

Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Summer Executive Committee Meeting • June 13, 2015

Minutes

The meeting began at about 9:40 AM, after a period of silent worship.

Assistant clerk Joel Cook read a quote from Margaret Fell Fox, 1694.

“In the year 1652 it pleased the Lord to draw him (George Fox) toward us.... My then husband, Thomas Fell, was not at home at that time, but gone the Welsh circuit, being one of the Judges of Assize, and our house (Swarthmoor Hall) being a place open to entertain ministers and religious people at, one of George Fox his friends brought him hither, where he stayed all night. And the next day, being a lecture or a fast-day, he went to Ulverston steeplehouse, but came not in till people were gathered; I and my children had been a long time there before. And when they were singing before the sermon, he came in; and when they had done singing, he stood up upon a seat or form and desired that he might have liberty to speak. And he that was in the pulpit said he might. And the first words that he spoke were as followeth: 'He is not a Jew that is one outward, neither is that circumcision which is outward; but he is a Jew that is one inward, and that is circumcision which is of the heart'. And so he went on and said, How that Christ was the Light of the world and lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and that by this Light they might be gathered to God, etc. And I stood up in my pew, and I wondered at his doctrine, for I had never heard such before. And then he went on, and opened the Scriptures, and said, "The Scriptures were the prophets' words and Christ's and the apostles' words, and what as they spoke they enjoyed and possessed and had it from the Lord'. And said, 'Then what had any to do with the Scriptures, but as they came to the Spirit that gave them forth. You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of Light and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?'”

Vicki Carlie gave the secretary 's report, which had been distributed beforehand. She asked Friends to log on to the new SEYM website, which is under development, and give feedback about it. She had received a few feedbacks already. The website is about half complete. After the website is complete and made public, it will be under the care of the SEYM Publications Committee.

Jean Larson suggested that the website needs to be in Spanish as well as English. Vicki explained that they (Vicki and others who are building the website) are looking into enabling the website for multiple languages. There would be an additional cost for that.

Vicki asked the EC whether the temporary name of the new website, seymquakers.org, should be made the permanent name of the website. If the new name became the permanent name, the old name would be retained for a year and would direct viewers to the new website.

15SEC01. SEYM Executive Committee approves making the new internet site domain name seymquakers.org. The old domain name of seym.org will be kept for a year, with a direction to the new site.

Vicki said that the cost of developing the new website might run over the budgeted amount for it. Treasurer Neil Andersen said that would not be an issue. Vicki expects the new website to launch before Labor Day.

She asked Friends to review the SEYM calendar of events and deadlines. She has put key events and deadlines on it and would like suggestions for corrections to it.

The question was raised regarding where this year's FIBM will be held. It was agreed that it is Saint Petersburg meeting's turn to host it. Davida Johns volunteered to bring it up at Saint Petersburg's business meeting the following day.

The nominating committee report was given by Cheryl Demers-Holton. It is in Attachment 1 to these minutes.

Regarding the Florida Council of Churches, Cheryl reported that Dustin Lemke, who is stepping down as representative to that organization, said that the Florida Council of Churches is inactive. There was a bit of discussion about discontinuing SEYM's representation to it, but no action was taken in that regard.

Peter Crockett, previous Gathering Committee co-clerk (through YM Gathering 2015) gave a report on the Yearly Meeting Gathering. The 2016 Gathering will be March 23-27. The theme will be Active Peace and the Walton Lecturer will be Bridgit Moix. The early date means that there will be more preparation required before Winter IBM than in the last two years when YM Gathering was later.

Regarding the 2015 Gathering, Peter reported that about 50 people turned in completed evaluations. As usual, worship sharing received the most positive reviews. A number of workshops received positive comments including one on centering. Early worship was also popular.

For Gathering 2016, the Gathering Committee will have a first draft of the program by Winter IBM. That means that if someone wants to give a workshop, he/she should contact Richard Freshette, who is putting together the workshop list, well before Winter IBM.

Neil Andersen gave the Treasurer's report. He reported that last fiscal year ended (May 31, 2015) with a positive net income in every program. He noted that in the fund that was established by the Yearly Meeting to support a Field Secretary for Earthcare, there is a discrepancy between the amount that the Earthcare Committee says has been raised (\$18,000) and the amount that has actually been recorded on the SEYM books (\$3000). However, the bookkeeping is not completely up to date. Vicki Carlie verified that she had received and deposited at least one donation that has not been recorded.

Neil reported that one third of the meetings in SEYM had not donated their apportioned amount for fiscal year '14-15. He wondered whether meetings were holding back their final donation for the fiscal year. There was a question about whether differences in the dates of fiscal years between the yearly meeting and the monthly meetings could be a problem and whether changing the monthly meetings' fiscal years to match the SEYM fiscal year would help.

Some people explained reasons why it is better for some monthly meetings to use the calendar year for their fiscal years. Both Neil and Clerk of Finance Committee, Peter Schmidt, said they can help monthly meetings to figure out a donation schedule that will work with both the monthly meeting and the yearly meeting fiscal years.

Beverly Ward spoke for the Earthcare Committee. Their report had been circulated before the EC meeting and Beverly read pieces of it. The report concerned the plans for hiring a Field Secretary for Earthcare. The Earthcare Committee had sent a letter to all the SEYM monthly meeting clerks asking their meetings to help support the position of Field Secretary for Earthcare. There is also some information about that on the SEYM website. Beverly requested that attendees at the EC meeting take this concern back to their home meetings. Beverly herself is also looking for grants to fund the field secretary's work. She also mentioned ReleasingMinistry.org as a potential source of crowd funding. The Earthcare Committee has formed subcommittees for developing a job description and for advertising.

Beverly asked who makes up the SEYM personnel committee. The answer was given that the Personnel Committee is made up of everyone on the Executive Committee. Unlike regular EC meetings, which are open to anyone, when the EC meets as the Personnel Committee, only EC members attend the meeting, [SEYM faith and Practice, Chapter 13, section Executive Committee: " Employees of SEYM are hired by the executive committee and are under the committee's direction."]

The Earthcare Committee will form a support committee for the Field Secretary . If any EC members are moved to be on a support committee, they should contact Earthcare Committee clerks Barbara Letsch and Brad Stocker.

There was a discussion of the need to generate a job description for the position of Field Secretary for Earthcare. It was pointed out that one of the yearly meeting minutes approving the field secretary position contains a job description. However, several Friends declared that that job description is insufficient for the purpose of hiring a person for the job. Phoebe Andersen said that an EC subcommittee was needed to work [with the Earthcare Committee] on a job description and to bring the hiring of a field secretary in line with hiring practices of SEYM. There was a question of who the supervisor of the field secretary would be. The

answer was that the Clerk of Executive Committee (currently Lisa Stewart) will be the supervisor of the Field Secretary for Earthcare.

It was noted that the committee to work on hiring the field secretary is different from the support committee for the field secretary. It was suggested that the former committee be called the "Selection Committee".

The question was raised as to whether the field secretary would be an employee of the yearly meeting or on contract. The answer was given that it will depend on the job description. There are laws governing whether a person is a direct employee or a contractor based on their job description and how they are supervised. The amount of money that is donated for the field secretary's position will also affect what can be done. Neil Andersen pointed out that the Yearly Meeting has two salaried positions and one contractor, so the Yearly Meeting has experience in hiring for both kinds of positions.

Volunteers for the EC subcommittee came forward and the following minute was approved.

15SEC02. SEYM Executive Committee approves formation of a subcommittee of Executive Committee members to work with the Earthcare Committee on a job description for the Field Secretary for Earthcare and a process for hiring the Field Secretary for Earthcare. Phoebe Andersen, Bill Carlie and Cheryl Demers-Holton agreed to serve on that subcommittee.

Phoebe Anderson reported for the Publications Committee, saying they were getting organized. The committee currently includes Phoebe and Vicki Carlie. They produced the proposed guidelines for the SEYM website that were distributed before the EC meeting.

The Publications Committee will combine consulting on publications and supporting the secretary with regard to the content of the website, e-news, and other print or electronic publications. Friends were asked to read the proposed guidelines for the SEYM website and give input to Phoebe and Vicki.

Sandy Lyon asked what the Yearly Meeting would do with the video the youth did at the 2015 YM Gathering. The communications committee was asked to discern that question.

David Johns gave a report on Circus McGurkis, beginning with a description and some history of Circus McGurkis. The 2014 Circus included 140 vendors, a labyrinth, kids activities, live music, and more. She brought a minute from Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting requesting that SEYM again sponsor Circus McGurkis in 2015. It was explained that due to regulations of the City of Saint Petersburg, the organization sponsoring any event in a city park must be a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, which SEYM is.

15SEC03: The Executive committee of SEYM approves SEYM acting as the official 501c3 sponsor of Circus McGurkis for the city of Saint Petersburg in 2015, as required for the permit to use the Lake Vista Park.

Upcoming personnel evaluations, a responsibility of Executive Committee acting as personnel committee, were postponed to the EC meeting at Fall IBM.

Peter Schmidt reported for Finance Committee. The committee has reviewed the description of the finance committee operations in the SEYM Operational Handbook, Procedures and Job Descriptions. They feel that the current description of the Finance Committee is out of date and want it changed. Phoebe Anderson said that all committees need to review the descriptions for their committees in the operating handbook. Neil Andersen noted that there was a committee to review changes to the operational handbook.

Clerk Lisa Stewart said she would send a note to those involved (committee clerks and YM officers) to review the operational handbook. Outgoing clerks should be involved as well as current ones. The handbook is available on the old SEYM website. Reviewers should send their corrections to Vicki Carlie.

New business: Warren Hoskins requested that the registrar for the YM Gathering and Half Yearly Meeting should be included as members of the Executive committee because of the large amount of work that the people in those jobs do. That request was laid over for discernment.

Warren also proposed making virtual attendance at EC meetings possible, and, for that purpose, look into the Yearly Meeting acquiring its own portable wi-fi hotspot. Warren was asked to come back to the next EC meeting with more information.

Regarding advertising the position of Field Secretary for Earthcare, it was stated that after a job description and ad are developed and approved by the committee appointed for that purpose, the Communications Committee can determine where to advertise the job opening.

The morning session of the EC meeting closed about 11:45 am with a short period of silent worship.

Following lunch, the EC convened briefly to approve the following minute.

15SEC04: SEYM Executive Committee expresses extreme gratitude to Tampa Monthly Meeting for their warm hospitality and refreshments in hosting the June 2015 EC meeting.

That concluded the business of the Summer 2015 Executive Committee meeting.

There followed a presentation and discussion with guest Emily Wirzba, FCNL Policy Associate on Sustainable Energy and Environment.

The following Friends were present for all or part of the meeting:

EC members present were:

Lisa Stewart, EC Clerk, Palm Beach MM
Joel Cook, Assistant Clerk, Palm Beach MM
Vicki Carlie, YM Secretary, Orlando MM
Bill Carlie, Membership Recorder, Orlando MM
Peter Schmidt, Clerk of Finance Committee, St. Petersburg MM
Davida Johns, St. Petersburg MM
Neil Andersen, YM Treasurer, Tallahassee MM
Phoebe Andersen, YM Clerk, Clerk of Publications Committee, Tallahassee MM
Warren Hoskins, Clerk of Peace and Social Action Committee, Miami MM
Cheryl Demers-Holton, Clerk of Nominating Committee, member of Committee for Ministry on Racism, Gainesville MM
Clara Diaz, Clerk of Worship and Ministry Committee, Miami MM

Others present were:

Caroline Lanker, YM Trustee and Recording Clerk (acting) for 2015 Summer EC
Davida Johns, outgoing co-clerk of YM Gathering Committee, St. Petersburg MM
Peter Crockett, outgoing co-clerk of YM Gathering Committee, St. Petersburg MM
Andrea Hoskins, YM Gathering Registrar, Miami MM
Nancy Corindia, member of YM Worship and Ministry Committee, Sarasota MM
Nancy Triscritti, member of YM Worship and Ministry Committee, Tampa MM
Beverly Ward, Tampa MM
Jean Larson, YM Trustee, Gainesville MM
Elaine Martin, member of YM Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Jacksonville MM
Willie Hager, Jacksonville MM
Dianne Langan, YM bookkeeper, St. Petersburg MM
Sandy Lyon, Gainesville MM

Committees not represented:

Young Friends Committee
Archives Committee
Earthcare Committee (was not officially represented, although Beverly Ward reported for the committee and expressed her intention to join the committee)
Half Yearly Meeting Committee