

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfB)
Fifth Month, Fifth Day, 2024 (5/5/24)

Present were: Karen C. (clerk), Phil C. (recording clerk), Martha B., Margaret H., Nan & Sky E., Jack L., Ann R., Larry M., Margaret & Will C., Mary B., Phyllis S., Martha L., Jeanne W., Marjorie W., Ellen M., Cairn K., Dan C., Kathy T., Pat S., Ted R., Jean C., Ria H., Stephen P., and Diane S. with video staffing by Ben.

We met both in person and via Zoom, beginning with centering worship and screen-sharing of Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Fifth Month Faith and Practice queries. From the initial silence, our Clerk welcomed Friends and reviewed AFM's anti-racist queries, encouraging Friends with our brief agenda again to take time to consider the spirit that runs through our business concerns. We proceeded with reports and action items from various AFM committees.

Reflecting on our just completed spring **Quaker Market**, Friends commented that it was a great joy to see many children enjoying face painting, enormous bubbles and being chased by their grandmothers. Despite the rain, it was a wonderful time. Cairn thanked Friends who pitched in so many different ways, noting that Market is an opportunity for our community outreach and to let them know about Quakers. We also appreciate the opportunity to support the efforts of Orphan Grain train, Food Security Network, and other groups in their international and their community work. Another Friend from MHL thanked Friends who performed the miracle of returning the Meeting House to its normal state the morning after.

For Peace and Social Concerns Committee (PSC), Margaret H. reported a decision to be made about replacing our old Black Lives Matter banner which has become weather-beaten and ragged. The Committee has discussed options and recommends a replacement with a new banner closer in size to our RRC Community Conversations banner. Friends approved.

Another Friend recommended a rainbow banner be considered also to show support for the LGBTQ community. The Committee will consider this and bring back a recommendation.

Announcement — As AFM traditionally has supported Md. Peace Action's Peace Writing Contest for middle school students, PSC has requested a \$250 contribution from the Committee Contingency fund to reimburse 1/3 of mailing costs.

Announcement- AFM, in the past, has supported postcarding efforts for voter turnout with the Center for Common Ground, a nonpartisan organization, so this would not conflict with our 501c3 status. Friends supported this idea with many raising our hands to show an intention to participate. The Committee will make further announcements soon and will offer dates and arrangements to do this.

Responding to concerns expressed by Friends in prior Meetings, PSC hopes to reopen conversation about AFM's fundraising policy with a general Listening Session in September. This likely will be the first of several meetings becoming more focused on our highest priorities going forward. We hope this also will fit in with another upcoming priorities discussion of Meetinghouse and Lands (MHL) meeting on 5/9.

For Meetinghouse and Land Committee (MHL), Jeanne W. reminded Friends of a meeting for listening on 5/9, from 7 to 9 p.m., to discuss concerns in relation to the Building Fund with a virtual option, Friends are asked to RSVP and encouraged to bring desserts. MHL hopes to offer "fact-based discernment" – to include historic information about the building fund, historic

plans for possible Meeting House expansion, and to solicit Friends' other concerns. Cost estimates will be offered but these are about 5 years old, so actual costs would be higher. The Committee will record the Meeting for Friends who are unable to attend.

Ellen M. also reported for MHL as to efforts to connect with our neighbors. Ellen & Barb T. attended the neighborhood's annual association meeting to discuss neighbor's concerns about occasional car speeding and a couple of exuberant renters' performance. With about 15 neighbors in attendance, the group discussed that local traffic authorities already have assisted in installing signs and trimming back shrubbery along the road, but speed bumps and traffic calming signs have been rejected due to the low traffic count. Ellen explained the past efforts of AFM to remind ourselves to be cautious because of children playing and the lack of sidewalks for pedestrians. Most of the 15 neighbors attending were supportive saying "we love you guys"; but some, who arrived during the pandemic, regard our return to renting normalcy to be a huge increase. We also alerted the neighbors as to Quaker Markets and some neighbors in fact came and enjoyed the day. The meeting concluded with "good vibes." One Friend suggested adding signs on AFM's own property outside the front door and near the driveway exit to urge those to "drive slowly." The Committee will discuss these recommendations. Friends thanked Ellen and Barb for this valiant effort.

For Stewardship and Finance Committee (S&F), Jack L. reported three announcements:

- 1) To open additional options for Friends to support Meeting financially, AFM will expand our current use for renters of Zelle fund transfers to make this available for AFM donors' use. Information and simple instructions on how to use the system will be posted on AFM announce and our annual letter to donors will explain how Zelle donations may work. Jack says that he has used Zelle and says that "it's safe and efficient." He noted that this will be separate from the AFM online "donate" button.
- 2) S&F committee also announced that the committee is considering a Donation button to the AFM website and invited Friends' questions and comments about possible use of this.
- 3) Jack also noted that our Treasurers' quarterly report was sent via Announce.

One Friend expressed concerns about whether our MfB minutes should include Friends' last names. One Friend recalled that the current system of last initials was adopted due to concerns for possible privacy violations if minutes were accessible online; another commented that, without more information, this might be unlikely for privacy violations. The concern was referred to Communications Committee for further discernment.

We returned again to consider a concern as to wording of a **past MfB minute** that recorded a Friend "standing in the way" as compared to one Friend's requested minute stating "*A Friend rose in the traditional Quaker manner and noted the spirit directed them to stand in the way of the proposal and reconsider. Meeting determined that the discernment was not valid for the proposal and chose to proceed accordingly.*"

Many Friends offered views which included:

-One not favoring the statement as stating that the "discernment was invalid"; but suggesting that we record this disagreement.

-Another Friend said the original minute's "language and formulation is inconsistent with traditional practice." She expressed the concern that the traditional practice would have the clerk determine the sense of the Meeting, but that this would not mean the Meeting was right or wrong.

So, the Meeting and the Friend in disagreement would not be opposed to each other. She noted that Friends don't always succeed in understanding where Spirit is leading us. We are all trying to be faithful and to follow where the spirit leads us."

-Another Friend noted their understanding that "stand in the way" means that the Meeting can't move forward. However, in this instance, the sense of the Meeting was to move forward. The Friend noted that the decision was about the upcoming Quaker Market while the concern was about the Building fund, our budgeting process, and fundraising issues, which are separate issues that we will return to later.

-Our clerk suggested that, in addition to the May MHL listening session and the September PSC listening session, S&F hold a listening session on the budget in the fall. Cairn, as clerk of QM committee, noted that early discernment—months in advance—is important for QMs.

-Another Friend suggested that the wording of the proposed corrected minute sounded "rude" and perhaps that the wording could have been softened to avoid saying Friends' discernment was "not valid."

- Yet another Friend agreed and suggested that we use the first suggested proposed sentence and add that *"Friends agreed more seasoning was needed, that there was not time currently to consider better phrasing of the minutes, and that Friends would return to these minutes and to the larger concerns raised in the future."*

-Our clerk suggested that the minute should include a statement that "our clerk determined the sense of the Meeting was to move forward given the time constraints," as well as using the term "sense of the meeting" and not the term "standing in the way." This would recognize, as discussed in recent BYM programs on clerking, that Friends cannot block the sense of the meeting, but they may be recorded as "standing aside." It is rare, but it can happen that Friends choose to proceed even though another Friend has expressed strong disagreement. We all need to listen openly to every Friend's concerns.

-Another Friend noted that the original view was shared by two Friends, pointed to two much larger concerns that some have experienced. She noted that the pending Listening Sessions may begin to address these bigger concerns.

Another Friend urged that we recognized that, as we age and participate remotely, many Friends may feel alienated and separated from the Meeting and thanked others to "search your hearts and be sure that you are remembering other Friends who may not be physically present."

Our Clerk thanked Friends for these discussions and suggested that we leave our March minutes as originally presented and direct readers of those minutes to the April minutes, which describe the proposed change, and these May minutes, which record various concerns and discernment. Friends approved this plan. Friends, including those online, agreed with the Clerk's suggestion and deferred final approval of these minutes in the interest of time.

We concluded with brief silence.

-These minutes respectfully submitted – Phil C., Recording Clerk.

Annapolis Friends Meeting Treasurers' report, April 2024

Operating Budget	2024 Budget	Activity through March 2024
Income		
Contributions	48,465	10,940
Rentals	15,000	4,830
Interest, Dividends	7,000	528
Total Income	70,465	16,298
Expenses		
Committee activities		
CREC	300	
Communications	6,000	1,237
Library	400	45
Meetinghouse and Lands	28,000	7,647
Ministry and Pastoral Care	700	48
Outreach	1,800	200
Peace and Social Concerns	3,400	
Quaker Market	550	
Stewardship and Finance	1,150	970
Trustees	0	
Independent Designated Funds	9,905	9,905
Quaker Causes	4,419	
Apportionment	13,841	4,614
Total Expenses	70,465	24,666
Net	0	-8,368

Notes:

- Interest and Dividends does not include unrealized gains/losses
- Ministry and Worship includes \$250 for Quaker Burial Ground
- Outreach includes festival fees, internal expenses, \$100 GAIN dues
- P&SC includes \$2,000 for Lighthouse and \$1,400 for 1/2 ACT membership

Money in the bank (3/31/2024)

Truist Checking	63,205
Truist Saving	107,137
Truist Certificate of Deposit	101,370
Friends Fiduciary Corp (FFC)	137,324
Total	409,036

Internally designated Funds	2024 beginning through March balance	Activity through March 2024
Peace and Social Concerns		
Emergent Social Concerns	2,404	
Peace & Justice Center	2,928	
Retrospective and Restorative Justice	12,532	
Meetinghouse and Land		
Building Fund*	199,718	
Capital Improvement	30,130	
Capital Replacement	47,047	
Memorial Garden	2,000	585
CREC		
Young Friend's Opportunity	2,000	
Camping	2,500	1,634
Ministry and Pastoral Care		
Embraced Ministry	2,000	
Suffering & Individual Emergency	5,000	
Stewardship & Finance		
Adult Scholarship	2,500	
Committee Contingency	10,000	
Trustees		
Founder's Fund	0	
Total Designated Funds	320,759	2,219

*The Building Fund includes some donations restricted by the donor as well as funds internally designated by AFM.

Internal AFM Balances (3/31/2024)

Net operating budget	-8,368
Designated Funds	318,541
Short-term off-budget funds (such as QM)	557
2023 surplus	5,256
Undesignated	93,050
Total	409,036