk announces upcoming Corporation Meeting
- Business Meeting appoints auditors
- Treasurer files Annual Franchise Tax Report with the State of Delaware
- Recorder presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Nominations Committee notifies those whose terms have expired and begins the process of identifying replacements

February

- Clerk announces upcoming Corporation Meeting
- Property Committee presents its annual report to Business Meeting
- The Hospitality Committee presents its annual report to Business Meeting.

March

Approved 2013

- Trustees hold Corporation Meeting prior to Business Meeting
- Trustees present annual report to Business Meeting

April

- Nominating Committee presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting conducts Census of Attendance

May

- Peace & Social Concerns Committee presents annual report to Business Meeting

June

- Children's First Day School recesses
- Adult Forums recess
- Contributions Committee presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Friends General Conference holds Annual Gathering
- The June, July or August Business Meeting may be cancelled if there is not a lot of business

July

- Tuition Aid presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting holds Annual Sessions

August

- Trustees solicit annual budget requests from all committees

September

- Trustees meet to discuss and prepare a budget
- Children's First Day School resumes
- Children's Religious Education presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Adult Forums resume

October

- Trustees present first draft of the budget
- Property Committee sets date for annual clean-up
- Worship & Ministry holds the Annual Meeting Retreat
- Worship & Ministry presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Treasurer sends out an appeal for member/attender financial contributions

November

- Property Committee holds annual clean-up
- Business Meeting sets date and plans for Christmas Eve service
- Business Meeting approves the annual budget

- Oversight Committee presents annual report to Business Meeting

December

- Treasurer presents annual report to Business Meeting
- Meeting holds Christmas Eve Service

6.0 By-Laws

6.1 Corporation By-Laws

“To turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of Universal Love becomes the business of our lives” John Woolman

PREAMBLE:

It is the desire of Centre Monthly Meeting that the Trustees of Centre Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Incorporate, conduct all business in the manner of Friends, as described in the following excerpt from the 1972 *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting:

“Trustees, whether corporate or individual, to whom the title to Meeting property has been entrusted, ordinarily act only under the directions of the Meeting and do not have independent authority to administer or regulate the use of the property. Full authority in that regard remains at all times with the Meeting except to the extent that the latter has expressly delegated any such authority to its trustees... To the extent possible under the state law, all corporate proceedings should be carried on in a manner consistent with the procedures which Friends follow in the conduct of Meeting business.”

ARTICLE 1 – TRUSTEES:

The Board of Trustees shall consist of six (6) members or regular attenders of Centre Monthly Meeting who shall be appointed at an annual corporation meeting.

Two (2) of the Trustees shall be the Clerk and the Treasurer of the Monthly Meeting. The Recording Clerk may serve in the place of the Clerk if the Clerk declines to serve. The Clerk (or the Recording Clerk) and the Treasurer may remain Trustees as long as they hold those offices. They may be nominated and appointed as regular Trustees after their terms of office expire.

Four (4) of the members of the Board of Trustees shall be by appointment, at a regular meeting of the Corporation, from nominees named by the Nominating Committee of the Monthly Meeting and approved by the Meeting for Worship for Business of the Monthly Meeting.

Recognizing that serving as a Trustee is an essential part of the ministry of the Meeting, the Nominating Committee is charged with nominating individuals who can be trusted to: carry out the will of the Monthly Meeting, who are well-versed in the ways of Friends, who understand Friends’ financial principles, and who will honor and care for the financial legacies of the past while looking to the needs of the future. The four initial appointed Trustees shall serve for two (2), three (3), four (4), and six (6) years. No appointed Trustee shall succeed themselves.

In the event that any Trustee cannot fulfill their duties, the Nominating Committee shall suggest a nominee to complete their term of office.

ARTICLE II – OFFICERS

The Trustees shall choose a Clerk and a Secretary to be chosen from their number to serve for a minimum of one (1) year, or until their successors shall be chosen.

A Treasurer, who is Treasurer of the Monthly Meeting, shall be appointed at an annual corporation meeting of the Corporation to serve for (1) year, or until a successor shall be appointed.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Corporation shall be held in March, at a date to be chosen at the January Meeting for Worship for Business of the Monthly Meeting. Auditors will also be chosen at the January Meeting for Worship for Business.

Section 2 – Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Corporation may be called by the Clerk of the Trustees or at the request of any five (5) members of the Monthly Meeting.

Section 3 – Regular Meetings of the Board of Trustees

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held at least two (2) times each year.

Section 4 – Special Meetings of the Board of Trustees

Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Clerk of the Trustees or at the request of any two (2) members of the Board or at the direction of the Monthly Meeting. Five (5) days notice shall be sufficient notice for special meetings.

Section 5 – “Quorum” of the Board of Trustees

At all meetings of the Board of Trustees, four (4) members shall constitute a “quorum.”

ARTICLE IV – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 – Clerk of the Trustees

The Clerk of the Trustees shall exercise the powers granted in the Certificate of Incorporation and shall preside at the annual Corporation Meeting and all meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2 – Secretary

The Secretary of the Trustees shall keep correct minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Corporation and of the Board of Trustees. The minutes of all meetings shall be read in tentative form prior to the rise of such meetings. At each subsequent meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting

shall, as the first order of business, be corrected or amended as required. A typed copy of these minutes will then be entered in the permanent minute book.

Section 3 – Treasurer

The Treasurer shall exercise the powers granted in the Certificate of Incorporation and shall receive all funds of the Corporation and deposit the same in such depositories as are named by the Board of Trustees. Such accounts shall be kept in the name of the Corporation and the Treasurer shall give such bond as the Board may determine.

The Treasurer shall not disburse funds except as directed by the Monthly Meeting.

ARTICLE V – DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The six (6) members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute the Finance Committee.

Section 1 – Budget and Meeting Contributions

The Board of Trustees shall prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year and present such budget to the November Meeting for Worship for Business of the Monthly Meeting. The Board of Trustees shall concomitantly prepare a suggested voluntary contribution amount for adult members to be used for Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meeting purposes.

Section 2 – Insurance Policies

The Board of Trustees shall before the annual corporation meeting examine all insurance policies to determine whether coverage is in line with current replacement costs and suggest to the Corporation changes as required.

Section 3 – Property

The Board of Trustees shall continuously oversee all real and personal property and shall review all investments. The trustees shall seek to follow the directions of the Monthly Meeting as to investment philosophy.

The Board of Trustees shall oversee real estate management and contractual agreements only if directed by the Monthly Meeting.

Section 4 – Bequests and Donations

When bequests are made or donations are offered to the Corporation, the Board of Trustees shall determine whether the terms are legal and proper and whether the acceptance of such bequests or donations is in the best interests of the Corporation, and the Board shall forward its recommendations to the Monthly Meeting.

The Board of Trustees shall prepare a separate description of each bequest showing the title, the date, the name of the donor and the specific use to which the bequest is to be put and shall present this to the Corporation. It shall also review each bequest at least annually to determine whether its terms are

being complied with and shall endorse the record book with the date of review. A report on all bequests shall be read at the annual meeting of the Corporation.

When required, donations shall be separately described and a record shall be made of the specific use of each.

Section 5 – Special Accounts

Special accounts shall be documented and described separately to avoid confusion as to their intent. The Board of Trustees shall supervise the activity in these accounts and make a report of each to the annual corporation meeting.

Section 6 – Requests for Unbudgeted Expenditures

Requests for unbudgeted expenditures by Committees or individuals shall require approval by the Monthly Meeting.

Section 7 – Quarterly Meeting and Yearly Meeting Representation

Upon occasions when it is necessary to consult with the Quarterly Meeting or Yearly Meeting on financial activities in which the Monthly Meeting may be involved, the Trustees shall appoint from their number a trustee or trustees to represent the interests of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE VI – AUDIT

The Monthly Meeting shall appoint an audit committee of two or three members of the Corporation (none of whom shall be members of the Board of Trustees) who shall as soon as possible after the close of each fiscal year (the 31st of the 12th month) and before the annual corporation meeting, audit the records of the Treasurer, compare all balances, examine all investments, and report the findings to the annual meeting of the Corporation.

AMENDMENT 1 – INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE BEQUESTS

The Trustees of Centre Meeting are requested to insure a prudent and conservative investment policy with respect to the selection of investment choices.

The Friends Fiduciary Corporation shall remain a primary source of investment for Centre Meeting. All investment holdings not under the Friends Fiduciary Corporation shall be diversified and under professional management (for example, Mutual Funds, Bond Funds, etc.)

Regarding specific investments, Trustees shall consciously consider environmentally and socially responsible investments. Additionally, Trustees shall consider the cost basis and possible benefits of investment management when selecting an investment.

Any Bequests left to Centre Monthly Meeting which consist of Stocks and/or Bonds (except Mutual Funds) shall be reviewed by Trustees within ninety (90) days and dispositioned as per the guidelines noted above.

7.0 Policies

7.1 Centre Meeting Graveyard Burial Policy

1. Graveyard committee is a sub-committee of Property Committee.
2. Current plots are 8 by 3.5 feet and are sold with a memo of understanding but not with an officially Delaware state filed deed of ownership.
3. Plot cost is 500 dollars each for non-members at Centre Meeting. Cost for Centre Meeting members and long-time attenders is 200 dollars.
4. Each grave shall be marked within a reasonable time after interment, before the exact location of the grave becomes obscure. This should usually occur within 6 months of interment. The monument shall be of a conventional material such as granite, marble or bronze. It should be simple and dignified to conform to the general atmosphere of the Friends burial ground. One headstone or monument may be erected on each plot or a doublewide monument maybe placed on adjacent plots. The headstone or monuments shall not exceed 15 inches in height or 36 inches in width.
5. Plantings on individual plots are limited to small plants, which are easy to control. Tree and large shrub planting are not allowed for individual plot holders.
6. The graveyard committee is responsible to maintain records of burial in the graveyard along with death certificates, such as are available. Records of plot ownership and the sale of plots are also the responsibility of the graveyard sub-committee.
7. Marking grave plots for interment is the responsibility of the graveyard subcommittee.
8. Urns of cremated remains maybe buried by the family or by someone contacted by the family with the agreement of a member of the graveyard subcommittee.
9. Interments of full remains are to be performed by a person approved by Centre Meeting Graveyard Committee who will be responsible for opening and closing the grave. This is also the approved company for setting Monuments. The cost of these services is the responsibility of the estate of the person being interred.
10. There shall be no charges for marking the plot or burial charges from Centre Meeting, except for the cost of the plot as noted above.
11. Grazing animals may be kept in the graveyard to keep the grass trimmed.

Approved 1/02

7.2 Child Protection Policy

Centre Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Child Abuse Prevention Policy

Mission

Centre Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is committed to honoring that of God in everyone, and to being an environment in which every member, attender, or visitor can feel, and truly be, free from fear or dishonor. We respect each other as sacred and uphold that respect through our actions. We are especially mindful of children and young people who participate in our Meeting's programs. Friends working with children, as well as the children under their care, are expected to treat one another with integrity and respect. As a community we affirm our commitment to true safety, which includes tenderness, affection, honesty promoting positive relationships, and supporting spiritual growth for everyone. We will not tolerate any form of abuse, whether verbal, psychological, physical, or sexual. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children and youth of Centre Monthly Meeting from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

Policy

1. A full criminal background check (paid for by the Meeting) will be required of the Religious Education Coordinator *prior* to being hired. In addition, a full criminal background check will also be required of any individual wishing to work with a group of children alone. This would include the following kinds of volunteers: First Day School teachers, nursery care teachers, and adults who supervise children on overnight events. Such individuals will interview with the Religious Education for Children Committee (REC), and complete Child Abuse Prevention training (CAP).
2. All First Day School volunteers and employees who will interact with children must have attended Centre Meeting for at least six months or (in rare circumstances) have the approval of the REC. This time of interaction between us and the applicant allows for better evaluation for suitability of the applicant to work with children.
3. In the event that the background check comes back indicating that an individual has been convicted of a crime of violence, either physical or sexual, they will not be permitted to work with the children of First Day School.
4. For outings which involve overnight activities and require additional chaperones, as often as possible, the chaperones should be chosen from parents and those persons who have completed the CAP training and or given approval by the REC.
5. Field trips sponsored by REC will require the attendance of at least two adults who are members or regular attenders.
6. It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session. In these instances either the adult will have a clear criminal background check or doors to the classroom will remain open and will be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation
7. This policy will be evaluated every two years by the REC to reflect changes in the Centre Monthly Meeting community.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) which endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- Physical abuse – any physical injury to a child which is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- Emotional abuse – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- Sexual abuse – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- Neglect – depriving a child of their essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at Centre Monthly Meeting becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Clerk of Centre Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends for further action including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at Centre Monthly Meeting or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation.
3. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report.
4. We will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists.
5. We will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, a team will be formed to investigate the circumstances of the incident. The team should act only in consultation with our insurance company and/or attorney.
6. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with children or youth.
7. **<NAME OR TITLE OF DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSON>** will be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. All other workers should refrain from speaking to the media.

8. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of Centre Monthly Meeting not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with Religious Education Coordinator to develop a plan of action.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of Centre Monthly Meeting not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with Religious Education Coordinator if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Restroom Guidelines

All children old enough and capable to toilet themselves shall have the privacy to do so without supervision in the bathroom provided in the schoolhouse. In cases where the child is incapable of toileting themselves, only an adult of the same gender may accompany the child and may only do so with the permission of the parent

For the protection of all, workers should *never* be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class. **Accidental Injuries to Children**

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

Training

Centre Monthly Meeting will periodically provide training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

7.3 Schoolhouse Use Policy

Friends at Centre Meeting hope to have the schoolhouse be used for functions of the Meeting and for activities that improve the community. Community activities need to fall within the beliefs and practices of Friends at Centre Meeting.

Users of the schoolhouse will fall into four groups:

1. Direct activities of Centre Meeting.
2. Single use activities of non-profit groups or members or attenders of Centre.
3. Single use activities of other groups.
4. Multiple use times of a single activity.

Costs for schoolhouse use:

1. Groups one and two will have no cost, however, donations are accepted.
2. Groups three and four will be asked to pay \$25.00 per hour for the meeting room and \$25.00 per hour for kitchen use (charge based on covering cost of utilities). For group four there will be an agreement to leave the building clean as it was found and we will ask a deposit of \$25.00 per event prior to use to cover the cost of cleaning in case it is not cleaned. If adequate cleaning occurs the deposit will be returned at the end of the agreement.

Special concerns:

1. No partisan political activity will be allowed
2. Group four users must have insurance coverage for the activity
3. Group four usage will only be scheduled for a fixed period and renewal or repeated usage should not be expected, but may be renegotiated.
4. Group four usage will be with a signed memo of understanding which allows for the Meeting or the user to discontinue the agreement at any time.
5. There will be no posting of signs from any group except Centre Meeting on the property of Centre Meeting.

Approval of and scheduling for schoolhouse usage will be by an appointed member of the Property Committee:

1. The individual so appointed has the authority to make decisions about the acceptability of the requesting group and use purpose.
2. If the usage or group is questionable, it will be reviewed by Property Committee and may be referred to the Meeting for Worship for Business for final decision.

Approved ??/?

7.4 Tuition Aid Policy

Centre Meeting's Tuition Aid Plan (for K to 12)

Purpose:

In order to nurture the spiritual growth of the children of Centre Meeting and to better enable our children to integrate "heart, mind and hand in spiritual wholeness," (*Faith and Practice*, p. 44), the Meeting has established a fund that will be used to help families send children who are active in Centre Meeting to Quaker schools and colleges.

Tuition Aid Plan (for PreK - grade 12)

1. FINANCING THE PLAN

The Meeting will budget \$10,000 initially for this plan.

2. WHO QUALIFIES?

A child active in the life of Centre Meeting qualifies if the child is a member or has at least one parent who is a member of Meeting. The child must also have been accepted to attend a Friends primary or secondary school, and the parent must have applied for tuition aid at the Friends school and at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Observations: The Tuition Aid Committee will determine if the child is active in the life of Centre Meeting and, if not a member, that a parent of the child is a Member. There will be no "means test." The Tuition Aid Committee will confirm that each family being considered for a grant has applied for tuition aid at both the school to which the child has been admitted and at PYM. The Tuition Aid Committee will also confirm that the total of all tuition grants for that child does not exceed actual tuition cost. Checks will be written to the school.

3. HOW WILL AVAILABLE FUNDS BE ALLOCATED?

The \$10,000 in the initial year, and the amount available in each subsequent year will be divided equally among all eligible children. The maximum for any one child will be \$5,000 for fiscal year 2007.

4. WHO WILL ADMINISTER THIS PROGRAM?

The Tuition Aid Committee will administer the program.

5. WHAT OTHER SOURCES OF TUITION AID ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE?

The PYM Education Granting Group currently provides grants to children of members of PYM Meetings (about \$800 currently). Most Friends schools have tuition aid programs, which involve means testing.

Approved 4/07

8.0 Procedure

8.1 Committee Procedures for Paid Contractors

The committee will announce a job to the Meeting. The Property Committee may use its discretion to engage a contractor without first announcing the job to the Meeting.

It is recommended that the committee determine if the job can be accomplished by a volunteer within the Meeting, or if it requires a paid contractor, either within or outside of the Meeting. The committee negotiates and approves the amount to be paid for the job, and this should be in writing.

If two or more ask for the work, the committee will select whoever seems the most qualified and affordable.

If the committee determines that the scope of the job changes, the committee evaluates the need for the changes and fee adjustment. The paid contractor does not continue the work until a new fee is determined.

Bills from a paid contractor shall be sent to the committee. After the work is done and the committee approves, they sign and promptly forward the bill to the Treasurer for payment.

Oversight will periodically review these procedures.

Approved 12/13

8.2 Marriage and Commitment Procedure

"Our life is love, peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand." Issac Penington, 1667

In May, 2003 Centre Meeting approved the following statement with regard to Quaker marriage procedures.

"Any leading towards commitment or marriage between any two persons, requested to be placed under the care of the Meeting by member(s) and/or attenders, will be considered using the methods described in the 1997 Revised Edition of *Faith and Practice*, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends."

I. Application Procedure

When a couple requests marriage at Centre Monthly Meeting they should understand that the process will take approximately five months. The couple notifies the Meeting of their desire to be married by writing a letter to the Clerk, stating their relationship to Centre Meeting and the anticipated date of the ceremony. When the Clerk receives the request, the letter is read at Meeting for Worship for Business, often after preliminary consideration by the Oversight Committee. (See *Faith and Practice*, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1997, or 2002, page 47.) If requests for marriage with

the help of the Meeting are received from non-members of Centre Meeting, using the Friends' marriage ceremony, the Meeting for Worship for Business should consider the request in the light of the advice given in *Faith and Practice*, page 52.

The Clerk forwards a copy of the letter from the couple to the Oversight Committee and the committee nominates four members of Centre Meeting, including the name of a convener, to serve as a Clearness Committee and submits the proposed names to the next Meeting for Worship for Business for approval.

II. Clearness Committee

Following approval, the Clearness Committee meets with the couple one or more times. It may be, however, that the Committee will also wish to meet with each member of the couple separately. They help the couple to understand the distinctive character and process of a Quaker marriage in which their vows are made to each other with Divine assistance, and in the presence of a loving community. They discuss with the couple the wording of the vows that will be spoken at the ceremony and recorded in a marriage certificate.

The Clearness Committee also explores the couple's readiness to make a lasting commitment to each other, their mutual love and respect and the degree of parental acceptance. They should be aware of any prior commitments that might affect the proposed marriage, and if there are children from a previous marriage, thoughtful consideration should be given to their integration.

The Clearness Committee should be guided by the queries, in *Faith and Practice*, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997, or 2002, page 49.

After determining the couple's readiness for marriage, the Clearness Committee presents its report to the next Monthly Meeting for Business.

III. Support Committee

When the marriage has been approved by the Meeting for Business, the Oversight Committee appoints a Support Committee to assist the couple with arrangements for the wedding and to provide guidance and care throughout the ceremony and afterwards. Their assistance includes:

- A. deciding the time, place, and details for the ceremony;

- B. advising the couple of their responsibility to obtain six copies of a legal marriage license, as well as a Quaker marriage certificate with wording previously approved by their Clearness Committee. (A pre-printed certificate can be obtained from Friends General Conference Bookstore in Philadelphia, 1-800-966-4556, or the couple may prefer to arrange for a hand-written or illustrated copy.);

- C. requesting a member of the Meeting to act as officiate at the ceremony, who will ensure that copies of the marriage license are appropriately signed and taken to the local county office;

(Note: Delaware officials may question the status of the Officiate since they require the name of a traditional ordained minister to appear on the license.)

- D. appointing a member of Centre Meeting who will rise at the beginning of the marriage ceremony to explain Quaker worship and Quaker wedding procedure;
- E. appointing a friend to read the certificate aloud, after the couple have spoken their vows and signed the document:
- F. ensuring that the marriage certificate is ready, with suitable pen, permanent black ink, a table, a sheet of paper to protect the certificate as it is signed, and weights to hold it in place.
- G. appointing, with suggestions from the couple, one or two persons to supervise the signing of the certificate (using only pens provided). These persons may also be responsible for taking the certificate to the reception if further signatures are needed;
- H. working with Property Committee for supervision of parking;
- I. checking on lights, heat, doors, and arrangement of benches.

IV. The Ceremony

The ceremony takes place in a silent Meeting for Worship at a designated time. As the meeting begins, the Officiate will rise to explain the nature of the worship for the benefit of those unaccustomed to Quaker practice.

After a period of silence, the couple will rise and taking each other by the hand, will make their vows. A usual format, which may be changed by the couple after agreement with the Clearness Committee, is as follows:

“In the presence of God and these our Friends, I (name) take thee (name) to be my husband/wife/partner promising with Divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband/wife/partner so long as we both shall live.”

The certificate will then be brought before the couple, who sign their names, and the appointed friend will read the certificate aloud.

The Meeting for Worship will resume, giving sufficient time for those who feel moved to speak to share in the ceremony. The close of meeting is indicated by a shaking of hands, and the Celebrant will remind those present to sign the certificate as witnesses.

The procedure to be followed during the ceremony itself is explained in further detail in *Faith and Practice*, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997, or 2002, page 51.

V. Following the Wedding

The couple must sign the copies of the marriage license in black, permanent ink. Members of the Support Committee must also sign the copies of the license. One copy of the license is given to the couple before they leave the Meeting House.

The Celebrant is responsible for taking copies of the license (within five days of the wedding) to the Clerk of the Peace, City/County Building, 800 French Street, Wilmington, DE, 19810.

The couple are responsible to see that the marriage certificate is copied, reduced to any size smaller than 16" x 24" in black and white. The copy is given to the Clerk of the Meeting to be kept in the Meeting archives.

Approved 12/08

8.3 Membership Procedure

Ref: Faith and Practice, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (2006), page 34 ff.

Members are expected to participate in communal worship, to share in the work and service of the Society, and to live in harmony with its basic beliefs and practices. Membership entails readiness to live as part of the Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meeting. Specifically, this means participation in Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Worship for Business, committee work, and religious education, pastoral care, and witness to the broader community.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Monthly Meeting is the final authority in all matters concerning an individual's membership. There is no membership in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting other than membership in a particular Monthly Meeting. Attenders who apply for membership should do so in a formal request to the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting, stating why they are moved to join the Religious Society of Friends and relating briefly their response to Friends' beliefs and practices. The Clerk may share such requests with the Meeting and then refer them to the Oversight Committee, or may refer them directly to the Oversight Community, which in either case promptly appoints a clearness committee to visit the applicant.

Applicants who are members of another religious body are expected give up that membership as they join the Meeting, formally advising the other organization of their intent to join the Religious Society of Friends, and endeavoring to obtain a letter of release from their previous religious affiliation.

The clearness committee should undertake this visit as a serious responsibility both to the Meeting and to the applicant. The visit should take place in an atmosphere of openness and caring so that both committee members and the applicant feel comfortable in exploring fundamental questions of religious belief and practice and the responsibilities involved in membership in the Society. Some of the following questions are taken from *Faith and Practice*:

- What are the milestones in your spiritual journey? How do you expect membership in the Meeting to help you in this journey?
- What gifts do you believe you might bring to the Meeting community? In what ways would you like to share your time and talents with the Meeting?
- How familiar are you with Friends' beliefs and practice? Are there some in particular that attracted you to Friends? Are there some you feel troubling or disturbing?

- Are you comfortable with a Society whose unity of spirit coexists with a diversity of beliefs? Are you prepared to join a Meeting family that includes people whose perspectives may differ considerably from yours?
- Have you weighed the Queries and Advices? In what ways does their guidance speak to you?
- How closely are you in harmony with Friends' testimonies? With Friends' work for social justice?
- Might you someday feel called to take actions that are difficult, unpopular, or even contrary to the civil laws?
- Do you understand the relationship between the Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings? Are you aware of and willing to meet our expectations of financial support for programs, services, and facilities at these three levels of our organizational structure?

If the Oversight Committee approves the application, they recommend acceptance to the Monthly Meeting at the next convenient Meeting for Worship for Business. Action may be postponed until a later session to give time where needed for members to become well acquainted with the prospective member.

If the Monthly Meeting approves the application, it records the acceptance into membership and appoints one or two Friends to welcome the new member.

Approved 1/11

8.4 Transfer of Membership Procedure

Duties of the Monthly Meeting to which the Friend is moving:

1. The Clerk acknowledges the receipt of the letter from the Monthly Meeting from which the member is moving.
2. The Clerk refers the letter to the Oversight Committee who recommend action to the Monthly Meeting.
3. If there is no objection, the Monthly Meeting accepts the transfer and records the Friend as a member, and sends information to that effect to the issuing meeting.
4. The Monthly Meeting should appoint one or more Friends to welcome the new member, including an invitation to attend Meetings for Worship and for Business, serve on committees, and share in the financial support of the Meeting. (At Centre Meeting it is customary also to welcome new and transfer members at a potluck.)
5. The Recorder should keep a list of all letters of transfer issued and accepted by the Meeting. The accepting Meeting's recorder should notify the Yearly Meeting of the new member.

Approved (Date Unknown)

8.5 Memorial Service Procedure

Clerk notifies Oversight Committee. A date and time are determined in accordance with the wishes of the family. Appropriate notice should be sent out by email or newspaper acquainting friends of the family as to the plans for the memorial.

Clerk notifies Graveyard Committee, which takes responsibility to:

1. identify the plot if one has been selected;
2. determine whether a casket is to be buried, and if so, arrange for the plot to be made ready;
3. if, on the other hand, ashes are to be buried in an urn, arrange for an appropriate burial site to accommodate it, making sure that the urn is brought to the Meeting House.

Oversight notifies the Property Committee, as far in advance as possible, the time of the memorial meeting and the likely number of attenders. The Property Committee will arrange for parking and direction of traffic. They will also arrange for the Caretaker to clean the building, mow the grass in the graveyard if necessary, and open the partitions in the Meeting House at the appointed time.

Oversight assigns a greeter to welcome guests at the front door, notifying them of general Quaker procedure if they are unfamiliar, suggesting where they may sit, and requesting that cell phones be turned off. A second greeter may be posted outside to point the way to the entrance door. One or two other Meeting members may be asked to sit among those attending in order to maintain the spiritual quality of the meeting, restraining, if possible, loud talking and inappropriate messages.

Oversight appoints someone to have care of the meeting, prepared to explain in simple terms what is to happen and to oversee the beginning and ending, allowing 45 minutes to an hour, or more if felt to be appropriate.

Oversight may wish to confer with family about placing an obituary in the newspaper. If flowers are to be ordered or made available, it may be appropriate to make some announcement of this fact and to determine who will be responsible for ordering and placement. If the family wishes to indicate an alternative in lieu of flowers, they should be asked to provide necessary information regarding names and addresses of proposed recipients.

Also, Oversight may discuss with the family their wishes regarding a gravesite observance, determining in advance whether or not others besides the family should be invited to be present. Other questions may need to be answered. For instance, does the family want an actual burial at the time of the memorial? Do they want any observance prior to the memorial at the gravesite?

A decision should be made about whether or not refreshments are to be supplied, and by whom, making sure that suitable supplies of plates, cups, napkins, etc. are available.

If there are likely to be children who need to be cared for, Oversight may wish to make arrangements with the Religious Education Committee to plan how this is to be accomplished.

It is generally assumed that the family will cover the expenses associated with the memorial, but in some cases it may be appropriate for someone from the Meeting to assist in overseeing the payment of bills submitted by various suppliers with the understanding that the family will be able to reimburse the Meeting with one payment at the end.

Approved 12/13

8.6 Process for an Individual to Apply to Centre Friends Meeting for a Grant

I. Procedure

1. A CFM member asks the CFM clerk for an application.
2. After answering the application questions, the member gives it to the clerk.
3. The clerk forwards the application to the appropriate standing committee (Worship & Ministry, Oversight, or other).
4. After reading the application the committee meets with the applicant (could be as a clearness committee) or sets up a clearness committee that includes others at Centre.
5. The clearness committee (or standing committee) meets with the applicants, listening deeply and asking questions, with intention to help the person explore the project's meaning/value for self and to discern (on behalf of the Meeting) the fit of the proposed undertaking for the person's, the Meeting's, the world's well-being. The clearness committee recommends to the standing committee a course of action.
6. The standing committee, reflecting on what it has learned and the committee's budget, responds to the request.
7. Each grant by a committee is reported to Monthly Meeting for Worship for Business unless the clerk of the standing committee and the clerk of the Centre Meeting agree that the grant should remain confidential with the committee.

II. Application

Directions: Please answer the following questions and then speak with the Clerk of Centre Meeting.

1. What amount of money is wanted? And for what purpose?
2. What financial circumstances in your life have led to this undertaking or need? Do you anticipate any future requests for this undertaking or need?
3. From what other resources have you sought financial support? What will you contribute?
4. What are the expected outcomes of the experience, for you as well as outcomes for the Meeting.

Approved 2/2010

8.7 Support Committee Procedures

When the Oversight Committee receives a request for a clearness committee or a support committee the following steps should be taken.

First, it is appropriate to determine whether the person making the request (the focus person) has a particular question that needs to be answered, in which case a clearness committee may best serve the need. Persons considering membership, for instance, typically seek clarity of mind with the help of a clearness committee. Also those considering marriage are expected to meet with other selected persons in the Meeting to reach a sense of clarity regarding their intentions. Clearness committees are described in more detail elsewhere. The purpose of this statement is to describe the nature and function of the support committee.

If the focus person feels the need for spiritual or emotional support over a period of time, it is more likely that a support committee is needed. Such a need might arise for a variety of reasons. For instance, one may be undertaking a particular task that requires discernment or sustained effort. Or one is going through a difficult or challenging period and needs the support of trusted friends. Or perhaps one has taken on a new responsibility and feels the need to learn from others' experience.

When the Oversight Committee receives a request from a member of the Meeting for a support committee, the focus person is asked to submit names of persons he or she would prefer to have on the committee. The Oversight Committee then appoints three or four members to serve on the committee.

The following guidelines should be observed:

- The support committee will select one person as convener, who will make arrangements for times and places for the meetings.
- The focus person will offer a prepared outline of his or her personal need.
- The committee members are then free to ask relevant questions of the focus person, without any sense of directing or advising, allowing sufficient time for all to listen in an unhurried and prayerful manner.
- The meetings of the support committee with the focus person are conducted in a prayerful manner. Members may be moved to ask questions, but will not offer specific advice ("I think you ought to ..."), and will give due time for the focus person to express his or her concerns. Periods of silence should be regarded as important and helpful to both the members and the focus person.
- Approximately two hours should be allowed for each meeting, and participants should be ready to meet together for two, or possibly three times.

Approved (Date Unknown)

9.0 Important Minutes

9.1 Marriage

"Any leading towards commitment or marriage between persons, requested to be placed under the care of the Meeting by the member(s) or attender(s) so led, will be considered using the methods of *Faith and Practice*. The leading will be considered by a clearness committee which may report to the Meeting for Worship for Business that the commitment or marriage seems rightly led by the inner light, and that the clearness committee is in support of a minute extending the care of the Meeting to the leading.

Such a report by the clearness committee and subsequent minute by the Meeting on being rightly led by the inner light will always be prayerfully determined, as far as humanly possible, without bias or prejudiced consideration of any extraneous matters such as any person's religious affiliation, race, age, gender, national origin, fertility, intention to raise or bear children, mental capacity, bodily integrity, legal capacity to marry, or other matters."

Approved 4/2003

10.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Clearness Committees: A Friends' Approach to Discernment, Simple Guidelines for Participation, Friends Council on Education

Listening deeply with intention,
Being awake and present to another person
Is a gift.

What is a clearness committee?

A clearness committee meets with a person who is unclear on how to proceed in a keenly felt concern or dilemma. The goal of a clearness committee is to support a person in reaching a deeper understanding of the issue and clarity about how to move forward.

What are the underlying assumptions of the clearness process?

- Each of us has an inner teacher/inner light that can guide us; therefore, the answers sought are within the person seeking clearness.
- The clearness process embodies the paradox of solitude and community. It is grounded in the belief that there are no external authorities on life's deepest issues. There is only the authority (the light) that lies within each of us waiting to be heard.
- A group of caring friends/colleagues can serve as channels for spirit-lead guidance in drawing out the inner teacher.

What is required for the clearness process?

- Listening deeply with intention and compassion.
- Resisting the impulse to give advice.
- Resisting the impulse to think about what you are going to say while another person is talking.
- Accepting, for now, that no one has answers for someone else.
- Hold the person and the issue in the light.
- Using the silence to reflect and search inwardly.
- Maintaining curiosity about what might emerge from the silence.
- Using your ability to ask searching questions.
- Maintaining a commitment to be open to the spirit in order to support discernment.
- Creating safe and sacred space for the person to seek the truth.

Double confidentiality

The Clearness Process is covered by an agreement of "double" confidentiality. When the process is over:

- Group members will not speak with others about what happened during their time together.

- Group members will not speak with the presenter about the issue unless s/he requests a conversation.

Appendix B: How to Do a Friendly Audit, by Jack N. Childs, Jr.

Somehow, through a combination of interest, pressure, time available, guilty conscience about doing your share, etc., you've been appointed an auditor of some Meeting's financial books and been told it's a simple task.

You're not quite sure what that involves and would like to show up not quite completely ignorant at the time of the audit. You would also like to know a little of what you're expected to do or look for. This sheet will give you a rough start.

The primary tasks and responsibilities of an auditor are:

- 1) Make sure all the assets claimed on the closing date are there, in the proper accounts.
- 2) Check that the bank accounts have been reconciled on a monthly basis.
- 3) Check if there are any liabilities on the closing date.
- 4) Check to make sure that there is some system of checks and balances for income and expenses.

Balance Sheet:

The person (treasurer) whose books you are auditing should have prepared a financial statement (balance sheet) showing all the assets for which he/she is responsible at a given date (often 12/31 or 6/30). He/she should also have a similar statement one year earlier (or when he/she became responsible) which lists the assets and their values on the opening dates. He/she should be able to explain to you how the assets and their values on the opening sheet get to the assets and their values on the proposed closing sheet.

Assets:

The checking account usually has the most transactions and deserves attention. Look at the monthly bank statements, particularly the one at the closing date and make sure that the bank's balance is the same as the one the treasurer claims. Often the two do not quite match because there may be outstanding checks or deposits not yet received by the bank. The treasurer will explain this and his explanation is called a reconciliation.

A savings account or a money market fund is similarly handled.

Other financial assets, such as securities (investments: stocks, bonds, mutual funds) should show the number of shares and values on opening and closing dates. Mutual funds will send periodic statements that show these and so it is easy to check any changes that occurred during the period. Statements of banks, brokers or other custodians will show what securities (and changes in quantities) they hold. If the

treasurer holds securities in a safe deposit box (rare these days) the safe deposit box should be visited and a list made for comparison.

Still other assets, such as real estate, leases, buses, etc., probably are not on relatively simple books and so are not dealt with here. If they do appear, ask the treasurer how he/she obtained the opening and year end values and if he/she applied any depreciation or amortization. Nod your head knowingly or ask more questions such as “What does that mean and is it realistic?” Then you can nod your head knowingly at the answer.

Trusts (over which the Meeting controls the investment management): These should be included on some investment account statement somewhere. This might be a Friends Fiduciary, bank or brokerage account statement. When reviewing, try to apply the ideas gleaned from above.

Accounts Receivable, hopefully none, but there might be the case where you have always received the income from a trust on Dec 31 but this year Dec 31 is on a Friday and the income doesn't actually arrive until Tuesday, Jan 4. In that case, in order to make a good consistent comparison with prior years it might show up as a receivable. (Alternatively it can be shown as received on 12/31, sometimes known as keeping the books open until Jan 4th).

Liabilities:

Hopefully the books are on a cash basis, as opposed to an accrual basis. Look to see if the proposed liability really belongs in the accounting period. *Example:* If the treasurer has determined that a contractor is due a certain payment as of 12/31 but has not paid it by year end, it is a liability. *But:* If the electric bill comes in 12/20 for the period ending 12/10 but is not due until 1/5 it is **not** a liability. (It should, however, have been handled the same way last year). If there's a mortgage on the property, the current value of the mortgage will show as a liability. If you owe on an installment plan for some other asset, that unpaid balance is a liability.

Net Assets:

Net assets are the total of the assets minus the total liabilities. Sometimes there are restricted and unrestricted net assets and these should be listed separately. An example of a restricted asset might be the graveyard fund, while the checking account or general investment account is unrestricted.

Dealing with Restricted or Designated Funds:

Restricted funds are those funds which the donor or some legal document restricts. Designated funds are designated for use by the Meeting and the Meeting can change this designation.

Income only may be used for the Mary Brown Fund. If that is the case, then the principal of the fund is permanently restricted but the portion of the assets that represents the unspent income (probably checking account) is unrestricted. Suppose the Alfred Williams Fund permits only the income to be used and only for the Graveyard upkeep. Then the principal of that fund is permanently restricted and that portion of the assets that represents the unspent income is temporarily restricted, until such time as it is spent on the graveyard. Suppose the Helen Enead Fund is available, principal and income, for

scholarships. Then both the principal portion (probably investments) and the income portion (probably checking account) are temporarily restricted assets. In this case the principal portion may be on the books for decades but it's still temporarily restricted. (Foundation grantors often restrict their grants for special programs and require careful accounting of expenditures. Often, too, they allow up to a certain percentage for overhead, which you may put into your organization's unrestricted general fund.)

Your meeting receives \$20,000 as an unrestricted bequest. The meeting minutes its decision to use this gift for a new bathroom. This is then a designated fund. The money remains in the unrestricted assets but the treasurer should be tracking the use of this gift.

Statement of Revenues and Expenses:

The treasurer should also have a statement of revenues and expenses. Revenues will usually consist of gifts or contributions, interest, dividends, capital gains distributions, rent, or grants. Expenses include payments for utilities, building maintenance, babysitting, reimbursements for supplies, etc. The total expenses for the year will include recurring items and some one-time events. They should be compared to last year's totals and any major differences should be explained.

If you receive contributions from an individual of \$250 or more, make sure that an acknowledgement goes out stating that no goods or services were supplied in return. A copy should be kept on the premises. Although the IRS does not require receipts for contributions below \$250, it is a good practice to send receipts for all gifts.

Be careful about mortgage receipts; they are usually part interest and part return of capital (principal, or investment). Also, when you sell an investment, part of the total receipt is return of your investment and part is either a gain or loss. Often, but not always, short term gains are considered income and long term gains are returned to principal.

Checking Account Expenditures:

Look at the endorsements on the backs of the canceled checks (or facsimiles). Spot check if there are numerous checks. Many banks, however, no longer return canceled checks, reducing bank charges. If there are checks written for large amounts to non-recurring payees, ask for more documentation as to purpose. You might also want to check with the payee to confirm that they, in fact, received and cashed the check. If a check is made out to the treasurer or another signer on the account, ask for documentation or an "OK" from another responsible meeting member.

Payrolls are always a pain. If your organization has any sense it will use a payroll service, like Paychex, which will handle all the complexities, particularly the Federal, State, and Local tax reporting, and will prepare the paychecks as well as the Federal, State, and Local tax checks. There is a considerable risk of liability here if one is not up on all tax laws, forms, and changes in them.

Comments:

Don't hesitate to ask questions on what, why, how, when etc. Ask for examples of routine transactions and see how they're handled. Ask if there were any unusual transactions during the year (such as adding

or disposing of an asset, a special emergency expenditure, acquiring a computer, or transferring cash to or from an investment account). Look at how they were handled. Ask how gains, realized and unrealized were handled. Listen to the treasurer's concerns: record retention, bonding, succession, security, asset mix, strategy, etc.

Be sure to find out where the books are kept in case a truck hits the treasurer. The "books" include ledgers, bank statements, IRS tax exempt number, wills, etc. If the records are kept on computer, please make sure that a back-up is regularly done (monthly would be good) and kept offsite. If the records are kept manually, copies of the account balances and statements should be kept offsite and updated regularly as well.

Prepare your auditor's report:

Often the Treasurer will have a draft ready for you to sign. It should say at a minimum that you have examined the treasurer's books, that you have verified the bank balances, naming the amounts, and that you have seen evidence of the value of the investments.

Final Comments:

Much of the above sounds dreadfully complicated but that's only because I have mentioned many items that are unlikely to show up on any particular audit. (I have also omitted many possibilities.) Most books have their own characteristic patterns as to what shows up on them year after year. In most cases a given transaction has probably been handled the same way at some previous date, which can serve as a model. Don't sound too know-it-all or the next thing you know you will be the next treasurer. Being an auditor can be fun and you can get a much better understanding of your organization.

Prepared by Jack N. Childs, Jr.

Germantown Monthly Meeting