

## Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, 9/30/05.

The meeting was held in the Palm Beach meetinghouse, Lake Worth, FL. Executive Committee members present: EC and Interim Business Meeting (IBM) clerk, Nancy Fennell; Assistant Yearly & IBM clerk, Sybil Brennan; Recording clerk, Ed Lesnick; Treasurer, Neil Andersen; Finance clerk, Caroline Lanker; Faith & Practice clerk, Phoebe Andersen; Nominating Committee clerk, Dan Vaughan; and Administrative Secretary, Lyn Cope-Robinson.

EC members not attending: Jan Dahm, Worship and Ministry clerk; Herb Haigh, clerk of Trustees.

Also attending: Cathy Gaskill, Trustee; Barbara Wolf, YM Gathering clerk; Cecelia Yocum, Peace and Social Concerns committee clerk; Ellie Caldwell, Palm Beach MM; Tom Fennell, Ft. Myers MM; Davida Johns, Tampa MM; Ruth Paine, St. Petersburg MM; and Lisa Stewart, Palm Beach MM.

The meeting began with a period of silent worship.

Nancy welcomed Friends. Changes to the Agenda were proposed. A consideration of reimbursement to workers with youth for fingerprinting and clearance expenses was added. Phoebe raised a concern about possible SEYM assistance to the devastation suffered by Friends' meetings in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Southcentral YM. Baton Rouge was assisting NOMM following hurricane Katrina, but also faced hardship from hurricane Rita's effects. The matter was referred to Cece Yocum and the Peace and Social Concerns committee.

Lyn gave the Secretary's report. [Attachment: Secretary's Report]

There is a need to update the software used by Lyn, Neil, Phoebe, and Caroline in their respective roles on behalf of the YM. Updates are needed for QuickBooks and Filemaker. Lyn requested the Finance committee give this consideration in formulating the next FY budget.

Caroline gave an update on the Handbook committee's progress. A written summary was distributed. Friends will be informed at FIBM. Nancy commented on the good feedback she has received about the ad hoc committee's work. Also, the clerk noted how the Nominations committee could use the handbook in explaining SEYM positions to interested Friends. Nancy thanked the committee for its work.

EC considered the fingerprinting requirement and a training videotape to educate youth workers. Caroline imparted, the training material sent by Annie McPherson only included how to recognize abuse. It did not deal with what we need, which is training in how to work with kids so as to prevent both abuse and suspicions of abuse. EC must ensure the policy's requirements are met.

Discussion was given to clarifying certain specifics: turnaround time for fingerprinting process, reimbursement to youth volunteers, and an action plan.

Cece stated turnaround time is within a week, Caroline said there are funds available in the Youth Committee budget for reimbursement, and a training plan should be in place by the winter IBM.

Lyn advised the State requires fingerprinting of a religious organization's workers with youth. Clearance through another organization (i.e., school employment) is not sufficient. Dan reminded EC that the insurance carrier would probably require proof of compliance. Nancy said the process involves many things but most importantly our youth.

Nancy prefaced the Finance committee report by reading a letter from Gainesville MM. Due to the increased costs arising from the storms of 2004 and delays in the new meetinghouse's construction, Gainesville would be unable to meet its assessed apportionment to SEYM.

As Finance committee clerk, Caroline explained her approach to apportionment. Apportionments are guidelines and are not required assessments to be made by monthly meetings. It is understood that meetings can be stretched financially. On the other hand, this must be balanced with the premise that when Friends approve a budget it implies a commitment to fund that budget. These two perspectives are not in opposition. As put forward in her reports, Caroline expressed that while some can't pay the suggested level, other meetings should consider paying more, if capable.

The question was raised as to who will respond to the Gainesville letter. Caroline will reply as financial clerk. Gratitude was expressed that Gainesville MM was willing to give a candid explanation of their situation.

Sybil, who is a member of Gainesville MM, expressed the struggle confronting her meeting. But, even in the midst of this challenge, the meeting sponsored a delegate to the World Conference of Young Friends in England. The challenges facing the Gainesville meeting are philosophical and financial. It all takes much energy, but it is a very meaningful struggle.

Caroline distributed an updated financial committee report that would be considered at FIBM.

Nancy introduced the clerk's report by sharing the need to have the YM Gathering clerk as a permanent member of EC. The following motion was approved.

**05EC13** EC recommends the Yearly Gathering Committee clerk be a member of the Executive Committee.

Caroline asked if it would be beneficial to have a "youth representative" on EC. Cece spoke of a person who was a "youth advocate." Barb questioned that creating another position would become one more "disconnect" between the youth and SEYM. How do we insure an ongoing rapport between adults and youth? Yet, there should be a liaison between EC and Young Friends.

Tom saw such an advocate as a "guardian representative," concerned with the general welfare of our youth and not specific programs. Neil said there is no one now focusing on youth. If we have someone who can be here (at EC) the YM really would benefit.

Sybil shared a concern about Jr. YM clerks' participation in EC meetings. In contacting attendees to the EC meeting held at her home in June 2005, two Young Friends said an unnamed adult questioned the need for their participation. She offered to stay in touch with these youth.

Caroline commended Gary Arthur, former IBM (RM) clerk, who went out of his way to involve the YF clerks. Perhaps, comments were misinterpreted since a report was not expected. Ed and Caroline referred to youth involvement and YF reports given at IBM (RM) in January and at 2005 YM Gathering. Nancy emphasized the need to have "a good handle" on what is happening with our youth.

Phoebe gave an example of greater intergenerational involvement. In NYYM, an adult gives a report to the youth. The adult Friend goes before the Young Friends' meeting or committee. This has possibilities for SEYM.

Young Friends are encouraged to send reports if they can't attend EC or IBM. Someone on EC should respond to Young Friends. Phoebe said personal contact like Sybil's makes them (the youth) feel included. Sybil will continue the dialog.

In her new role as IBM clerk, Nancy was pleased to know that intervisitation was part of her responsibilities. She recounted visits to four meetings. She attended with no agenda or fundraising pleas. She stated she was simply there to "worship with SEYM Friends." The response was positive.

Demographics and distance make inter-visitation difficult to be conducted on a sustained basis. One person cannot regularly visit meetings throughout the region. Nancy suggested dividing the YM into sections where an SEYM representative could visit meetings in an area once a month. Clearness is needed, yet intervisitation is integral to building yearly meetings. Others spoke to their experience with visitation, the possibilities and specific meetings and worship groups who may have interest. Opportunities were seen north of Jacksonville as an outreach to Savannah, Charleston, and the new Aiken, SC Worship Group.

In assessing the situation, EC concluded current standing committees, such as Worship and Ministry, would be unduly burdened by additional responsibilities. It was decided to form an EC ad hoc committee. The following motion was approved.

**05EC14** EC establishes an ad hoc committee to develop a plan for Inter-visitation. Phoebe Anderson, Sybil Brennan, and Cecelia Yocum will serve on the committee. The committee will report to EC at WIBM.

Nancy requested input on ways to develop a list of workshop presenters who have gifts or talents they could share with SEYM monthly meetings. Friends would become better aware of resources within our community that would benefit a meeting.

Lyn stated an SEYM email account could easily be provided for inquiries. Dan offered a questionnaire would be helpful. It was mentioned FGC could provide us with the questionnaire. Cece will contact FGC.

Nancy brought forth the idea of a “state of the yearly meeting report,” similar to what monthly meetings provide SEYM. Cece suggested a “spiritual state of SEYM,” drawn from the monthly meeting reports. Phoebe noted the YM Epistle was specific to a YM Gathering. Cathy said the process of the YM looking at itself is important as a written report. While such a report seemed to be in the purview of the Worship & Ministry committee, EC concluded this task was too burdensome given the additional responsibilities (religious education and Michener Lecture) the committee has recently assumed. After additional discussion it was decided to lay this item aside for continued consideration at the January EC meeting.

Additional comments were given on ways to increase communication and understanding in the Quaker community. Nancy said she would continue to explore ways to make YM come alive.

The meeting concluded with silent worship.

# **Secretary's Report**

## **to EC 09/30/2005 to be held at Palm Beach Meetinghouse**

### **Daily tasks:**

Fortunately this summer has provided a bit of a respite, albeit, enjoyably filled with sharing several days with the Operational Handbook Ad hoc Committee.

A discovery following this meeting was that in my fatigue, I noted that I became more linear and less able to multitask!

Great news is that publication sales (packaging and shipping) continue at a rapid clip. We have a net balance of \$1072, AND we have a great inventory.

### **Finances**

Meeting donations seem to be off to a slow start this fiscal year.

In continuing to work with the Trustees, we have had several small donations in memory of Ed Bertsche for Representative Outreach Travel Endowment Fund and a couple for the Michener Endowment Fund.

### **Publishing**

The warehouse stash of pamphlets is in good order, thanks to Dave's building shelves and labeling pamphlet boxes for ease in locating. The archival aspect of the warehouse storage leaves a lot to be desired and there is much that could be discarded (thinned out) if I ever take the time to do it.

Newsletter (16 pages) was bulk mailed. Bulk copies of it and of the HYM brochure will be available at FIBM. This was the first time that we included several Yearly Meetings as recipients

### **Website:**

The <[www.seym.org](http://www.seym.org)> website has been updated several times this summer with the new logos continuing to receive rave reviews for assisting ease in navigation. Increasingly, the operational pages of the website seem to be the domain of the secretary.

### **New Concerns:**

Realistically budgeting for software expenses for the Finance Committee and Publications. In order to remain compatible, SEYM needs to consider upgrading software this next fiscal year for Finance Clerk, Treasurer, Membership Clerk, and for Secretary.

### **New Additions:**

Office protection and camaraderie: Basil, a Cardigan Welsh Corgi— 4 months old.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope  
09/30/2005

