

Western Quarter Support Committee Meeting for Business – Second Month 21, 2016

Shelley Hastings & Ariana Langford, Co-Clerks

Minutes

Members of the Western Quarter Support Committee met at Kennett Friends Monthly Meeting. Friends from Centre, Kennett, London Grove, Fallowfield, New Garden, Hockessin, and Newark were in attendance. The meeting began at 3:05 pm with silent worship.

16.86- Minutes from Jan 17 Quarterly Meeting were considered and approved.

16.87- Bookkeeper discussion-Stan Glowiak

It is not clear that the working arrangement with our current bookkeeper is meeting our needs. We are a small account who needs someone to update our files on premises (in our office), once a month at the very least. We have been “in transition” between bookkeepers since last spring, when our contract with the previous accounting firm was bought out. Most recently there was a gap of more than two months between times when the bookkeeper updated the books, and then there were numerous discrepancies in the final reports. (This was complicated by the office computer crashing and the need to “rescue” the backup files.)

Friends agreed that it is time to make our needs known to the new company, as well as look into other options. The current treasurer, past treasurer, and clerk of Finance committee will also meet to go through the ledger, and get the numbers balanced again.

After hearing about a fraudulent charge that was not caught until it was “too late”, some discussion was had around using a bank debit/credit card, versus applying for a credit card (with better fraud protection). It was agreed that more timely attention to our bank statements would be a sufficient guard against fraudulent charges (this has only happened once in all the years we have banked with Citadel) at this time.

16.88- Status Updates

a) Youth Activities Support – There is a gap between what the coordinator does and the extra help in planning for WQM youth events. Suggestions were made for seeking someone to fill the position. In the meantime, the coordinator will hire the help needed for specific youth events, particularly Quarterly Meeting children’s programs

b) Friends Support Committee – Two applications were made last spring to the William Jackson Education Fund, but no grants have been awarded yet, despite efforts to contact the committee clerk. A London Grove Friend offered to connect with the two committee members from her MM, and find out if they need support. The Support Committee is prepared to assist in taking care of last year’s applicants, and ensure that this year’s application is sent out in the next few months.

c) Property Surveys – Surveys for five (5) properties in the quarter have been received. The committee needs to reach out to the MMs and independent property committees again; Ariana will work with Sarah on this. Copies of all London Britain documents were sent to the WQM office (years ago, prior to Zac) – we need to see if we can find them.

16.89- Update on April Quarterly Meeting plans

Centre MM has embraced the hosting of QM on Sunday, April 17, 2016. They have arranged a special “sprint” group to oversee the plans and hospitality. The morning program will be led by Michele Sullivan. She will be sharing with us new discoveries about the Underground Railroad – much of which is interesting to Friends, and pertains to our current work on undoing racism. The children will be learning (and practicing) meditative movement – through a labyrinth walk and tai chi chung. Centre is requesting someone to help with the childcare; Friends approved hiring someone from the morning. Sarah will make the arrangements. Lunch will mainly be provided by Centre Friends; guests are invited to contribute something for dessert.

16.90 PYM Clerks & Coordinators meeting

Shelley, Ariana, and Sarah attended a meeting in Downingtown of quarter clerks & coordinators earlier this month. During the two hour meeting we heard about what is happening in other quarters throughout the YM (except there were no reps from NJ; we agreed to hold our next meeting across the river, so they might attend). Western Quarter seems to be right in the "middle" of what is happening. Many meetings have taken up the query on racism; the more urban meetings have been more active over the year; we are able to learn from their experiences. Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting organized a seminar, but the original idea of a "panel" of oppressed/misunderstood people (people of color, homeless) struck some of the organizers as inappropriate, and was canceled. Instead they had a program led by Noah White, of PYM's Undoing Racism Group - which was very successful and highly recommended. WQM might consider his program for the future. The White Privilege Conference will be held in Philadelphia in April; WQM's Friends Support Committee might receive some requests for support to attend the WP conference, and we should encourage folks to apply if needed.

16.91 Addressing Racism – moving forward

There is a small group of Friends who identified themselves (at Jan. QM) as being interested in working through WQM on undoing racism. There are two ideas for moving forward between QMs. 1) work within the community (ideally with other churches & existing groups) to organize & facilitate discussion on the topic of race. Sarah has a meeting on Monday with another woman from Kennett who is interested in the same thing. More to come. 2) Plan a one-day retreat/workshop for the Quarter with a speaker/facilitator to lead us through some of our questions/issues. The coordinator and clerks should work with the sprint group identified earlier to bring this to fruition.

16.92 Finance Committee report

Half of the Monthly Meetings have responded to a recent email asking for their covenant amounts. The commitments from the meetings with January FY (who have just approved new budgets) seem about the same as last year. A few MMs (Hockessin & Centre) anticipate a reduction in income from a particular fund, which may affect covenant amounts.

Monthly Meeting treasurers have been called to gather on April 17 in a "break out" session of QM, to preview and discuss the next WQM budget proposal. To prepare that proposal, Dick will need anticipated expenses for the coming FY, particularly payroll expenses.

Property Committee Reports:

London Britain and Pennsgrove property committees have both asked to defer their annual reports to April. Both committees and both buildings remain in good shape.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:32 pm

Next WQM for business will be during Quarterly Meeting on Sunday, April 17, 2016 at 1 pm, Centre Friends Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Kastriner
WQM Coordinator, temporary recorder