

**Committee and Leadership Reevaluation Advisory Group (CLR)
Minute of Exercise of the Meeting on 4 Eleventh Month 2013**

Present: John Beer (Newark Meeting), Richard Bernard (Hockessin Meeting), Zachary Dutton (Wilmington Meeting), Sarah Kastriner (Kennett Meeting), Ariana Langford (Newark Meeting), Pamela Leland (London Grove Meeting), Dick Logan (Hockessin Meeting), Mark Meyers (London Grove Meeting)

Regret: Shelley Hastings (Newark Meeting)

Richard Bernard, of Hockessin Meeting, clerked our Discernment.

Friends met in earnest to discuss the listening and threshing sessions held three times over the previous year: at the Quarterly Meeting Business Meeting on 9 Fifth Month 2013, at the Quarterly Meeting session on 21 Seventh Month 2013, and at the Quarterly Meeting Session on 20 Tenth Month 2013. We reported on our experience of these sessions and reviewed notes or minutes of their proceedings. We also reviewed several written ideas from our members on ways to move forward, which included some research from our Coordinator on the mission of Bucks Quarterly Meeting and his report to Quarterly Meeting Business Meeting on 3 Ninth Month 2013.

We first considered whether to conduct more threshing or research. Do we need to hold more listening sessions with more diverse sets of people? Do we need to explore the structure and witness of other Quarterly Meetings that have experienced recent visioning processes, or which are in similar geographic situations such as Caln or Concord?

We decided at this point that we will not corporately pursue any data collection, but we may do so individually. We also decided not to plan any further listening or threshing sessions, but to present our progress at the upcoming Quarterly Meeting Business Meeting to be held 13 Eleventh Month 2013. The CLR will also meet again with any interested others after the Quarterly Meeting sessions planned for a weekend in the First Month of 2014.

There was general agreement that business meeting should be re-integrated with Quarterly Meeting sessions. However, we need to approach business differently. We need to avoid make-work and conduct only necessary discernment at Quarterly Meeting sessions. In addition to Query reports, this may include establishing broader strategic aims, considering issues which carry a great deal of life among Friends, or reports on the vitality in our respective Monthly Meetings. When there are agenda items, they should be announced far in advance so Friends can prepare for the discernment or even be enticed to attend due to the topic. This

re-integration means we may be able to bring more people into the discernment. At the very least, it would help to minimize the number of meetings that volunteers must attend.

Friends also discussed the need to develop ways to bring different Monthly Meeting communities together. Past partnerships between larger and smaller meetings to run a Quaker Quest project, for example, could extend to a myriad number of strategies toward the goal of increased mutuality and, as one Friend put it, “shared communion.” This may also help to establish the value of a broader association of Monthly Meetings, which larger Monthly Meetings may not realize.

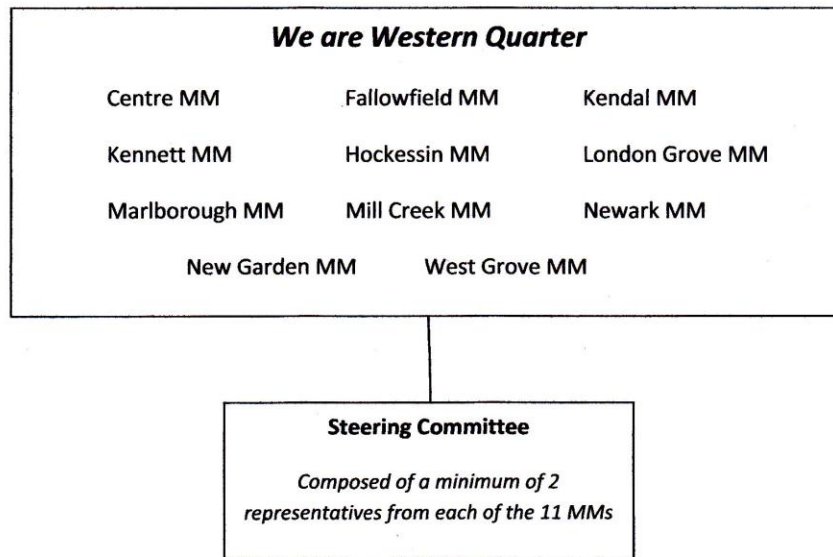
Thirdly, we need to figure out what the Quarterly Meeting has to give and find ways to market it to each of the Monthly Meetings. There was some disagreement as to how to realize this aim, but all agreed it remains an imperative focus.

We also struggled with the fact that families are choosing to engage in activities outside Quaker community. Yet, families with young children seem to be among our most important constituencies. We discussed the work already being done by our Coordinator and a few volunteers. We considered ways to enhance this work. Most relevant to the CLR’s task is the fact that our current organizational structure disperses the available energy across multiple committees and thereby renders the Quarterly Meeting’s shrinking resources continually more ineffective. There was general agreement that we need to consolidate our resources to leverage them efficiently.

We lastly turned our attention to a potential change in our organizational structure wherein we would reduce our number of committees to one Steering Committee. An initial sketch of this organizational chart is attached. This new structure, closely resembling a Board of Trustees model, might at least bring together the different people working across our disparate committees and offer a more deeply felt sense of shared purpose and belonging. A change in structure resembling this organizational chart would need to be implemented along a corresponding change in mindset. If not, we may end up, as one Friend said, “rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.”

We invite Friends of Western Quarterly Meeting to join us in considering changes both to practice and mindset concerning Western Quarterly Meeting. Specifically we invite feedback on the idea of consolidating our committees into one Steering Committee.

Respectfully submitted by Zachary Dutton, our Coordinator



Role and Function of the Steering Committee

- Serves as trustee of physical and financial assets
- Serves as communication nexus/interface between and among Monthly Meetings
- Coordinates Quarterly Meeting, including the planning of youth programming during QM
- Supports ministries and leadings of individual Monthly Meetings as resources allow (this includes Quarter-wide youth activities)
- Coordinates the work of any committees
- Hires and oversees the work of any paid staff
- Appoints its own officers and committee clerks
- Meets no less than quarterly
- Any member of WQ is welcome to attend Steering Committee Meetings