

Executive Committee Meeting
Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
6/3/2006

The Executive Committee (EC) met at the Tampa Meetinghouse, Tampa, FL Saturday, 6/3/2006 from 10am to 4:30pm.

Executive Committee members present: EC and Interim Meeting clerk Nancy Fennell; Yearly Meeting clerk Susan Taylor; Assistant IBM and YM clerk Sybil Ann Brennan; Recording clerk Ed Lesnick; Treasurer Neil Andersen; Worship & Ministry co-clerk Barbara French; Faith & Practice clerk and Membership Recorder Phoebe Andersen; Nominating clerk Dan Vaughn; Y M Gathering Clerk Steve Kinney; and Administrative Secretary Lyn Cope.

Also attending: Tom Fennell, Ft. Myers MM; Andrea Walsh, Tampa MM; and Kay Lesnick, Orlando MM.

Karen Putney and Barbara Wolfe, Tampa MM, were present hosting the EC meeting. Herb Haigh, clerk of Trustees and Caroline Lanker, clerk of Finance committee, were unable to attend.

The **Administrative Secretary's report** is included as Attachment 1.

The meeting began with silent worship followed with greetings by EC and IBM clerk, Nancy Fennell. The agenda was modified in order to consider inter-visitation and the SEYM Pendle Hill representative job description.

Neil Andersen gave the **Treasurer's report**.

FY 2005–2006 ended June 30, 2006. With minor exceptions, the ledger is complete. In summary, the general fund had a \$3600 net income. The YM gathering committee provided a \$507 donation to the general fund. Publications showed a net income of \$3052.

SEYM assets increased from the previous FY (2004-2005). The YM received 92.7% of its budgeted income and spent 89% of budget providing for the net income increase.

Most MM apportionments were paid in full, and there was a donation from Crestview WG, an unaffiliated worship group.

The Annual report for FY 2005-2006 will be presented at the Fall Interim Business Meeting in October.

Lyn Cope and Nancy Fennell gave a **YM Gathering Report follow-up**.

General issues were discussed, including the need for a more accurate accounting of meal payments and meal preparations. It was noted Friends were particularly pleased with the junior program. The importance of monthly meeting scholarships was noted. [Attachment 2: Gathering Data Report, 2006]

Steve Kinney, YM Gathering clerk, announced the **2007 Walton Lecturer** would be Arthur Larrabee.

Friend George Newkirk, (Gainesville/Ocala) has contributed \$1,000 towards the speaker's honorarium. The total honorarium is \$1,500, which includes the threshing and workshop sessions.

The Handbook Committee will write a position description for **SEYM's Pendle Hill representative** that is similar to the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) representative description. The representative's role will be to act as a contact and to facilitate communication. As is with QUNO, the Pendle Hill contact does not serve on the Pendle Hill board.

The location of the **Fall Interim Business Meeting** will be in St. Petersburg.

Susan Taylor, YM clerk, brought forth a new concern regarding a **possible donation of land to SEYM**. George Newkirk has offered SEYM two (2) acres of land situated adjacent to land he owns, about fifteen miles north of Ocala.

The EC discussed the offer, the parcel, and its possible uses. In order for a more complete discernment and timely consideration, the EC approved the following:

06EC02 EC requests SEYM trustees to explore a proposed donation of land by George Newkirk and to report its preliminary findings to the EC by email as soon as possible.

EC undertook the continuing concern of the relationship and affiliation between **SEYM and Friends United Meeting (FUM)**, and a discernment process to be used.

As approved at YM sessions [06YM14, 06YM15], YM clerk Susan Taylor mailed the pertinent minutes and a cover letter to the FUM president, clerk, and general secretary.

The SEYM letter was included in the advance documents packet for the upcoming FUM General Board meeting.

It was reported that the Superintendent of Iowa YM and clerk of Indiana YM have sent letters to the General Board seeking a reaffirmation of the *Declaration of Faith (1887)*, a.k.a. the *Richmond Declaration*, which conflicts with the testimonies and views on "continuous revelation" of unprogrammed Friends.

Since both items – the SEYM minute and reaffirmation of the *Richmond Declaration* - will be on the agenda, it would be prudent to wait until the General Board responds. Then, the EC would be better prepared to take on the concern at fall IBM.

It is necessary for meetings to be continually informed since the SEYM/FUM concern is also an internal matter within YM and within monthly meetings. As Friends, we should be open to new information and understanding. The discernment process within meetings should be honored with emphasis placed on living in the Spirit and expressing ourselves with love.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) has established **an Intervisitation program** to increase understanding and discernment among affiliates regarding the FUM policy.

06EC03 EC appoints Phoebe Andersen to represent SEYM at the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Intervisitation Program with Yearly Meetings affiliated with FUM, to be held July 31 – August 6, 2006, at Harrisonburg, VA

Following silent worship, the session was recessed for lunch and fellowship.

In a May 8, 2006, letter to EC members, the clerk, wrote:

At our last EC meeting, it was decided that in our June meeting we would deal first with matters that must be attended to, such as a report on our Yearly Meeting Gathering. Then, we hoped to turn our attention to matters that we may need to deal with in the next year, with a focus on prioritizing our work and on realistic assessment and planning about how to facilitate and accomplish the work involved.

Hence, the afternoon retreat considered a self-evaluation of the Executive Committee in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, explanations of incomplete or outstanding tasks, setting priorities, and the necessary actions to be taken.

Nancy Fennell facilitated the session. [Attachment 3: EC Flip Chart Notes]

Two minutes were approved as Friends considered the topics.

06EC04 EC appoints Laura Winefordner, Tom Fennell, and Dan Vaughen to the ad hoc Youth Workers Review Committee through summer EC meeting, 2007.

06EC05 EC recommends the clerk of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, clerk of the Youth Committee, clerk of Half Yearly Meeting, and the Membership Recorder be permanent members of the Executive Committee.

A minute of appreciation was warmly approved.

06EC06 The Executive Committee is grateful to Tampa MM for hosting our summer meeting. We appreciate the thoughtfulness and care given to prepare for our comfort and our work. We offer a special thanks to those who prepared our tasty lunch and snacks. Hospitality is alive and well among Tampa Friends.

The session concluded with silent worship.

Secretary's Report to EC 06/03/2006 to be held at Tampa Meetinghouse

This report describes activities that have taken place since YM2006. Please carefully read the attached 4-page *Overview of SEYM Secretarial Position* written to provide EC with my view of how the Secretary's job has evolved during the last five years.

YM2006:

This year as last, the SEYM secretary was called upon to provide greater assistance to the YM Gathering Committee Clerk and Committee. From the point of view of the office, it would be great help to the Gathering Committee Clerk, and for that matter to all committee clerks, if committee members would step forward to volunteer for and fulfil obligations. This is the first year we instituted SEYM's new policy on Child Abuse Prevention and anticipate full compliance by YM2007. I am waiting to receive the final bill from LEC for food and lodging. Whereas in the past LEC has wanted to bill us for a block of rooms, the new administration is more understanding of the fact that Friends arrive 'for the event' throughout Yearly Meeting. However, the bill for YM2006 was based on their older style of billing so is being contested. I expect to hear from them and to have the books closed out before EC Meeting 06/03/2006.

Finances:

Meetings and a several much appreciated individuals have donated regularly. It appears at this time that we will meet our budget. Applied to Florida Dept. of Revenue as required every five years for tax exemption and was requested to defend SEYM's 501(c)(3); have sent additional requested documentation. Also filed the required annual Florida Corporation Report.

Publishing:

The *Faith and Practice* excerpt *Marriage and Commitment; Separation and Divorce* has been laid out and is presently being reviewed by Phoebe Andersen, Clerk of F&P. Phoebe will also be writing a Preface and I am working on the cover design. This booklet may or may not be available for purchase at EC Meeting but will certainly be available by mid-late summer.

Michener and Walton Lectures pamphlets/booklets:

While I have the 2006 Michener Lecture *Seeking Christ* by Frank Massey tape in hand, I have not yet audited it to compare to the manuscript. I have not received either tape or electronic version of Ernie & Vince Buscemi's Walton Lecture, *Here I am Lord* (I do have a hard copy printout). *Equality* by Deborah Ann Sanders is presently back-ordered to FGC Bookstore and waiting retyping with submission for corrections to Deborah. I anticipate having these three booklets to press before FIBM or at the latest by WIBM.

The summer issue newsletter submissions are coming in, but significant holes remain.

The SEYM ad hoc Committee (Nancy Fennell, Caroline Lanker and myself) will complete the update of the *SEYM Handbook/Job Descriptions* this summer.

Website:

I am managing to keep the <www.seym.org> website current with organizational details but only the F&P page has been totally reviewed, reformatted, and updated. A few meetings have availed themselves of the opportunity to design websites; those meetings presently with websites are reminded that they may choose to use the SEYM host without additional cost to themselves or to SEYM.

New Office Concerns: none.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope, 06/03/2006

DEAR EC Friends,

When I was interviewed at Fall Representative Meeting 2000, Steve Angel, YM Clerk, and Cecilia Yocum, former YM Clerk, were on my interview committee. Steve indicated that SEYM needed a long term commitment. I made that commitment. This document will provide my overview of the SEYM secretary's job description of required labors. Please note the use of the word, 'overview'. This will not be a point-by-point, day-to-day calendar of required tasks, but rather a description of the evolution of the interweaving of tasks with consideration of how a division of these tasks could be accomplished should or when it becomes necessary to do so.

At YM2006, Clerk of IBM, Nancy Fennell, raised the concern/wisdom (as is the case of Brian Humphrey) of having the knowledge-base in one person. I concur. Herb Haigh recommended the book *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam *on the collapse and revival of the American community as an introduction to the trends in volunteer organizations*, i.e. that as able, potential volunteers are more fully employed, volunteers for tasks are diminishing and increasingly the work falls to paid employees.

This is what has noticeably happened in SEYM during the past decade, and this is what, I believe, Nancy is asking us to examine.

Friends, we have time. Or do we? In 1961, a wise friend said to me, ***"we are only as important as the hole left in the bucket of water after we remove our thumb."***

Having born this statement in mind, I have tried to keep Friends informed (thus all the emails) and to those who have compatible software, to provide back-up copies on a regular basis. The Canmore Press stand-alone Maxtor hard-drive houses well-marked master SEYM files making it easy to transport in an evacuation, or to identify should it ever become necessary. I have intentionally NOT password protected this device nor the files.

However, this is not sufficient—there is no way for the wealth of experiential SEYM knowledge to reside outside my brain UNLESS committee clerks step up to the plate and function fully, know their jobs, *know when they are not doing their jobs*, and to know what I am doing on their behalf. This, I believe is one purpose of the retreat that Clerk Nancy seeks so that we may explore the future of SEYM.

I want to thank you for approving the budget for 2006-2007 that increases my salary. This is very affirming, and I thank you.

Lyn's long term plans

In fiscal year 2009-2010, SEYM plans to publish *Faith and Practice*. It is my intent/goal/objective to continue as secretary to see this project to fruition.

Commencing in 2010-2011, a training period needs to commence for my replacement so that I may retire in 2012 or 2013. During this time various tasks could be 'broken off'.

The Skill Sets SEYM Requires in an Administrative Secretary

The skill sets the yearly meeting requires in an administrative secretary uniquely combine talents from the following fields: 1) social service, 2) management, 3) education, 4) finance/accounting, 4) graphic

arts. Fortunately, at any given time, SEYM is blessed with functioning committees that fully provide and/or assist with these tasks.

Social Services

Social service skills are entwined throughout every task the SEYM secretary provides (being gracious, being knowledgeable of SEYM history and current process, able to refer inquirers to appropriate persons/resources, etc.)

Management

The Executive Committee provides corporate management, provides direction to the secretary who then oversees the day-to-day office and corporation management.

Education

Ideally the Clerks of Youth Committee, Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Worship and Ministry Committee provide education. However, it falls on the secretary to network and provide interface when necessary.

Finances/Accounting

Ideally, the Clerk of the Finance Committee, the Clerk of Trustees and the Treasurer provide direction/assistance for financial accounts, fund raising and oversight of the bookkeeping/accounting and general communication with Friends concerning financial matters.

Friends, it is vital that these positions ALWAYS be filled by knowledgeable and experienced Friends with financial backgrounds. It is questionable if SEYM can ever again ask a non-employee to provide the kind of service required to manage SEYM finances/accounting.

A Bit of History:

A bit of history is due here, since I am sometimes asked by SEYMers regarding this division of labor. Prior to 1998, the distinct division of labor was clear. The Finance Committee considered the budget and presented it at YMs. The Trustees oversaw investment funds. The Treasurer received and deposited checks and provided 'paper records' to the SEYM accountant. With the hiring of the new Palm Beach Accountant, Liz Jensen, SEYM treasurer, realized that SEYM bookkeeping was inadequate. Before her illness, she set out to create a new chart of accounts in Quicken, sharing her concern with Caroline Lanker that her self-assigned task was not complete. By necessity of the treasurer's illness, the secretary assumed banking and data entry, and provided the SEYM accountant with quarterly reports. Her hours were increased to half time.

When I was hired, we continued with the Palm Beach Accountants. Tor was treasurer and clearly stated when asked to serve that he would only be able to attend YM and was unable to attend EC and Representative Business Meetings. This proved to be difficult. Furthermore, I found the accounting available in Quicken to be inadequate to the needs of running a business with the complexity of SEYM. The Palm Beach Accountants recommended Peach Tree or QuickBooks Pro (QBP). Consensus from friends whom I consulted outside the yearly meeting was that Peach Tree, as written for professionals, was too complex, and although QBP was complex, it was learnable.

The Palm Beach accountants estimated a charge of \$3000.00 *or more* to set up SEYM bookkeeping

in QBP *using the Quicken Chart of Accounts as written* without adding the necessary class divisions as envisioned by Liz Jensen. Tor, overworked at his place of employment, was unable to assist. With approval from EC, I took a QBP course and Caroline Lanker read her husband Gary's accounting books. We decided we could set up QBP to better meet SEYM's needs than the accountant who was unfamiliar with our internal financial divisions and needs. We had a fabulous time. I was introduced to double entry bookkeeping (I am finally beginning to understand it). With Caroline's clarity and consideration for Liz's concerns, SEYM's QBP data superbly meets our needs and allows us NOT to pay an accountant for our Annual Report which the SEYM treasurer now creates from data entered by the secretary thereby saving SEYM \$3000.00 annually.

In summary, the SEYM bookkeeping is a 3-person job. It is sufficiently complex to require frequent oversight and consultation. Many times the Clerk of Finance, the Treasurer, and I consult regarding the best account (create a new account?) in order to properly record a transaction. QBP has some flukes—sometimes it automatically fills in data, or substitutes data that I think I entered correctly. For example, it thinks each financial division (Trustees, General Fund, Gathering Committee) has its own check book—we don't. It automatically opens the master banking account which we only use it for bank reconciliation. Brownouts have been known to delete information just entered, or a phone call may interrupt me, and data I entered has reverted to what QBP thinks is more appropriate! Therefore, the person doing the data entry NEEDS *for her or his peace of mind*, for the Treasurer and the Clerk of Finance to be willing to go over the bookkeeping data *at a minimum of once per month* to find errors in data entry and to make suggestions. On average, Caroline and Neil find/suggest 2-6 changes per month—and I think I am meticulous!

Graphic Arts/Publications/Website

The publications could be returned to a very capable, active, and dedicated committee, or sorted out to a paid employee. This person needs to be very knowledgeable in computer graphics and design software and willing to work no less than 15-25+ hours/week. The present quality of SEYM publications is the result of professional knowledge, professional software, and securing professional printing discounts from vendors. The tasks involved in creating documents and making them web-ready are commingled. In my mind, I have folded the Michener and HYM brochures, and preparation of DIAs and YM Registration packet into this category. Publications includes communication with Michener and Walton lecturers, listening to the taped lecture and comparing it with their manuscripts, preparing and submitting drafts to them for review, layout and design, imposition of pages for right order in printing into booklets, and selecting professional offset printers. Newsletter creation includes encouraging contributions, collecting submissions, and photographs for the newsletter. The youth centerfold was originally conceived to be pre-prepared and laid-out by the Youth Committee, but it has fallen to the secretary to collect, create, write. Creating and maintaining the website will work hand-in-glove with the present publication activities, in that web-publications need to be in either html or pdfs formats. From my point of view, it is imperative that this committee or person be computer literate and knowledgeable in graphics, photo, layout, and web software and able to upload and download files to and from the server.

Historical Daily tasks

Ideally, the daily secretarial duties could return to 1/4 time if SEYM opted to see the position as secretarial support only: 1) phone, 2) email, 3) file FL required reports, licences, etc.) 4) file papers, 5) keep calendar, 6) collect data and print Documents in Advance, 7) receive and print already formatted Michener Lecture and HYM brochures, 8) do bulk mailings, 9) receive formatted documents (apportionment, budget, donation records, etc.) from committee clerks and officers for DIAs, etc., 10) receive and print Directory,

11) do ongoing communication with EC, Committee clerks and Meeting clerks, 12) sign required contracts with LEC, Warren Willis Camp, HYM site, 13) attend IBMs and YM, 14) keep YM statistics and provide those when asked to FGC, FUM, and FWCC. A new task is oversight of the Child Abuse Training Program requiring interface with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).

In Reality

In reality, the tasks have commingled and, in my opinion, make the former separation of tasks i.e.: 1) general secretarial duties, 2) financial data entry, 3) publications, and 4) website impossible for the future. A more likely division of labor could be: 1) general secretarial duties (1/4 time); 2) Finances/Accounting (1/4+ time), 3) Publications/Website (1/2 time).

The **general secretarial duties** could possibly be sorted out, however, the job would change in that s/he would/could not process publications orders.

The person doing **QBP data entry** would be responsible for warehousing all publications, receiving orders, billing, shipping, and receiving payments. This person would also do QBP data entry for both the Trustees and the Treasurer—receive apportionments, donations and publication payments and loan payments for loans as extended by Trustees. This person must communicate with and oversee the financial data entry for the Gathering Committee, HYM, Michener Lecture, Publications, Triennial Travel, and Trustees. This person needs to have an understanding of double entry bookkeeping and to be proficient in QBP data entry. This person would presumably need a van to haul materials to/from IBMs and YM. The scope of this job is larger than a volunteer treasurer should be expected to do.

The **Publications/Website** tasks are sufficiently commingled to require a professionally trained individual proficient in professional layout programs to enable her or him to interface with professional printers and web hosts.

Other tasks that come and go depending upon the skill-sets of the various clerks are assisting in document layout for the Worship & Ministry Committee (Michener brochure), HYM Committee (brochure), Gathering Committee (Registration and Programs), and Youth Committee (providing centerfold for newsletters, securing and supporting Youth Program Workers). Former secretaries have variously been lead to visit Meetings, assist with child care at YM, etc. It should be remembered that the general role of secretary may/will change with the skill set of a particular secretary. However, the skill-sets needed for Finance/Accounting and for Publications/Websites *by necessity require expertise in those fields.*

Simple Queries for prospective employees:

Do you have a van?

Are your hours sufficiently flexible to accommodate volunteers' off work hours?

Are you willing/able to assist (not do for) clerks in the many tasks they do?

Are you computer literate?

Do you have an adequate home office?

Do you own updated and adequate computer(s) and software? Are you willing to install SEYM software?

How are your people skills? Your ability to work with others? To take direction? To gently provide direction?

Do you have an understanding of Friends' testimonies: Equality, Integrity, Peace, Simplicity, Community?

Are you a Quaker? How long have you been a member?

How long can you commit to this/these positions?

Attachment 2: Gathering Data Report, 2006

1. Pre-registered 158
Registered on site 12 (7%)

Total Registered 170 (including children)

2. We had 28 children in attendance:

Wee Friends	4
Young Friends	10
Middle Teens	6
Older Teens	8

3. We had 24 first timers; 6 were guests, but 18 were local Friends. (We usually have 8-10 new people, including visitors. So, SEYM must have talked up the YM this year!) No yellow dots were available to mark the nametags of new comers.

4. For the first time, online registration (53 or 55%) outnumbered mail-in registrations. (43 or 45%).

5. Contributions above registration fees:

Youth fund	\$350.01
Gen'l fund	\$507.42

6. Scholarship money was awarded to 3 adults and 4 children. Only three applications were submitted. The total cost was \$165.02.

Problems noted:

Registration form

*Need to put place to request LEC vegetarian meals so we don't have to guesstimate for the kitchen.

*Need to add a place to register a child under 12 for free simple meals. Even though free, we still need to know how many meals will be needed.

*Need to drop the Walton Lecture and Dinner only category. No matter how many different ways we have tried to explain this over the past six years, it still leads to nothing but confusion. This year, only 2 of many people who registered for it really meant to. Much more trouble than it is worth.

Volunteer form

*Two out of three people let their name off the volunteer form (mail-in) and I added the names for them. Somehow, we need to make this more visible.

*Wednesday was left off the volunteer form.

*Times for assisting with children need to be on the volunteer form.

General Issues

*The criteria for youth workers support (room and board) needs to be in written form and given to all involved each year. As an example, if a full-time youth worker wants to eat all meals in LEC, along with his/her children, they should understand that he/she is to pay the difference charged between LEC and simple meals.

*Sadly, we have to go to a ticket situation for meals. People ate where they were not registered to eat and some ate meals for which they were not registered at all. In fact, at Saturday dinner LEC ran out of food, even though we added extra meals (10% above registration) and the kitchen added extra meals as well. For years LEC has trusted our numbers implicitly. Unfortunately, we can no longer trust them ourselves.

Nancy Fennell
Assistant to the Registrar

Attachment 3: EC Flip Chart Notes

June 3, 2006

EC Strengths:

Seasoned Friends and knowledgeable re: YM
Commitment to serve YM
Ready access to each other and to all in YM
Communication
Staff!
Has a clearly defined mission that is kept in awareness
Strives to be spirit-led
Encouraging
LUV

EC Weaknesses:

Not mindful of introductions
Busyness
Too much work for too few
Lack of continuity from one EC meeting to the next
**Needs more coordination between EC, IBM, and YM meetings
Needs better follow-up
Needs more self-examination (EC)
Needs more support, care, and counsel

Rank ordering of projects already on the table.

1. vitally important project
2. important, but not critical
3. hold for future consideration
4. should be removed from list

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Project</u>
1	Operational handbook <i>Lyn, Caroline, Nancy — in active progress</i>
1	Abuse prevention guidelines, training manual, reporting instructions, etc. <i>Sybil is to contact youth workers who have not responded to materials under review.</i>
1	Youth Workers Review Committee <i>Ad hoc for 1 year, June to June EC, rotating members</i> <i>This year: Laura Winefordner, Dan Vaughen, Tom Fennell</i>
1	Faith and Practice Marriage and Commitment Booklet <i>Lyn and Phoebe. Awaiting only a preface. Will go to FGC for distribution.</i>
1	Additions to EC to be recommended to IBM: <i>Clerks of Peace and Social Concerns and Youth Committees,</i> <i>Membership Clerk, Half Yearly meeting Clerk</i> <i>EC Clerk will notify parties involved of this recommendation.</i>

- 1-2 Yearly Meeting Inter-visitation
See Phoebe's draft proposal which will be sent to all monthly meetings for response. Phoebe will collect responses.
- 2 Personnel policy: continuation of previous work.
Nancy is collecting copies of work accomplished thus far. Will distribute coordinated draft before next EC.
- 2 Software
One program needed for Lyn and Neil. Lyn is handling.
- 2-3 Representative travel funding guidelines.
Ad hoc committee: Nancy, Susan, Sybil, Caroline actively at work on issues. In meantime, Sybil in close contact with representatives and is surveying organizations to confirm duties of our reps.
- 4 YM workshop, seminar, training resources (within our MMs)
Included in Phoebe's inter-visitation plan. Remove from list.

Wish list for the future:

Better connections between the YM and HYM.

More intentionality for our Youth, such as campouts, work camps, etc.

Quaker community retirement community.

Quaker intentional community.

A YM spiritual development program.