

Southeastern Yearly Meeting Minutes of Fall Interim Business Meeting 10/03/2009

Fall Interim Business Meeting (FIBM) for 2009 was held in the Sarasota Meetinghouse, Sarasota FL. Committee meetings were held in the morning. These minutes record the Interim Business Meeting held in the afternoon.

The meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business began with silent worship. The roll call of monthly meetings and worship groups followed. [Attachment: Attendees]

Following announcements, the Agenda was approved as amended.

The Worship and Ministry committee report was given by Co-clerk Nancy Triscritti. Nancy reported the 2010 Michener Lecturers and discussion leaders will be Maia and Stoph Hallwood. Nancy encourages attendance by young adults and adults with children, who should particularly enjoy the Hallwoods. A concern was brought forth about providing adequate child care during the Michener weekend.

As of this date there are no applicants for the Pendle Hill scholarship. Worship and Ministry asks monthly meetings to encourage applications for this wonderful opportunity to sojourn or engage in a short workshop.

A new project of the Worship and Ministry committee is the development of queries to be considered by meetings in making their annual state of the meeting reports.

Lisa Stewart, Palm Beach MM member and SEYM observer to FUM has requested assistance for her three-month sojourn to Kenya, which begins in June. Palm Beach discerned Lisa's leading and noted their approval at business meeting in May.

Lisa has established relationships with Kenyan Friends. She will be providing administrative relief and assistance while engaging in dialogue with Kenyan Quakers as a non-programmed Friend. It was stated that this is a "ministry in earnest," one which EC should act upon now. EC approved the following minute at its June meeting:

Recognizing and responding to Lisa Stewart's call to ministry as an unprogrammed Friend among Kenyan Friends, EC approves a contribution of \$500 to this ministry in support of her living expenses during the trip. This contribution will come from the contingency line item in the SEYM budget.

Phoebe Andersen, committee clerk, offered the Faith & Practice committee report. Members have come forth to proof read the style sheet in order to make all pages identical in format and easy to read.

The sections on Yearly Business Meeting, Interim Business Meetings, Yearly Meeting Committees, and Yearly Meeting Representatives are in 2nd Draft.

It is the Faith & Practice committee's goal to have a draft of the Quaker history section for Yearly Business Meeting, 2010.

Lyn Cope is helping with the document's index. The committee requests input on the final format. Examples given were 8.5 x 11, 5.25 x 8, and loose leaf arrangement. It was suggested space be given for handwritten notes and a place for recorded ministers.

Treasurer Neil Andersen gave a summarization.

Caroline Lanker, committee clerk, gave the Finance Committee report. The goals of the committee are to prepare the budget, compute apportionments, and shepherd the financial health of the yearly meeting.

Copies of the current apportionments were distributed. Corrected data will be sent to each monthly meeting and worship groups. As previously discussed, Key West WG and Golden Isle WG are not included for apportionment purposes. [See Executive Committee minutes, June 2009.] As of now, Savannah MM has no members. All are attenders.

There is an ongoing effort to keep a "flat budget," expenses and income being equal. The process for building the FY 2010-2011 budget has begun. Input is sought for a preliminary report to be given at WIBM.

Herb Haigh, clerk of Trustees, was present for the Trustees report. Mention was Youth Gathering Fund, the laying down of DeLand, and trustees section in Faith & Practice.

Ellie Caldwell, committee clerk, gave the Yearly Meeting Gathering committee report. For the 2010 Gathering, a multi-activity "Family Night" will replace the Friday Night intergenerational dance. Other small group activities will be encouraged. The final agenda is yet to be decided, but there will be time for interest groups. For 2010, there will be more flexible plans for meals and housing. One option is a selection of one meal per day.

The Walton lecturers will be Betsy Neale and Richard Mitchell. Their topic is "The Historical Jesus."

Since turn-around time is a factor, finger printing and background checks for youth workers need to be completed as soon as possible.

A concern was raised regarding the rules and expectations of our Quaker youth at the gathering. Another Friend noted the importance of maintaining the Thursday retreat session.

Warren Hoskins, clerk pro-tem, gave the Peace and Social Concerns report.

The Peace and Social Concerns committee presented a Minute of Concern regarding the proposed construction of a vast military training complex in southwest Florida. The Highland County Commissioners scheduled a public meeting for October 5 concerning zoning variances for the \$425 million project.

It was stated, the proposed Training Center is an effort by a developer, Greg Eagle, to make millions of dollars exploiting open lands in the southwest corner of rural Highlands County.

The Eagle National Security Training Center, south of Venus, could be larger than five Wal-Marts. The runway is long enough to land C130s and 747s. These planes are loud and will be landing and taking off over Venus residents' homes and farms. The proposed installation is contrary to our Quaker testimonies about peace and the environment.

Greg Eagle's son, Dane Eagle, is the finance director on Gov. Charlie Crist's staff. The *Miami Herald*, in a 2008 story, reported Eagle gave \$500,000 to a Floridians for a Better and Brighter Future, supporting Governor Crist's senatorial campaign.

Comparisons have been made between the School of the Americas, Blackwater, and the proposed Center. Nancy and Tom Fennell, both of whom live in the area, provided additional insight. As residents of the area and "point people" involved with the issue, Friends were asked to hold Nancy and Tom in the Light. The proponents' tactics have been "deceptive and frightening." The last meeting before the county commissioners was cancelled because a large turnout could not be accommodated.

Noting the urgency of the matter, Friends discussed the wording of the minute which would also serve as a press release of SEYM's concern. There are other organizations, such as the Sierra Club, which have stated their opposition to the possible zoning changes which would permit construction.

Mary Jo Klingel, committee clerk, gave the Nominating Committee report.

Two additional representatives to FWCC and a Membership recorder will be placed in nomination at the YBM. Also, an AFSC committee representative position is open. If someone is so led, please talk to Susan Vaughn and Martha Morris.

Lyn Cope and the Nominating Committee will continue to consider assistants for certain positions, i.e., Yearly Meeting recording clerk.

Please make known to the monthly meeting the opportunities to serve SEYM and the wider Friends community. Please become familiar with the terms of office, understand, and ask all to discern their leadings and gifts. We (on the committee) “are on nominating and so are you.”

The soon to be released annual Directory lists the SEYM officers, committees, and representatives to organizations. Terms expiring in 2010 need Friends immediate consideration.

Becky Steele, IBM and EC clerk, reported on the EC meetings of June 6 and October 2.

SEYM will not disassociate itself from the Golden Isle Worship Group and Key West Worship group. These groups are attended by Friends who make Florida a winter home and are members of their “home monthly meetings” and other yearly meetings. However, Golden Isle and Key West will not be included in determining apportionments.

Deland Preparative meeting has been laid down. Some former attenders will meet as the Orange City Worship Group. Another new worship group is forming in Hilton Head, SC.

Upcoming events were discussed: Herb Haigh’s Fall 2010 Quaker Trip to England, Miami Monthly Meeting’s meetinghouse jubilee (November 1), and the Savannah MM celebration (November 15) signifying its becoming a monthly meeting and constituent member of SEYM. There will be a FWCC regional consultation meeting

Friends were reminded of the SEYM Inter-visitation program, which provides for Friends with particular expertise and gifts to visit and share with the monthly meetings. More information is available on the web site.

Executive Committee gave ongoing consideration of SEYM’s relationship with Friends United Meeting. While a new way to unite SEYM friends has not opened to us, SEYM is providing partial financial assistance and supporting Lisa Stewart’s calling to FUM Friends in Kenya. As of now and as in the past, SEYM will fund observers from the yearly meeting to designated FUM functions.

The future status of the Ad-Hoc Discernment committee is uncertain, including the committee’s role in continuing to discern the weighty issue of SEYM and FUM. The committee will continue to meet. A Friend raised a concern about the committee or larger community’s role in the need for developing a healing process. The spiritual impact the issue has on individual members and the yearly meeting as a whole should be addressed.

The FUM General Board is scheduled to meet in two weeks. According to information received, they will not deal with modifications to the Richmond Declaration and Personnel Policy.

Changes to the SEYM Directory are being made and the 2009-2010 edition will be available soon. The need for an accurate census and lead time to publish the document was emphasized.

Many Friends spoke to Lyn Cope on the phone prior to this meeting. We miss her presence and hold her in the Light as she continues to recover from surgery.

The following minutes were approved.

09IBM01 FIBM approves administrative secretary Lyn Cope's request to seek input from the publications discernment appointees concerning recycling a selection of older SEYM pamphlets.

09IBM02 FIBM approves a threshing session to be held 1-3 PM on the Friday preceding the 2010 WIBM to be held in Orlando. It will be a time for worshipful listening to all concerns regarding questions of our YM's relationship with FUM. The session will be facilitated by Susan Taylor.

David Johns gave the ProNica report. Also, see *Documents in Advance*, pages 9-10.

David Johns summarized her DIA report and added comments about projects, the upcoming U. S. performances of Nicaraguan Reggae musician Philip Montalban, and the "people's fair" in St. Petersburg, *Circus McGurkis*, October 24, 2009. This annual community event is a project of St. Petersburg Friends. On November 21, ProNica will discuss grant proposals.

Andrea Walsh, registrar, gave The Half-Yearly Meeting report: The Half-Yearly meeting will be held November 26-29, 2009 over the extended Thanksgiving weekend. SEYM's annual social intergenerational gathering will be held again at Wekiwa Springs State Park, a few miles northwest of Orlando. This year's theme is: *Simple Living with Nature*.

A Representatives to Organizations report from Andrew Jason, AFSC/SERO, was distributed.

In other business, the meeting returned to a consideration of the Eagle National Security Training Center and the hearing before the Highlands County Commissioners on October 5.

09IBM03 FIBM approves the following minute of concern which is entrusted to P&SC for distribution.

The Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), having been informed of the proposals to divert use of land in Highlands County, Florida, from agriculture to urban military combat training conducted by a private company for mercenaries, militias, private militaries, military contractors, and militaries of other lands, expresses its opposition to such wrong use of Florida lands as this proposed Eagle National Security Training Center.

Our opposition is grounded in our testimonies of peace and opposition to war, and in our Quaker "earth care witness" --- our concern for Florida's fragile environment, with the chemical and noise pollution, flight traffic, and firing range activity which will occur if this land use is allowed.

We are also concerned for the safety and community values of the region and its potential for being the target of a future military attack.

We ask Quakers and others who carry these concerns to communicate their opposition to the Commissioners of Highlands County, and to communicate their support for this Minute of Concern to the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Southeastern Yearly Meeting.

Friends showed their concern for Lyn Cope. We hold Lynn in Light, we miss her presence, and we anticipate her rapid recovery. Several members talked to Lyn during the lunch hour before worship with an attention to business.

On behalf of FIBM attendees, a **Minute of Appreciation** was offered by Gary Arthur, assistant clerk.

SEYM Friends offer gratitude to our Sarasota Friends for your warm and gracious hospitality shared with us this 2009 Fall Interim Business Meeting. We delight in your beautiful meetinghouse with porches lined with picnic tables and surrounded by gardens. We take with us your smiles and caring concern.

The meeting concluded with silent worship.

Participants

at the Fall Interim Business Meeting

Ft Lauderdale

Mary Jo Klingel

Ft Myers

Nancy Fennell

Tom Fennell

Gainesville

[Gary Arthur]

Lake Wales

[Caroline Lanker]

Miami

Warren Hoskins

Orlando

Chuck Deneen

Ed Lesnick

Kay Lesnick

Palm Beach

Gary Arthur

Elle Caldwell

Barbara Letsch

Lisa Stewart

Sarasota

Carol Bechtel

Dave Hillsheimer

Peggy Martin

Mary Paul

John Steinway

Mimi McAdoo

St. Petersburg

Peter Crockett

Herb Haigh

Edward Hotchkiss

Connie Hotchkiss

David Johns

Tallahassee

Neil Andersen

Phoebe Andersen

Susan Taylor

Tampa

Steve Kinney

Carolyn Lanker (Lake Wales WW)

Becky Steele

Nancy Triscritti

Andrea Walsh

Nil Wilkins

Winter Park

Martha Morris