

**Piedmont Friends—Yearly Meeting & Fellowship  
Interim Representative Body Meeting  
April 20, 2024 10:00 am**

**Note:** \* indicates an advance document.

**Present:** Marian Beane (*Charlotte*), Susan Carlyle (*Friendship*), Ted Edgerton (*Wilkes County*), Sally Freeman (*Eno*), David Haines (*Durham*), Paul Klever (*Eno*), Mary Jo Klingel (*Charlotte*), Amy McIntosh (*Raleigh*), Jasmine McKewen (*Chapel Hill*), Melissa Meyer (*Wilkes County*), Bill Moore (*Raleigh*), Nancy Riemer (*Raleigh*), Leslie Rountree (*Chapel Hill*), John Shuford (*Raleigh*).

**Presiding Clerk:** Nancy Riemer

Nancy welcomed everyone and asked that we introduce ourselves and share what had brought us joy in the past week. We then settled into silent worship.

***Approval of Agenda\****

The agenda was approved.

***Approval of Piedmont Friends Representative Body Minutes, 2/17/24\****

The minutes were approved.

***Clerking/Executive Committees Report\****

*PF Spring Gathering Recap* – Sally Freeman reported that about 40 friends from nine monthly meetings attended our Spring Gathering at the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum. We were graced with beautiful weather, if a bit chilly. Our tour guide was excellent. After the tour, a few Friends stayed and looked at the dining hall, which is available as a rental. The Clerking Committee is considering using it as our location for Annual Sessions in 2025, and will refer the idea to the planning committee. The dining hall is spacious and offers excellent audio/visual services. There is also an adjacent catering kitchen. The site also resonates with our desire to work with and support historically Black institutions.

*PF Fall Gathering Plans* – Marian Beane reported that the Clerking Committee is considering John Cardarelli's suggestion of the Historic Bethabara Park in Winston-Salem as the location for our Fall Gathering. Bethabara, the first European settlement in the North Carolina Piedmont, was founded in 1753 by German-speaking Moravians (United Church of Bethren) who came from Pennsylvania. The park includes a pavilion with tables for outside seating, which would be ideal for our practice of "bring-your-own-picnic" fellowship. We hope to secure a tour for a weekend in late September or October that won't conflict with other organizational or yearly meeting events. Marian shared that we need volunteers to help with the planning, and that folks can contact the Clerking Committee if they are interested. Friends agreed that September 21 would possibly work as a tentative date.

*Naming Committee* – Currently, the PFYM&F Clerking Committee also serves as its Naming Committee. Marian said that ideally, the Nominating Committee should be made up of members of both large and small monthly meetings. There are two positions coming open on the nominating committee this year, and representatives are urged to share any candidates with the Clerking Committee.

*Leadership Directory Update* – Nancy requested that representatives let her know what kind of rotation schedule their monthly meetings operate under (January – December or July – June) so that she can keep the listings in our leadership directory current. To her knowledge, Raleigh and Salem Creek meetings are the only ones who change leadership roles in January.

#### *FCNCL report\**

Vernie Davis, our Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation representative, was unable to attend today, so Nancy shared a few highlights from the report. With the help of its constituent Meetings, FCNCL is gathering and discerning policy priorities for 2025-2026 year. Monthly Meetings have been asked to discern their legislative priorities and submit them to FCNCL by May 31, if possible.

In Chapel Hill this coming Monday at 7 pm there will be a screening of *The Smell of Money*, a documentary about the environmental and cultural impacts of hog farming and waste lagoons in Eastern North Carolina. Marian noted that the documentary is also available through Amazon Prime streaming service for a small fee (\$5). Lastly, FCNCL is planning another Advocacy Day on June 12 in Raleigh; details to come soon.

#### *Quaker House Representative*

Sally reported that Quaker House Executive Director Wayne Finegar has started the process with the Board of Directors to approve adding a representative of PFYM&F. The Board has tentative approval, with the final decision to be made April 25. Meanwhile, the Clerking Committee has obtained approval from our Nominating Committee to add the position. Sally asked those present to approve a recommendation to Annual Sessions that Quaker House be added as a representative organization. The recommendation was approved.

#### ***Nominating Committee Report\****

Jeff Brown presented the Nominating Committee's report. They recommend Mark Davidson to serve on the Spiritual State of the Meeting Committee, and seek approval of the recommendation to Annual Sessions of John Shuford to the Clerking Committee. Both were approved with gratitude, with John's nomination (as approved by the representative body) to be brought before Annual Sessions.

The Committee reported that Bill Moore and Lizzie Biddle have agreed to have their tenures as AFSC and FCNL reps extended by one year. Bill noted that he has agreed to serve until a replacement is found. The Nominating Committee is also seeking candidates to serve as a representative to the Quaker House Board, should the position be finalized at Annual Sessions.

Lastly, Jeff and Karen McKinnon are rotating off the Nominating Committee this year. The report was accepted with gratitude.

[FIVE MINUTE BREAK]

### ***Treasurer's Report\****

Paul Klever shared the report, noting that the financials reflect our situation as of April 15. Two monthly meetings have increased their support. The Spring Gathering was both a joyful event and beneficial to the coffers. On the other hand, we have received requests for travel reimbursements from our organizational representatives, leaving only \$500 for the remainder of the calendar year (our fiscal year). Paul suggested that we may need to revisit this number to cover all requests we anticipate before December. Paul noted that we have budgeted \$1200 for individual and/or families to travel to the FGC Gathering this summer. He reminded Friends that requests must come through an applicant's monthly meeting. The report was accepted with gratitude.

### ***Spiritual State of the Meeting Committee***

Sally Freeman noted that the SSOM Committee began as a working group under PFYM, and became an actual committee for PFYM&F this past year. The Committee has invited all meetings to participate, without requiring them to submit a spiritual state report. Sally said that very small meetings may only need to respond with an informal "temperature check" via email. The Spiritual State of the Meeting Report will capture the essence of the joys, leadings and concerns of our member meetings, but each individual monthly meeting report will be available on our website. Nancy said that Raleigh Meeting found the queries very helpful as a prompt and it was a joyful process.

Sally shared that Deborah Warot has had to step back temporarily because of a death in her family. Sally welcomed Mark Davidson to the committee. The report was accepted with gratitude.

### ***Planning for 2024 Piedmont Friends Retreat & Annual Sessions***

Sally shared that this year we are meeting May 31 through June 2, and our theme is "*How Are Friends Called to Respond in These Tumultuous Times?*" We will follow the same format as last year, with virtual sessions on Friday evening and Sunday morning, and an in-person retreat and Annual Sessions at Guilford College on Saturday. Child care will be available on site. During Saturday's events, we will offer Zoom access, possibly utilizing the "chat" feature for online participants to participate in discussions.

The Associate General Secretary for Planning and Advocacy for FCNL, Amelia Keegan, will be our plenary speaker Saturday morning. Later, James Shields will lead a tour of Guilford, and will also be joining us in singing freedom songs in the afternoon. Sally said that Friends can volunteer to provide morning refreshments when they register. As it is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of George Fox's birth, we may mark the occasion with simple refreshments in closing as well. Paul Klever said a flyer will be available electronically the first week of May.

## ***Quaker Call to Action-NC***

Paul Klever, who is on the steering committee for the initiative, gave a brief update. The Quaker Call to Action seeks to harness Friends' concerns relating to threats to our democracy to protect the integrity of our election and democracy; to channel fear and anxiety into action. The group is planning a statewide Zoom call on Thursday, May 23 at 7 pm to bring Friends together and teach them how to become engaged. Zoom call links are available in the outreach materials that were sent to monthly meeting Peace and Social Concerns committees. Diane Randall, of the group *Urgent Call to Action* will be on call. Paul noted that the Zoom meeting is NOT an activity of PFYM&F per se; he is sharing the information for those who may be interested.

## ***American Friends Service Committee report***

Bill Moore reported on last week's annual AFSC meeting. Bill noted that there has been a lot of stress within the organization in the last few years around the policies and mechanisms for diversity and inclusion. He felt the tone this year from AFSC officials was that's in the past, and now we're moving on. Bill sensed many people were not ready to move on. He was concerned about the appointment of ex officio members of the board to promote diversity; will it break the balance of the board which is supposed to be 80% Quaker?

Bill also noted that the cost to attend has gotten very expensive. There were about 40 people in person and another 25 online in attendance. On the brighter side, AFSC's finances are more stable.

A Friend asked Bill what we could do to support him. Does he need a committee for care? Bill responded that he wasn't clear how to answer that. Marian Beane said that the clerking committee was there for him if he needed them.

**Our next Representative Body Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 17, 2024.** The meeting settled out with silent worship at 12:07 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by*  
*Leslie Rountree, recorder*

## **Priorities for the year**

Creating opportunities for Friends to gather across PF—both virtually and in-person.

- o Supporting Adult Young Friends group.
- o Encouraging opportunities for young adult Friends, young families and youth to connect across PF meetings.
- o Strengthening the unification of Piedmont Friends.
- o Sharing opportunities for Friends to join in common concerns and work toward response and action (encourage meetings to extend opportunities to other PF meetings—workshops, forums, Peace & Social Concerns, Minutes of concern, etc.).