

Executive Committee Meeting
Southeastern Yearly Meeting
June 11, 2011

Present: Ann Jerome, Executive Committee (EC) and IBM clerk; Joel Cook, Assistant clerk; Phoebe Andersen, Yearly Meeting (YM) clerk; Susan Taylor, Acting Recording clerk; Nil Wilkins, Mary Jo Klingel, Neil Andersen, Elizabeth Croce, Ann Sundberg (morning), Ellie Caldwell, Nancy Triscritti, Mimi McAdoo, Karl Hersh, Andrea Walsh, Warren Hoskins, Steve Kinney, Chuck Deneen. Gail Rogers (afternoon), Rolf Hanson (afternoon).

Regrets: Lyn Cope, Administrative Secretary and Ed Lesnick, SEYM Recording clerk.

The meeting began with Open Worship at 10:00 a.m. in the Tampa Meetinghouse, Tampa, Florida.

Opening report from Ann Jerome, EC Clerk:

The new SEYM Clerk, EC and IBM Clerk, and Assistant Clerk met at the home of Ann Jerome and Chuck Deneen in retreat on May 21, 2011. They found unity in discerning that it is time for SEYM to focus on the core: Love and to continue moving forward as a Yearly Meeting in a Spirit-led way, with an underpinning of gratitude.

The "phoenix from the ashes" of the Youth Program has brought forward a revitalized Youth Program and there is a reunion of youth today at the Tampa Zoo with shared lunch with Executive Committee members.

Finding safety for youth has led us to a wider view. What are we doing with our youth? How do we nurture them?

What is the Yearly Meeting? This often translates to the Yearly Meeting Gathering. However, we are not an event. We are an organization. This may be the time to strengthen the organization in addition to the Gathering. We would like to raise the profile of SEYM as an organization and demonstrate the value of SEYM to Monthly Meetings.

The clerk directed us to a flip chart with the following verses from John, underscoring the focus on the core of Love and treating the Yearly Meeting as a people to be gathered (George Fox). The gathering force is love:

I give you a new commandment: love one another; as I have loved you, so you are to love one another.

If there is this love among you, then everyone will know that you are my disciples. (John 13: 34-35)

From this core, the clerks discerned that it is important that everything within the Yearly Meeting be conducted consciously in the Light of Love. They brought forward a query to committees:

Where is God in your committee? How do you invite God into committee work?

The clerk brought forward specific ideas on other ways the clerks discerned of bringing Love into all that SEYM does:

- At Yearly Meeting Gathering plenary sessions: Complete business by the end of the day on Saturday. This will require discipline on everyone's part.
- How to make YM more meaningful to Monthly Meetings? It was suggested to increase intervisitations and communication. It is important that members and attenders of all Monthly Meetings are familiar with the Yearly Meeting.
- Communication (publications and electronic, possibly via Constant Contact): providing more support to Monthly Meetings, perhaps through providing some content to Monthly Meeting newsletters and through providing an electronic means of communication.

Concerning the Havana, Cuba Worship Group, Ann Jerome consulted with Eduardo Diaz, Miami Monthly Meeting. Cuba Yearly Meeting (CYM) has declined to recognize the Havana Worship Group as a CYM worship group. This is why Mercedes Soca came to SEYM for support.

The clerk e-mailed Mercedes Soca with queries on ways SEYM could be of help to the Havana, Cuba Worship Group. There has been no response as of June 11.

Neil Andersen has spoken with Hope Bastian-Martinez, Tallahassee Monthly Meeting, who attends Havana Monthly Meeting, a CYM Meeting. Hope is organizing a service trip to bring young adult Friends from the U.S. to Cuba.

Miami Monthly Meeting is discerning way forward on how they can support the unprogrammed Havana Worship Group.

Mercedes Soca reported to Susan Taylor, Tallahassee Monthly Meeting that she has registered for FGC and will need help with funding. Individual Friends have offered to help with her expenses. Carl Hersh of Miami Monthly Meeting asked to be notified if funds were needed, because money left from the former Cuban Quaker Project might possibly be available for her.

The Secretary's Report, previously distributed, was discussed.

Friends considered the idea of SEYM providing funding for the SEYM clerk, IBM clerk and Assistant clerk to attend a Pendle Hill clerking workshop.

Value was seen in being in the Pendle Hill environment together. A weekend focused on clerking is very valuable and would be of great benefit to SEYM.

Other clerking resources were brought forward: Deborah Fisch's clerking workshop at Pendle Hill and FGC clerking Consultations.

Regarding funding, the Finance committee supports the idea. There are several options. \$500 is left in the Contingency Fund line item 10 in EC and general expense. Also, for annual representative to organization travel: \$2600 has been allocated this year. YM spent slightly over half of the line item last year. It is possible to ask trustees. There is also the Pendle Hill Scholarship that could be used for this year.

Friends approved the following minute:

11EC04 The Executive Committee approves funding, as needed, for the attendance of the YM clerk, Assistant clerk and IBM clerk at the November 18, 2011 Pendle Hill clerking workshop led by Arthur Larrabee.

State of Florida Corporations report: YM officers are to be listed as officers of the corporation according to SEYM bylaws, but the current Corporations Report is partially inaccurate. This will be changed when the next report is filed.

Carl Hersh reported for the Trustees: It was inquired how to proceed with Peace and Social Concerns request regarding the bank used by the Yearly Meeting. There is a willingness to consider a change, but more information is needed. It was noted banking communities are interrelated. Also, with an income of \$70,000/yr at the Yearly Meeting level, deposits are often made in person, and not always at the YM Secretary's home location as the YM holds events throughout the state. The item was again referred to Peace and Social Concerns Committee, with a request for a full report outlining the rationale for a change and taking into account the needs of the Yearly Meeting as well. The committee will report back at the fall Executive Committee meeting.

Regarding SEYM Publications, Ann Jerome reported from conversations with the Administrative Secretary. The past year had fewer newsletters because of other pressing concerns.

Administrative Secretary is now ready to go forward with publications. She would like to make the SEYM Newsletter a journal, as it has already evolved in that direction. A journal would be a place where topics can be more deeply developed; time sensitive matters can be posted on the web. In a related matter, the Administrative Secretary will be redoing the website this summer to make it more attractive and easier to use.

Much discussion followed. Concerns were raised about priorities. Friends need to get time sensitive information, which can be provided electronically. There is a membership component within SEYM that is not online. We must not exclude those people. It was reported that the Administrative Secretary is aware of this, and we have the technology to see who those people are. They will be sent hard copies. A question was raised about variability of fee related to bulk use. Peace and Social Concerns Committee Friends gave a reminder about the importance of decreased paper use. Concern was raised for the Administrative Secretary's workload with regard to producing a more

extensive publication. More information is needed from her regarding her specific needs for help with the journal.

Concerns were raised about the speed with which we are moving on this item and the need for formal arrangement in the support role of the publications advisory committee. Friends expressed the importance of providing more support for the Administrative Secretary and gaining familiarity with all the work she does. Gratitude was expressed for her many gifts.

Support was expressed for the idea of scheduling print publications to coincide with mailings regarding events throughout the year. A possible publication schedule could be timed with announcements/registration information for Half-Yearly Meeting, the Michener Lecture, and Yearly Business Meeting. There could be savings in postage if we "piggyback" mailings.

The SEYM clerk provided a historical perspective. The Administrative Secretary took over the job of publications when the publications committee was not functioning. It's time for us to seriously reconsider abdicating so much to the Administrative Secretary. Concern was expressed for the future of SEYM and the Administrative Secretary's well being. Concern was raised as to whether SEYM needed more than one staff person. It is important to support the functioning of committees. EC clerk will take concerns discussed to the Administrative Secretary and report back to EC at the fall meeting. EC will be sent a report from the Administrative Secretary regarding her concerns prior to the meeting.

Young Adult Quaker (YAQ) request funding to attend EC meetings: YAQ clerks and Young Friends clerks are part of EC. The Finance Committee is asking Trustees if traveling funds for YAQ representatives can come from unrestricted Trustees funds for this fiscal year only. The current estimate is \$300 for each YAQ co-clerk. The Trustees will consult.

YAQ Co-clerks have agreed that only one of them at a time will attend EC meetings.

Friends were reminded that YAQs living out of state have provided strong leadership so far. Do we need to address this more broadly? How can monthly meetings be involved in this process? The Trustees will consider the matter, too. There may be an option of remote conferencing. Friends were clear that financial means should not determine ability to serve.

Carl Hersh, clerk, provided the Trustees report. From the May 21, 2011 meeting in Orlando, the query was raised: How do we integrate Monthly Meetings within YM? Trustees are enablers for the Yearly Meeting and have come to a deeper understanding of their spiritual cohesiveness and the importance of clear communications. Also, the Trustees also discussed the role of the YM Treasurer who is an ex officio member of Trustees.

Ann Sundberg, Youth Committee clerk, spoke to the persistent need to address the Youth Program Guidelines.

A question was raised: How does the process outlined in the Youth Guidelines speak to violations? Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) training speaks to that situation. Language will be adapted for the Youth Guidelines.

It is important that Trustees as a committee be informed of situations like the alleged sexual assault incident that was recently resolved. Clerk of Trustees should be on the clearness committee described in the Youth Guidelines.

Concerns were raised as to whether SEYM's expectations of young Friends are stated clearly enough. Talking points with families will address this.

Youth committee members will visit Meetings. FCAT was not the only barrier that was discussed regarding youth attendance, but the state-testing schedule should not be a conflict in 2012. SEYM should encourage early Monthly Meeting promotion of the annual gathering.

After the morning session closed with worship, lunch was served at 1:05.

Upon reconvening, Gathering Committee clerk Ellie Caldwell reported. Ellie noted that so many people were involved with the 2011 Gathering. Youth Committee took on a huge role. Individual contributions helped, but the committee continues seeking ways to lower costs. Tampa MM generated new interest by providing the registration, room and board for first time attenders at the Gathering.

YM Gathering 2012 will have a musical theme. Tom Neilson will be Walton Lecturer. He is from Mt. Toby, (Maine) Monthly Meeting. The Lecture is *Spiritual Journey with Music*. There's lots of musical talent in the YM that can contribute to the gathering. The theme will provide opportunities for intergenerational activities.

The committee will make the effort for all children to come to the Gathering free of charge. Ellie Caldwell is looking for an assistant now whom she can mentor to become clerk of the Gathering Committee in 2013. Nominating Committee will assist in this.

Nancy Triscritti, co-clerk, gave the Worship and Ministry report. At the Yearly Meeting Gathering meeting, the committee sought clearness regarding the intervisitation program process. Phone conferences have been successful. Spirit-based opportunities may prove fruitful.

The committee will revamp the intervisitation project. The two Friends who have visited found it meaningful. Intervisitation is a vital part of the Yearly Meeting.

Committee meetings have considered many monthly meeting issues, and Worship and Ministry is seeking ways to address these matters. Workshops on nurturing within the SEYM family may be helpful. The committee asked to be held in the Light.

Friend Nancy continues to feel led to work with the Youth Committee.

Warren Hoskins, clerk, reported for the Peace & Social Concerns Committee. P&SC had meetings in the Spirit in seeking a process to write new queries relevant to our times. P&SC requested a meeting of P&SC and WM to move forward in this process. Nancy Triscritti, Worship and Ministry co-clerk, accepted the invitation. Faith and Practice is historically the committee that writes queries. Phoebe Andersen, clerk of Faith and Practice Committee, asked to be a part of that meeting and will attend.

Friends approved the following minute of gratitude for Tampa Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends:

11EC05 The Executive Committee of Southeastern Yearly Meeting expresses heartfelt thanks to Tampa Monthly Meeting for their warm hospitality in providing accommodations, a loving place to meet and delicious food during our June, 2011 meeting.

Finance committee reported that apportionments have been posted on the SEYM website and e-mailed to monthly meeting clerks and treasurers.

EC meeting closed with open worship and moved into worship sharing on queries provided by the clerk:

1. Where is God in our work? How can we invite God more fully into our work?
2. How can we move into deeper, more spirit-filled worship in our committees and our meetings for worship and for business?
3. What does the Yearly Meeting offer monthly meetings, worship groups, and individual Friends?
4. What does it mean to raise a child to adulthood in Friends community? How does this query enlighten the first three, and vice versa?

Worship sharing ended at 4:00 PM.

Responses during worship sharing on queries

God's presence is evident in the meeting of the clerks, the unity they felt in strengthening the foundation of love within YM, the conducting of today's meeting, the way in which we are with each other, and the discernment that went into committees' work heard today. Very much feel the presence of God.

Addressing #3: In trying to explain to people that are new or not active, YM is an underpinning and umbrella. They ask: What's the point? Some are put off by membership cost. For me, it's where I feel God's presence in the world. It is Love and

care of kindred spirits. There is a bigger world – and try to communicate that to others is very difficult.

The work we do is God's work. We open up and listen fully to each other. Listening for that of God in other people, their thoughts and feelings. That's when the work gets meaningful. That was my experience at Youth Committee Meeting. Not being wed to one's own ideas. To opening to another way when we have differences. That's how we invite God into our work. It's God's work, not our work.

What can the YM offer? Offer a clerking workshop within YM. Coordinate a couple of workshops within course of year. Another workshop might be pastoral care. There is any number of possibilities. Intervisitation is very important. (It) Might work better if people were specifically asked to visit a meeting. Being asked to do things is a good way to get me involved. Provide programs, workshops for benefit of membership and invite them to participate in a certain way to help them feel a part of the community.

2. And 3. Worship and prayer are ways to go deeper, become more spirit-filled. A gift from God can be developed. Perhaps, workshops or programs can be useful.

SEYM is my "gateway drug" to the wider world of Quakers. That's where I learned more of the wider world of Quakers and Quaker individuals. We can't do it by ourselves. Our meetings can't do it alone. SEYM opened that connection not only to us but also to the wider world (FGC, FCNL etc.).

One Quaker I met who is about to retire is going to work a year in that transition and give 75% of earnings to a Quaker organization.

#2. Make more space for intentional worship. It's more than that. It is important to spend time talking amongst ourselves about the spiritual foundations of what we do. Some Friends are so much into the process and not knowing what's beneath the process.

The more you do it, (worship and talking about it) the more real it becomes.

#4. My child is relatively isolated as a Quaker child. With her peers, there's a place she needs to start. She senses a difference in quality of her relationships with friends within SEYM and elsewhere. Providing that quality of relating is most important. I can teach her about testimonies.

#1. How can we invite God? Ask and ye shall receive. (Moves into #2). Someone new at this meeting felt like an outsider and not part of the already established camaraderie.

#3. (SEYM) can be a vehicle of dissemination of information to others. If we accept God, invite God in, we can go deeper and also help monthly meetings.

#4 I learned much in the meeting I attended with my young children about parenting and Quakers. It was the one place where we realized that the whole community was raising our children. The love was given intentionally. They were welcomed fully. Neither of my children is a practicing Friend. But, their behavior is that of Friends. It is important to have a corporate group to worship with.

There is a deep sense of unease. There are families who are really struggling. There is an environmental crisis, and a sense of a culture that has just gone wrong in significant ways. There is also a sense that we (Quakers) have a great deal to offer. (I am) very interested in transformation of consciousness. It is very important that we be awake.

(It) starts with individual spiritual practice and practice within monthly meeting. That's where it starts with YM. Better ability to deal with what needs to be attended to. Where is our concern for the spiritual life of everybody out there? Is that our mission anymore? Listen "at the gates of heaven" and take direction from that.

Raise a child to not be totally self-centered. Be other-centered in varying degrees. Ask not what the world can do for me, but what can I do for the world. Many levels of outreach very important

Recorded by Susan Taylor

Secretary's Report to EC 06/11/2011 to be held at Tampa Meeting House

This report describes activities that have taken place since EC Meeting YBM 2011.

General office activities following YBM:

Office work took a turn toward normality with lots of catching up, most notably filing always seems to fall between the cracks. As the office accumulates paper at a rapid clip, and as tornadoes rip through Quaker homes in the heartland and as flood wipes out QUF clerk's home on the Missouri River, I am reminded that everything needs to be filed and stashed or shredded with master files kept on off-site storage. To date we are doing a pretty good job keeping current copies of Quick Books Pro, the CAP FileMaker database, originals and pdfs of handbooks, policies, and guidelines on the password protected offsite storage available 24/7 to those who use them.

Accolades to new clerks Phoebe, Ann, and Joel who met together May 21st.

Accolades to the Trustees for holding their first ever retreat May 21st, with thanks to Herb Haigh for his decade of clerking and to new clerk Carl Hersh for being willing to step forward.

Accolades to the Youth Committee and their new clerk Ann Sundberg for holding their first ever retreat Memorial weekend as they move forward to create even more wonderful plans for youth.

Financial/Bookkeeping:

End of the fiscal year bookkeeping is seemingly ahead of schedule—all data submitted has been entered. I wish to thank the Treasurer Neil for his timely review so that end-of-the year bookkeeping can proceed and enables him to write the Annual Report for FIBM.

Trustees met in Orlando Meeting house May 21st for a day-long retreat. This proved to be informative and community-building as they reviewed way forward to better identify needs and tasks.

Questions have been raised about the right use of unrestricted funds in the SEYM General Fund and in the Unrestricted Fund under the care of the Trustees. The secretary would like to remind Friends that we need a sizable cushion to cover expenses. For example without donations, after writing June checks, the checkbook for the General Fund will be in arrears \$4800. Hopefully, apportionment donations will soon start to arrive. Curiously to put apportionment-suggestions into perspective, if Quakers tithed—the suggested \$103 annual donation per member represents an annual salary of \$1030; for attenders \$515.

Please consider: when Susan Taylor became clerk, SEYM funded her attendance at a Pendle Hill clerking workshop; this came to my attention as accolades were expressed for her clerking style. Therefore, I would like to propose that the YM fund Clerks Ann Jerome, Phoebe Anderson, and Joel Cook, knowing that this will benefit the yearly meeting as we go forward. Please discuss and discern right way forward. It might be especially beneficial if they were able to participate in a class together.

All budgeted donations to Quaker organizations from the General Fund (from meeting apportionments) were written for FY 2010-11. The State of FL Corporation Report was filed in a timely manner; however Ann Jerome noted an error. While SEYM's *Faith and Practice* lists many officers, the new Bylaws that changed the name of the corporation, eliminated naming Trustees. To submit a corrected report costs \$61.25. One solution is to correct it next year; another would be to modify the Bylaws to make them congruent with our *Faith and Practice* (filing fee charge), or modify *F&P* to reflect the Bylaws, or simply to keep the two documents separate and file a correction ASAP to meet rules of existing Bylaws.

At YBM-2011, the question arose regarding keeping funds in the Bank of America. This is a huge dilemma

because there is no doubt that we all believe that we should put our funds where our values are. BOA leaves much to be desired—all banking appears problematic to some degree. Predecessor Finance Committees and secretaries chose BOA because offices around the state were within walking or short driving distance from the SEYM office, events and individuals involved. Convenience was the operative factor in decision making and still is of concern. [FYI, BOA is the only bank in Melbourne Beach and the closest bank in the wider metropolitan Melbourne area. Personally, I use the local Credit Union five miles away, but trips are considerably less frequent.]

Website:

Three significant Friends: Mike Flanery, Ed Lesnick, and Carl Hersh requested a review of the seym website wishing that it were more in keeping with the stylized formats readable on small devices. Since the need for the logo-links may have passed as older Friends have become more comfortable with searching websites, word-based directives require less space. FYI, I have reviewed several sites and initiated communication with Vonn New, former attendee at a SEYM Gathering and now member of NYYM who designed their website. I have been using my personal software, Adobe CS for all publications. The last design software SEYM purchased was for Phoebe in 2006. Upgrading my CanmorePress-owned Adobe CS-3 prior to May 31 would be cost effective. Treasurer Neil and Clerk Phoebe approved and Neil requested that the software costs be divided between FY 2010-11 and FY 2011-12. Carl Hersh is also familiar with these applications.

Publications (Print and Electronic)

The three clerks have communicated with me through Ann requesting that the newsletter move from the back burner to the forefront. This, of course, is always my intent, but alas, the immediacy of ringing phones, current emails (example today: assisting a meeting to claim an earlier investment of ±10K), etc. Two-three volunteer helpers would be wonderful. I am working simultaneously on three pamphlets. I would expect the pamphlets to go to press in late July-early August.

Data membership officer, Chuck Deneen received the FileMaker application from Nancyrose and the database from Phoebe. He is hard at work completing *Directory 2011-2012*. The office wishes to remind Friends that 400 copies are printed and given freely to all volunteers for the Yearly Meeting with 2-3 copies given to each meeting for their use. Individual Friends who wish to receive a copy may request one at no additional cost. In order to enable Chuck to make mailing labels, we will need to purchase Adobe Acrobat Professional and the required USPS software.

Summary of Requested agenda items:

- 1) Recommend consideration of fully funding SEYM's three new clerks: Ann Jerome, Phoebe Anderson, and Joel Cook to attend a Pendle Hill Clerking Workshop. Encourage funding them to attend the same workshop which would provide opportunities for camaraderie and community-building to support the work they started on 06/21/2011 at Ann's house.
- 2) Recommend that EC encourage 2-3 people to volunteer to assist the secretary in compiling articles, images, and book reviews for the newsletter and so that I may take time to enable me to create the new website format.
- 3) Request all EC members to query their meeting clerks and themselves regarding usage of SEYM.org website.
Queries:
 - Do you access the archival files—the file cabinet of SEYM financials and minutes?
 - Do you use the calendar?
 - Were you aware the calendar includes event-site maps and driving directions?
 - Registrar access and EC access to Directory are password protected. Would you value the site more if you had to log in to access data?

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope