

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfW wAtB)
8th Month, 2nd Day, 2020
(08/02/2020)
Meeting Minutes

Note: The MfW wAtB was conducted using Zoom.

Present: Martha B. (clerk), Ellen M. (recording clerk), Carl B. (Zoom host), Jennifer D-M., Phyllis S., Ria H., Karen C., Sheila M., Sky E., Nan E., Jack H., Tom W., Margaret C., Will C., Peter M., Ruth S., Jean C., Martha L., Dot W., Barb T., Larry M., Minette S., Wes J., Marcia O., Nancy Jo S., Margaret H., Carl B., Ruth S., Jack L., Cairn K., Jon H., Lisa H., Joan M., Phil C., Cecile T., Mary D., JoAnne S., Sue P., Jeanne W., Mary B., Patty R., and Amy K.

9:00 am Opening: We began with centering silent worship. The 8th Month Queries from Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice (revised 2001) were displayed on the screen and read aloud for those on the phone. The agenda was displayed on the screen and everyone was welcomed. The clerk read the list of those who were present at the meeting.

Agenda Items:

1. 7th Month MfW wAtB Meeting Minutes Review & Approve

- a. The meeting minutes were approved from the previous meeting held on 07/05/2020. See the attached.

2. Quaker Market

- a. On behalf of Quaker Market Committee, Cairn K. said that the committee was trying to identify ways that Friends can still support Quaker Market goals even during these uncertain times. As Friends simplify their lives by identifying items they no longer need, the committee has suggestions for ways to:
 - i. raise money for the causes chosen as beneficiaries of Quaker Spring (and Holiday) Markets, or
 - ii. donate items directly to causes with whom Quaker Market has had long-term relationships (e.g., Orphan Grain Train, Partners in Care, Winter Relief).
- b. The committee will communicate using emails sent to the Announce List as opportunities for supporting the Quaker Market goals are identified.

3. Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) Annual Session

- a. Barb T. and others who participated provided an update about the BYM Annual session that just ended this morning. See the attached report. The Theme for the Annual Session was: Courage, Faith and Hope to Love Across our Differences. All events were presented virtually. There were twenty-five (25) workshops and AFM provided four (4) of the presenters. Five (5) people from AFM provided Zoom host technical services for a variety of sessions. For the coming year, there will be nine (9) Friends from AFM who will serve on various committees, including Stewardship & Finance, Program Committee, Unity with Nature, Friends General Conference Board, Friends United Meeting Board, Peace and Social Concerns, and Working Group on Racism.
- b. The clerk reminded us about and read the AFM Anti-Racist Declaration queries, so that we could use them during our current business meeting.

4. Path Forward Committee

a. On behalf of the Path Forward Committee, Karen C. presented the committee's report and proposed guidelines (see attached). It was re-iterated that no in-person meetings were allowed at the meeting house since the last business meeting and, to the best of the committee's knowledge, none were conducted. The meeting house is closed. People who need to go to the meeting house for official business are requested to sign-in on the log. She provided an update as to the progress made by the committee in the information gathering stages that included an online survey and two listening sessions and a workshop session that were conducted using Zoom on July 20th, 21st and 29th. The process for in-person meetings is going to be slowly and carefully developed in "baby steps". Karen requested approval on behalf of the committee to hold up to four (4) in-person outdoor worship events during August. Each worship event is dependent on the success of the previous meeting with regards to the guidelines being followed. For the September MfW wAtB, a report will be provided and potential next steps will be presented for further corporate discernment.

- i. Friends engaged in a lively, respectful discussion and illuminated the positives and negatives of in-person meetings. Strong emotion was expressed by some Friends who were worried that Friends might become infected and die from the coronavirus during this pandemic if they met in-person. Others expressed strong emotions about how very necessary it is for some to meet in-person to worship, that their mental, emotional and spiritual health had suffered for these past five (5) months.
- ii. Friends highlighted the science and case/death counts related to the coronavirus and expressed recommendations for how to protect ourselves if we meet in person, including the proper use of masks, social distancing and handwashing.
- iii. Another Friend emphasized that with the current rise in cases, anyone meeting in-person needed to be fully aware of the risk they were taking.
- iv. It was noted that churches, in particular, are experiencing increased case rates and persons dying from the virus. It was also pointed out that, in those cases, they were large numbers and indoors. We have an opportunity, one Friend stated, to be a model and show others how to do this in-person worship in a safe, diligent and extremely careful manner.
- v. A Friend asked for clarification about the four (4) proposed trial MfW, would they be on Sundays? All trial MfW would be on the 1st day of the week (Sunday). Further clarification was provided that the anticipated plan is to have two (2) trial MfW at 8:00 am and two (2) trial MfW at 11:00 am during the 8th month (August).
- vi. Sign-up methods were discussed. The initial sign-up process will be an email to clerk@annapolisfriends.org stating that you would like to participate in the first trial MfW, planned for 8:00 am on 08.09.2020. Other types of signing up may be needed in the future, but a simple email is all that is needed at this time.
- vii. The plan for the first trial MfW is to be no more than 15 people.
- viii. Many Friends expressed gratitude and appreciation to the members of the Path Forward Committee for developing well thought-out plans and appropriate guidelines that are inching our way forward.
- ix. Friends asked if a possible other time could be included, such as 10:00 am on a 1st Day. It was explained that the complexity of conflicts prevented that option at this time. For the trial period, only 8:00 am and 11:00 am alternating on 1st days are being considered and are completely dependent on the success of the prior meetings.
- x. On behalf of M&W, Tom W. asked if the trial MfW will be needing a M&W convener. It was determined that for the first trial MfW no convener would be needed as it

would be a similar meeting to what was conducted at 8:00 am prior to the pandemic and no convener was needed at that time. If it is determined that a M&W convener is need at some future time, scheduling will need to be discussed.

- xi. On behalf of Outreach, Margaret H. asked if there will be a need for a greeter for the trial MfW. It was explained that, for the initial trial MfW, there will be a greeter (i.e., usher) who will have additional duties as described by the County guidelines for houses of worship. It will need to be worked out with Outreach if we go forward into the 9th month (September) and find that we do need greeters.
 - xii. The clerk acknowledged that there was a fair amount of concern for health and safety expressed and, at the same time, some who were expressing a desperate need for in-person worship. The clerk requested that Friends consider the proposal that was brought forth by the Path Forward Committee: Would friends approve up to four (4) trial in-person MfW during the month of August?
 - xiii. When some present said that they would stand aside, there arose a discussion as to what that actually meant. It was clarified by a Friend that Spirit is leading a person to stand aside and not to oppose the proposal from moving forward, that the person was not standing against or attempting to prevent the approval of the proposal. It was made clear that we, as Quakers, were not “voting” or calling for a question as is done in secular meetings, but that we were respectful of each person’s leadings and discernment from Spirit. [See pages 40, 260 and 280 of the 2013 Resource for Faith and Practice (BYM) at <https://www.bym-rsf.org/publications/fandp/>]
- b. Because there were a number of requests to stand aside expressed, the clerk wished to minute this clearly and requested that those who were asking to stand aside type that into the chat. Nine friends typed into the chat that they would stand aside. No Friends indicated that they would stand in the way of moving forward. The proposal was accepted and the Path Forward Committee was approved to conduct up to four (4) trial in-person MfW outdoors at the meeting house in August starting 8:00 am on 08.09.2020.
- i. Friends expressed gratitude and appreciation for how Spirit manifested itself at this meeting and how this corporate group was able to follow Spirit. Another Friend expressed appreciation for the thoughtfulness that went into this effort to come to a decision.

5. Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC)

- a. On behalf of P&SC, Phil C. requested that the treasurer consider an external grant for Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR), a P&SC-sponsored cause, and if the grant could be received by AFM and passed through to MAJR.
- b. Background: MAJR received a grant from an external organization. MAJR, which grew out of Annapolis Friends Meeting's Peace & Justice Center, still uses our street address & our building meeting place (in non-COVID times). In order to receive their grant, MAJR needs AFM, as an incorporated entity, to receive it on their behalf. Accepting funding, such as grants from outside funders, is included within the Peace & Justice Center guidelines.
- c. Because MfW wAtB determined previously that AFM would no longer accept pass-through donations, a request to accept this grant was presented with a request for clarification from the Treasurer, who consulted with Trustees. It was determined by Trustees that there is no legal barrier to AFM serving as a pass-thru conduit. However, it is necessary to bring the request as an exception to the current pass through policy to MfW wAtB for consideration.
- d. The Meeting approved accepting this external grant for MAJR with a request that S&F be asked to reexamine the policy and craft it to provide a clearer understanding of accepting external grants.

6. Announcements

- a. Chesterton Academy, the school that has been renting our building over the past two (2) years, requested that they be permitted to return to use the meeting house this Fall. They are experiencing delays in permitting that restrict them from moving to their new rental space and they are already permitted for our building. Their school year is about to begin. The 7th month MfW wAtB decision that “Renters should not be allowed to use the facilities until after AFM has approved use for AFM activities” was conveyed to Chesterton. However, since their request came to us after our last MfW wAtB and we have had a long-term partnership with Chesterton, the Path Forward Committee felt that the Academy’s request should be brought to the attention of the Meeting. Based on today’s discernment about our own worship, Friends remain clear about the decision not to rent space at this time and the need to say “no” to the Academy’s request was affirmed.
- b. On behalf of P&SC, Phil C. announced that P&SC committee is discussing the establishment of a web page where Friends could post and discuss causes to consider. The committee recognized that there are so many causes, resources, and activities, that it would be best to have a unified central location for the information. P&SC will bring this idea back to MfW wAtB next month.
- c. Quaker causes: See the attached list of 2020 Quaker Causes as presented to MfW wAtB by P&SC.
 - i. A suggestion was made that P&SC might consider going back to limiting the number of causes to ten (10) or twelve (12), instead of the current twenty-two (22), and it was acknowledged that the pandemic has increased the need.

Closing: AFM MfW wAtB ended with a moment of centering silence. The clerk expressed gratitude for all the discussion, respect and ability to move forward. Although not approved before the end of the meeting, the plan for the Meeting minutes was for the recording clerk to send the draft meeting minutes to the Announce List, so that Friends can review the draft minutes and provide feedback. The minutes will be approved at the beginning of the next MfW wAtB.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M., Recording Clerk
recording-clerk@annapolisfriends.org

ATTACHMENTS:

- Meeting Minutes (approved) from 7th month MfW wAtB
- BYM Report
- Path Forward Committee Report to Aug 2020 MfB
- 2020 Quaker Causes

Report on 2020 Baltimore Yearly Meeting Virtual Annual Session

The Theme was: Courage, Faith and Hope to Love Across our Differences

25 Workshops—including one each by our own Larry McNeeley, Martha Baer, Phil Caroom and Bob Bruninga—brought much variety and Light to the 11 days.

The awesome Annapolis Friends tech team—Ellen McBride, Carl Benson, Jennifer DeLorge McKeown, Martha Baer and Phil Caroom—enabled the workshops, Bible study, training for presenters, etc. to happen.

Nine Annapolis Friends serving BYM for the coming year:

- Stewardship and Finance—Karen Cunnyngnam—(co-clerk)
- Program Committee—Jennifer DeLorge McKeown, Martha Baer, Barbara Thomas (clerk)
- Unity with Nature—Carl Benson
- Friends General Conference Board—Dot Walizer
- Friends United Meeting Board—Ann Riggs
- Peace and Social Concerns—Phil Caroom
- Working Group on Racism—Pat Schenck

Initial Retreat, two Plenaries (Margaret Benefiel and Bridget Moix), Intervisitation Lounge, Drop in luncheons,

The ad hoc Path Forward committee is charged with developing a phased plan for an eventual physical return to the meetinghouse by the AFM community.

We appreciate all the input we've received so far, from business meeting, an online survey, two listening sessions, a working session, and individual emails. We are particularly grateful for the deep caring and concern Friends are bringing to the issue of re-opening as well as the creative solutions that have been suggested. As we move forward, we will host additional meetings to continue conversations about overarching questions and logistical details.

We have heard that some AFM community members are hesitant about any in-person gatherings while others feel a strong need to meet in-person. There is strong sentiment that Zoom remain an option even after in-person meetings resume. Friends are very concerned that we stay abreast of and follow all applicable guidelines, and that the reasoning behind the policies we establish is clear and transparent. Friends are cognizant that our actions can serve as examples to others.

To reiterate where we are now, the meetinghouse is closed except for the conduct of essential business, primarily by Meetinghouse and Lands. Anyone who must be in the meetinghouse is asked to record their visit in the log on the table near the office door.

Based on feedback and suggestions, we recommend taking a step-by-step approach to outdoor in-person worship at the meetinghouse. We propose beginning with one 8 AM meeting for worship of no more than 10-15 people who are willing to serve as testers. After that meeting, we'll gather feedback from attendees on how they felt it went, how well the agreed-upon protocols were followed, and whether any protocols need to be changed. If there's general agreement that the initial pilot meeting successfully provided a safe in-person option for meeting for worship, we would like to hold additional pilot meetings in August, including at least one at 11 am. We will assess how well each pilot meeting went before deciding to hold another. For these pilot meetings, we will not try to incorporate technology.

At the September business meeting, we will report on pilot meetings and bring further recommendations. Possible next steps would be expanding the in-person meetings to a larger group, incorporating technology into a 11 am in-person outdoor worship, adapting some of the processes, and/or holding in-person worship at a time other than Sunday at 8 am or 11 am. We've also heard interest in allowing small groups to meet in-person for committee meetings or activities like the spiritual friendship group. Once we have established outdoor in-person worship, we will consider how we could adapt the safety protocols to apply to small AFM groups and bring a recommendation to business meeting.

Today, we'd like approval to hold up to four small weekly outdoor in-person meetings for worship in August, using the processes and expectations described. We'll make a decision about each meeting based on how the previous meetings went and government health and safety guidelines in place at the time.

Small pilot outdoor meeting for worship

- Attenders will register in advance by emailing or calling a coordinator. This will allow us to limit attendance to 10-15 people, gather contact information (in case contact tracing is needed), and answer any questions about procedures and expectations.
- Upon arrival, attenders will proceed to the sidewalk at the Nursery-end of the building. A greeter will welcome them, confirm expectations, and direct them to the seating area. After Meeting, attenders will move directly from the seating area to the parking area to reduce the possibility of unintended interactions without appropriate social distancing.
- Attenders will wear a face mask that covers both nose and mouth, including while they are seated and in worship. Wearing face masks is in accordance with current health guidelines, reduces exposure, and is a sign of respect and care for other people.
- Attenders will maintain 6-foot distance from others not in their own family units. This is in accordance with current health guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure.
- The meetinghouse will be closed. There is evidence that indoor spaces have greater potential for infection. Restricting indoor use also limits areas that need to be sanitized.
- Attenders will bring their own water, sun protection, and insect repellent if desired. There will be limited access to shade and no access to water in the meetinghouse.
- The greeter will set up the necessary number of chairs in advance to ensure social distance spacing, minimize contamination of surfaces, and allow attenders to seat themselves promptly. Attenders will not stack chairs before leaving. Instead, once attenders have left, the usher will move and sanitize the chairs. While leaving chairs in place may seem unfriendly, minimizing possible cross-contamination will help the greeter efficiently complete the task of sanitizing the chairs.
- People will restrict their use of the bathroom facilities. If necessary to accommodate people coming from a distance or who have an emergency, the greeter will allow one person at a time to enter the building to use the facilities. Restricting entry to one person at a time eliminates the need for a separate entrance and exit and therefore more than one usher.
- In recognition of our responsibility to protect others, anyone who is sick, has traveled outside of Maryland or been in large crowds in the past 14 days, or has any reason to believe they may have been exposed to the coronavirus will not attend in-person worship.
- The greeter will set out chairs in advance (wearing gloves) in pre-determined places with 6 ft. distance between them; confirm names and emails of all who are in attendance; ensure expectations regarding facemasks and social distancing are followed; facilitate bathroom use as needed, and sanitize chairs with 10% bleach solution after worship.
- If an attender needs to use the AFM bathroom, the usher will open the door at the nursery-end of the building to allow them to enter. The attender will leave the hallway bathroom door open, wash their hands prior to and after using the toilet, and use cleansing wipes on the toilet stall handle, the flusher, and anything else they touch. Once finished, they will proceed directly back to the nursery end of the building, where the usher will open the door so they may exit and if necessary, allow another person to enter.

Minutes from AFM's July 5 Meeting for Business (MfB) say "It was clarified by two Friends that it is not necessary for Meeting to approve the list of Quaker Causes and that the committee can move forward as they have discerned. P&SC will work with the Treasurer to [disburse] the funds. Friends were asked to make any additional recommendations as soon as possible directly to P&SC."

Per AFM's 2020 Budget, we have \$4,485 to disburse. The Treasurer's report indicated that AFM has NOT as yet suffered a huge drop in income because individual donations have filled in for reduced rentals. So, no Friends suggested that we should delay or reduce the amount of Quaker Cause funds disbursed.

Here is the 2020 Quaker Causes list as agreed by our AFM Peace & Social Concerns Committee:

Afghan Women's Fund – 1 -	\$400
Quaker Voluntary Services -1	400
Ramallah Friends School -1	400
BYM STRIDE - 1	400
Tier 1 - 4 x \$400=	\$1600
Annapolis Immigration Justice Network	175
Anne Arundel Conflict Resolution Center	175
Friends Peace Teams	175
Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)	175
Friends Wilderness Center	175
Interfaith Action for Human Rights (IAHR)	175
Peace Action (Maryland)	175
Samaritan Visit	175

South Sudan Hope Network	175
Friends General Conference (FGC)	175
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)	175
Friends Theological College in Kenya (FTC)	175
Muslim Voice for Peace	175
Magothy UMC for Winter Relief	175
BYM Camping Property - (in 2019, remainder)	175
*Quaker House (Fayetteville, N.C.)	260

Tier 2 - 16 x \$175 = \$2,800.

TOTAL	\$4,485
	=====

*The additional \$85 we could give to Quaker House since we know they are overburdened and otherwise would have a reduced contribution. That would raise the Quaker House amount to \$260.

We should note that, for Peace & Social Concern Com. as for other AFM committees, there remains the "Committee Contingency Fund" --in effect, a "rainy day fund"--of over \$16,000 so that we would be able to ask for additional disbursements later in the year if unforeseen needs arise that AFM is moved to assist.