

Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Fall Interim Business Meeting

October 1, 2016

Palm Beach Friends Meetinghouse

MINUTES

The meeting was held at the Palm Beach Monthly Meeting meetinghouse, Interim Business Meeting Clerk, Lisa Stewart, opened the meeting at 1pm with a period of silent worship.

Assistant Clerk Nancy Triscritti read two quotations from *SEYM Faith & Practice* (p.84):

"Over-busyness is one of the diseases that has infected Quakerism, not only here, but throughout the Society of Friends.... Too many of us too often find ourselves caught in a merry-go-round of activities and responsibilities, and we do not take adequate time to get centered or sufficient time to nurture ourselves... The world of the spirit is real, and our journey into wholeness has to include time for us to be consciously aware of the life of our spirits."

- Marty Walton, 1994

"Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand."

- Isaac Pennington, 1667

Announcements: Tampa Friends announced an October 30th open house for their new meetinghouse at 1502 W. Sligh Avenue, Tampa, FL 33604; <http://www.tampafriends.org/>.

Roll Call & Milestones: The assistant clerk called the roll of meetings ([Attachment 1](#)). Those present identified themselves and announced meeting milestones, if any. *Orlando MM* announced that Friend Tom Ensign died in September. *Ft. Lauderdale MM* is delighted to have three new attenders. *Tallahassee MM* announced the death of Friend Jean Oppenheimer in September, and the transfer of membership from Savannah MM of Doug Hahn, also in September.

Nominating Committee: Kathy Hersh read the published committee report ([Attachment 2](#)) and added the following nominations (all terms until 2019): Trustee - Eileen Zingaro; CAPP Coordinator - Vicki Mariner; Committee for Ministry on Racism - Lisa Stewart, Susan Taylor, Cheryl Demers (returning), Clara Diaz, Eduardo Diaz; and AFSC Representatives - Stacey and Chris Lazurek.

FIBM accepted the report and approved all the nominations.

Worship and Ministry Committee: Clara Diaz reported. Susan Waltz <http://tinyurl.com/SusanWaltz> will be presenting the 2017 Michener Lecture and seminars at WIBM on January 15, 2017. Friends are asked to announce this in their meetings. Wess Daniels <http://tinyurl.com/WessDaniels>, Director of Friends Center and Quaker Studies at Guilford College, will present the 2018 Michener Lecture, speaking on the topic of Convergent Friends. Eduardo Diaz will present a 2017 SEYM Gathering workshop on "Invoking the Presence of God."

Friends are invited to participate in the Intervisitation Program each fifth First Day <http://seymquakers.org/resources/spiritual-formation-program/>. Please announce these Intervisitations every First Day of the relevant month. The next date is October 30th, and notify Clara Diaz artbearclara@gmail.com if your meeting participates.

The committee offers assistance to monthly meetings to hold "Equality of Worship" meetings for learning at least yearly. Outreach might include distributing copies of *Faith & Practice* to new members and to interfaith partners.

FIBM accepted the report.

Earthcare Committee: Brad Stocker reported.

New committee member Brian Humphrey (Ft. Lauderdale MM) is investigating a current lawsuit regarding Everglades drilling.

The committee brought forward Miami Meeting's minute of support for Standing Rock:

16FIBM01. Southeastern Yearly Meeting stands in unity with Miami Monthly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, Quaker Earthcare Witness, and other monthly meetings of the Religious Society of Friends in support of the Standing Rock Protest as follows:

"The Dakota Access pipeline, which is being built by the Dallas-based company Energy transfer Partners, endangers culturally significant land and also puts the Missouri River in danger of pollution. We, the Miami Friends Meeting (SEYM), are called to support the voices and actions of the Standing Rock Sioux and the others who have joined them in peaceful protest and protection of the water of the Missouri River. We also stand in solidarity with New Your Yearly Meeting, Dallas Friends Meeting, Quaker Earthcare Witness and others who oppose the pipeline project and the violence toward peaceful protestors by security forces."

FIBM approved this minute. The SEYM minute will be sent to the Standing Rock tribe's publicist, FCNL, Creation Justice Ministries, and our representatives in Congress. Kathy Hersh reported that her son, Kody Hersh, had been to the Standing Rock encampment, and that the drilling continues.

The committee has approved beginning discernment on SEYM minute on sustainability, a concern brought forward by Orlando MM. SEYM currently has no such statement. A draft will be prepared for WIBM.

Ministry on Racism: Ellie Caldwell reported. The committee brought forward a request that meetings and yearly meetings affirm the need for restoration of rights for persons formerly in prison and the need for removal of the exception clause of the 13th amendment.

FIBM approved sending out the proposed "End Slavery for All" ([Attachment 3](#)) out to all SEYM meetings for discernment. The minute will be considered at WIBM.

Executive Committee Minutes: Mike Shell reported. The numbered minutes from the Fall Executive Committee meeting were read and approved. FIBM accepted the committee report.

- 16FEC01.** SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee accepts the report of the SEYM FSE Search Committee.
- 16FEC02.** It is with joy and a sense of Spirit that the SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee hires Beverly G. Ward for the position of Field Secretary for Earthcare. Beverly brings a rich and relevant background and depth of understanding to the environmental issues facing SEYM. This is a \$15/hour, 20 hour/week salaried position, as per the job description.
- 16FEC03.**
- 16FEC04.** SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee with deep gratitude lays down the SEYM FSE Search Committee.
- 16FEC05.** SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee is very happy to name the following people to serve on the FSE Anchor Committee for two years: Bill Carlie, Bonnie Zimmer, Phoebe Andersen and Nancy Triscritti.
- 16FEC06.** SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee acknowledges the report that the Administrative Secretary position, based on history, requires compensation for two-thirds time, and therefore approves this increase in compensated time effective June 1, 2016.

SEYM Clerk Phoebe Andersen asked Friends to take the news of Beverly Ward's hiring to their monthly meetings and to encourage their meetings to invite Beverly for visits (fsEarthcare@seymquakers.org). Vicki Carlie, Administrative Secretary, will publish the news on the SEYM website, along with Beverly's biography ([Appendix 4](#)).

Treasurer's Report: Neil Andersen distributed and described two reports.

Annual Report at end of Fiscal Year 2015-16 (June 1, 2015 thru May 31, 2016): Narrative status report, FY16 General Fund Budget vs. Actual, Income & Expense by Class (i.e., general fund, program budgets, etc.), and Balance Sheet. Neil explained that the last line of the Income & Expense sheets shows positive or negative totals for each Program/Class.

Neil addressed and/or answered questions about several column totals:

- *Admin/General Fund* – Net Income is carried over every year for use in future operations.
- *Walton & Michener Lectures* – Net income gains by SEYM policy are transferred to the Trustees' related endowment fund, whose dividends are used for future lectures; net losses are covered by the General Fund.
 - Note: There are 2003 and 2004 minutes which address these transfers to the endowment, but the minutes are not yet indexed.
- *Half Yearly Meeting* – Gains are returned to the General Fund, and losses are covered by that fund.
- *Programs for Youth* – There were few programs in FY16.
- *Publications* – This expenditure covers catch-up publication of six pamphlets and three or four eBooks from previous years (during which funds were not expended).
- *Secretary-Earthcare* – The \$12,315.15 Net Income is donations for the past 12 months. There were previous donations over the prior 14-16 months. The FSE Account #670 on the Balance Sheet shows a total of \$20,647 as of 5/31/16.

- Note: The trustees have promised a transfer of \$10,000 to the FSE fund during the first year of employment, with timing at their discretion.
- *Triennial Travel* – Expenses from the Fund were for Representatives' travel to the FWCC meeting in Peru.
- *Trustee's Funds* – The amount labeled "Net Income Before Unrealized Capital Gains/Losses" includes specific donations received for Trustees and also dividends reinvested.

Report at end First Quarter Fiscal Year 2016-17 (June 1 through August 31, 2016): Same sequence of documents. Cash flow results are shown but the results are not really meaningful because there are no program events in the first quarter of the year.

Neil commended Bookkeeper Dianne Langan and Administrative Secretary Vicki Carlie for their expert handling of SEYM financial transactions and record-keeping. He also thanked all committee clerks for effective handling of the funds under their control.

FIBM accepted the Treasurer's reports.

Finance Committee: Peter Schmidt reported. Revision of the committee's *Handbook* section is in process. Peter does annual reviews of the SEYM books, but the committee recommends that SEYM contract for an official audit of its books in 2017 (preferably before the new treasurer takes office). This proposal will be on the WIBM agenda. FIBM accepted the report.

Youth Committee: Vicki Mariner reported. The committee's first priority is preparation for 2017 Gathering. Some possible programs include "Puppets for Peace" and "bee hotels." FIBM accepted the report.

Gathering Committee: Stephanie Preston reported (Attachment 5). Peter Toscano (<https://petersontoscano.com> and <https://climatestew.com>) will be Walton Lecturer and retreat session leader. He wants to connect with Monthly Meetings in the weeks before Yearly Meeting on the Gathering theme of "Climate Justice." There are 24 proposed workshops and interest groups, including the Worship & Ministry Committee's intensive workshop, led by Eduardo Diaz, "Invoking the Presence of God," and a workshop on FCNL by Aurelio Anderson. SEYM has a new contract with the Live Enrichment Center.

The Equality Testimony is a possible theme for the 2018 Gathering, including topics such as restorative justice, mass incarceration, etc. A Friend proposed a workshop on how to be an effective recording clerk, and people were asked to suggest presenters.

FIBM accepted the report.

Orlando MM & Pulse Orlando Killings: On request, Stephanie Preston reported that there is a strong spirit in the community, which is still healing. Meetings from around the world sent sympathy messages to Orlando MM, and there were simultaneous vigils around the globe on June 14th.

Half Yearly Meeting Committee: Kathy Hersh reported. The flyer has been sent to all meetings (<http://seymquakers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/HYM2016flyer-.pdf>), and registration opens on October 6th. Friends are advised that Half Yearly Meeting is a good "recruitment" tool, since children of families enjoy it so much. One boy compared the event with his normal school experience favorably: "When you fall down, they pick you up."

FIBM accepted the report.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee: Elaine Martin reported. The committee plans a full-day retreat for members and others on Friday, April 11, 2017, preceding the Gathering. Participants will read and study Douglas Gwyn's 2014 book, *A Sustainable Life: Quaker Faith and Practice in the Renewal of Creation* (eBook currently half-priced at Quaker Books <https://quakerbooks.org/products/a-sustainable-life-4425>).

The *Handbook* section revision will include offering the committee as a sounding board for Friends who are involved with other peace and social concerns organizations. Additional upcoming activities:

- The committee will send Orlando MM's "gun violence" minute to all SEYM meetings for consideration.
- Warren Hoskins is the contact for Friends interested in forming anti-death penalty working groups.
- Jacksonville MM is presenting an AVP Basics workshop on October 23rd-25th (flyer at <http://www.jacksonvillefriends.org/images/PDFS/AVPflyerbasic16.10.pdf>).
- Curt Torell from the board of Quaker House will lead a "conscientious objection" workshop at the 2017 Gathering.
- The committee needs additional representatives to Friends Peace Teams. Shawna Doran is the contact person.

FIBM accepted the report.

ProNica Report: Board members Brad Stocker and Josh Paolino reported that Melissa Ajabshir, Stateside Coordinator, will be leaving that position October 7. Irene King will be taking her place. Peter Schmidt of Tampa MM will serve as volunteer bookkeeper. There is a Board vacancy which needs filling.

Brad and Josh asked Friends to consider donating more to ProNica, as inflation and bureaucracy in Nicaragua are having a negative impact on funds. Also, the presence of the Zika virus had caused cancellation of two delegations, which are a source of income. They shared their concerns for the political stability of Nicaragua.

Josh reports that there is no open discourse in the country, and that religious missions are not being allowed in, possibly to suppress outside witness to a replay of pre-1980s abuses. Nonetheless the Quaker presence does have an impact. FIBM Clerk requested that Brad and Josh relay ProNica talking points to SEYM meetings through Vicki Carlie.

FIBM accepted the report.

Friends Peace Teams Report: Cecilia Yocum reported and referred Friends to the website <http://friendspeaceteams.org/> [Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/friendspeaceteams>]. She asked if there is SEYM interest in FPT work in Honduras, perhaps a Gathering workshop and/or adopting a project <http://friendspeaceteams.org/initiatives/peacebuilding-en-las-americas-pla/>. FIBM accepted the report.

FCNL Advocacy Corps Report: Aurelio Anderson reported on his work as a member of this group of 18 young adults from all over the country who organize in their communities and lobby national legislators. Advocacy Corps members are employed for one year after undergoing an intensive

training in the summer. Aurelio is available to visit Meetings to talk about lobbying. He can be contacted via e-mail: 280903@gmail.com. FIBM accepted the report.

Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) Report: Warren Hoskins reported. Warren encourages meetings to sign on to the “Quaker Statement on Climate Change” <http://quno.org/resource/quaker-statement-climate-change>.

Warren also spoke about renewed anti-death penalty work by the Historic Peace Churches in Florida (Church of the Brethren, Mennonites and Quakers). After the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Florida's death penalty system in January, the state passed and the governor signed a new law. Death penalty opponents are instead seeking a "life without parole" alternative. Phil Lersch PhilLersch@verizon.net of Church of the Brethren is seeking contacts with Friends interested in this work.

There may be QUNO and death penalty workshops at the 2017 Gathering. FIBM accepted the report.

Additional Executive Committee Actions: Lisa Stewart reported.

Personnel Committee completed personnel evaluations and approved wage increases.

FIBM approved a minute to amend Minute 16FEC02 on the hiring of the Field Secretary for Earthcare by adding October 1, 2016, as the effective date:

16FIBM02. It is with joy and a sense of Spirit that the SEYM Executive Committee as Personnel Committee hires Beverly G. Ward for the position of Field Secretary for Earthcare effective October 1, 2016. Beverly brings a rich and relevant background and depth of understanding to the environmental issues facing SEYM. This is a \$15/hour, 20 hour/week salaried position, as per the job description.

FIBM approved a minute from Executive Committee regarding a computer for the Bookkeeper:

16FIBM03. SEYM will provide and maintain a computer for our bookkeeper.

Winter Interim Business Meeting will be held on Saturday, January 14th, at the Orlando Meetinghouse.

Meeting ended with silent worship.

Submitted by
Mike Shell, EC/IBM Recording Clerk
October 6, 2016

Attachment 1 – Roll Call

1	Clearwater MM	Eileen Zingaro
2	Ft. Lauderdale MM	Mary Jo Klingel
3	Ft. Lauderdale MM	Julia Beginina
4	Ft. Lauderdale MM	Brian Humphrey
5	Ft. Myers MM	Melina Russek-Potter
6	Gainesville MM	Jean Larson
7	Gainesville MM	Bonnie Zimmer
8	Gainesville MM	Shawna Doran
9	Jacksonville MM	Elaine Martin
10	Jacksonville MM	Willie Hager
11	Jacksonville MM	Mike Shell
12	Lake Wales WG	Caroline Lanker
13	Miami MM	Steve Donachie
14	Miami MM	Gerry O'Sullivan
15	Miami MM	Eduardo Diaz
16	Miami MM	Clara Diaz
17	Miami MM	Warren Hoskins
18	Miami MM	Andrea Hoskins
19	Miami MM	Kathy Hersh
20	Miami MM	Carl Hersh
21	Miami MM	Brad Stocker
22	Miami MM	Joshua Paolino
23	Orlando MM	Stephanie Preston
24	Orlando MM	Vicki Carlie
25	Orlando MM	Bill Carlie
26	Palm Beach MM	Barbara Letsch
27	Palm Beach MM	Ellie Caldwell
28	Palm Beach MM	Lisa Stewart
29	Palm Beach MM	Peter Ackerman
30	Palm Beach MM	Beth Harris
31	St. Petersburg MM	Dianne Langan
32	Sarasota MM	Nancy Corindia
33	Sarasota MM	Tom Corindia
34	Sarasota MM	Jennifer Mendoza
35	Tallahassee MM	Vicki Mariner
36	Tallahassee MM	Phoebe Andersen
37	Tallahassee MM	Neil Andersen
38	Tallahassee MM	Aurelio Anderson
39	Tampa MM	Peter Schmidt
40	Tampa MM	Beverly Ward
41	Tampa MM	Caroline Lanker
42	Tampa MM	Cecilia Yocum
43	Tampa MM	Nancy Triscritti
44	Treasure Coast WG	Joel Cook

Attachment 2 – Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Report
August 13, 2016

The Nominating Committee continues to seek members of our SEYM family who are willing to lend their gifts, energy and light for the good of all.

We are happy to report that Andrea Hoskins has agreed to serve as Co-Clerk with Stephanie Preston of the Gathering Committee. Andrea is already a member of the committee.

Nominees for AFSC representatives to the Board are Stacey and Chris Lazurek, from Savannah Meeting. They will be mentored by Harold and Sandy Branam, outgoing SEYM reps to the AFSC.

The position of Clerk of SEYM is currently under discernment.

We are awaiting revisions on the responsibilities of the Publications Committee before seeking new members.

We have an opening on the Trustees Committee.

We need a new Coordinator of the Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) program. Anyone working with our youth receives this standardized training of one hour, which consists of watching a video and going over operating procedures to protect our children and adults who work with the youth. Ask Nancy Fennell or Ellie Caldwell what is entailed. This training is required by our SEYM insurers, as well as being a moral obligation of our YM. Some of our monthly meetings are also adopting these protocols.

If anyone reading this report feels led to assist in any of the above areas or feels a calling in another service capacity within SEYM, please contact one of us below:

Ellie Caldwell, Palm Beach Meeting
Elaine Martin, Jacksonville MM
Beverly Ward, Tampa MM
Kathy Hersh, Miami MM

This report was compiled by Kathy Hersh, Clerk, SEYM Nominating Committee

Attachment 3 – "End Slavery for All" minute

10/1/16

Southeastern Yearly Meeting Committee for Ministry on Racism

END SLAVERY FOR ALL

Minute for Fall Interim Business Meeting 2016

At its Fall Interim Business Meeting 2016, Southeastern Yearly Meeting (Quakers) approves the YM administrative secretary forwarding to wider Quakerdom our YM's Committee for Ministry on Racism request that meetings and yearly meetings affirm and make efforts to publicize the need for: **1. the removal of the exception clause of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution which otherwise abolishes slavery; and 2. persons formerly in prison to have full restoration of constitutional rights and typical citizens' rights and responsibilities (such as freedom from housing and job discrimination).**

The 13th Amendment reads:

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, **except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted**, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

We seek this in light of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Testimony on Equality and our history of efforts to abolish slavery in the United States and among Quakers. Currently, persons in prisons involuntarily work in what amounts to slavery conditions and leave prison with severely restrictive conditions of freedom that shackle their efforts for normalcy, often for the rest of their lives.

We seek this in light of former President Franklin D. Roosevelt's executive order removing the exception clause to the 13th Amendment, after which this action did not become law of the land. And, we seek this in light of a person without a job seemingly contributing nothing to society, except get that person in prison and that person is worth \$30,000-\$40,000 per year for corporations using prisoners' labor.

Submitted by SEYM Committee for Ministry on Racism

Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Cheryl Demers-Holton, Minerva Glidden, Susan Taylor, Ellie Caldwell

Attachment 4 – Bio

Biography: Beverly G. Ward

Beverly is a member of and past clerk of Tampa Monthly Meeting. She is a member of the SEYM Earthcare Committee. Her history among Friends goes back to her attendance at a Quaker high school and her interest and concern for our natural world occurred with her studies there in environmental science. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* struck a chord with her.

She is very well rounded academically with a PhD in Applied Anthropology and a minor in Public Administration. Beverly earned a Master's in Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts Degree with majors in Psychology and Film/Drama. She has taught Cultural Anthropology at the University of South Florida, Community Sustainability, Transportation and Society and Geographic Information Systems and Anthropology among other classes. Her related experience includes principal and owner of BGW Associates, LLC, in which she conducts research, provides technical assistance to communities, local state and federal agencies, and conducts program evaluations, including environmental and social justice. Among her publications and papers is *Saving Ourselves: The Need For Knowledge Sharing and Other Technology Transfer Among the Islands and Nation-States of the American Mediterranean in Response to Climate Change and Other Extreme Events*. She is a member of the National Academy of Science and Environmental Justice.

Beverly has been deeply involved with Alternatives to Violence in Facilitator Apprenticeships and providing Advanced workshops. She has had a Facilitator Apprenticeship in Trauma Healing in Colombia. She has focused on issues around transportation within vulnerable black, elderly, and ethnic communities. She has a particular interest in permaculture and a commitment to work with SEYM youth.

The Search Committee adds:

What struck us was the way Beverly has woven her education and experiences in such a way that has opened a unique background and ability to create space for dialogue, activism, and negotiate in conflict management.

Beverly was clear in her leading to approach the position of the SEYM Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) from her understanding and commitment to Friends Testimonies. She was able to clearly address the duties laid out by YM for the FSE. We felt in unity that she would be an outstanding fit with SEYM and the FSE positions.

Attachment 5 – Gathering Committee

2017 Gathering Committee Report

First and foremost, deep gratitude to Andrea Hoskins who has agreed to serve as the SEYM gathering committee co-clerk. Thanks also to SEYM nominating committee who engaged in discernment on this.

Our SEYM 2017 Gathering will be held April 12-16, 2017. The theme is "Climate Justice." Climate justice is a recognition of the impact that changes in global environment are having on the web of life on earth. It seeks to address the fact that those least responsible for climate change experience its greatest effects. Quakers must discern how to respond to complex concerns related to human rights, stewardship of natural resources, economic systems, and public policy.

Peterson Toscano will lead the retreat sessions and deliver the Walton Lecture. He is a member of Millville, PA Monthly Meeting, PYM. You can learn more about him at <https://petersontoscano.com> and <https://climatestew.com>. He is a performance artist who addresses serious issues in an innovative way that engages the heart and spirit. He has led many workshops in the wider Quaker world including facilitating the Bible Half Hour at the FGC Gathering in 2012.

Peterson especially looks forward to connecting with monthly meetings within SEYM during the weeks both before and after the gathering to help them consider how they can work for climate justice. Please let the gathering committee co-clerks know if your meeting would like to arrange a visit with Peterson.

The reservation contract for our host site, The Life Enrichment Center, has been signed and the payment is in the process of being delivered. The LEC has a new staff group services manager, Lori Buonasera, who will be our point of contact for the gathering. She has already proven to be very kind and helpful.

The following items are on our FIBM 2016 gathering committee agenda:

- Budget
- Evaluations from 2016
- Ideas for 2017
- Schedule preview & timing of events for 2017
- Workshops
- Youth program
- Gathering theme & speaker possibilities for 2018

Submitted by Stephanie Preston and Andrea Hoskins, Gathering Committee Co-Clerks