

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Fall Executive Committee Meeting

October 5, 2018 • St. Petersburg Friends Meeting

Minutes

Meeting began at 7:00 pm. After silent worship, Bill Carlie, Acting Assistant EC Clerk, read the following:

There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male nor female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. – Galatians 3:23 (NRSV)

Administrative Secretary's Report: Friends accepted Vicki Carlie's report ([Appendix 1](#)). YM committees are encouraged to use the new Zoom web conferencing. The eNews system had problems, and a workaround is being used. New England Yearly Meeting's gathering bookstore was successful in selling SEYM pamphlets.

Half Yearly Meeting Registration is now open. See www.seymquakers.org/news-events/half-yearly-meeting/ for details and online registration. Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups are asked to share the information with their participants.

The SEYM website www.seymquakers.org/ has major backend problems. Vicki used a 10-hour block of contractor time for partial fixes at a cost of \$1,500. However, a full update if the current system is not possible. The contractor needs a minimum of \$2,000 for a complete fix, to be done preferably between now and WIBM. Friends approved the following minute:

18FEC01. SEYM Executive Committee approves the expenditure of up to \$3,000 to do necessary updating, re-working, and recoding of the SEYM website. Finance Committee and the Treasurer will determine the source of the funds.

CAPP Report: Friends accepted Vick Carlie's oral report. CAPP coordinator Vicki Mariner proposes using SEYM's encryptable form provider to enable online application for CAPP training. To protect confidential information, a password would be required for access, the data would not be stored SEYM server, and applicants would be offered the alternative of mailing a print version of the form. Friends approved the following minute:

18FEC02. SEYM Executive Committee approves the Child Abuse Prevention Program (CAPP) coordinator's proposal to use SEYM's online encrypted form provider to ease submission of CAPP applications. Applicants will be sent a password to gain access to the form. Data will not be stored online. Applicants will be given the option of mailing paper forms instead.

Nominating Committee: Ellie Caldwell summarized updates and vacancies for 2019-2020s SEYM Personnel. The full report will be given at FIBM.

Naming Committee: Friends accepted the report from Peter Schmidt and Stephanie Preston-Hughes ([Appendix 2](#)) regarding the filling of Nominating Committee vacancies.

- Elaine Martin and Kathy Hersch are leaving the Nominating Committee
- Ellie Caldwell will serve as clerk through 2011, and Beverly Ward will continue through 2021
- Ed Lesnick is joining the committee through 2021
- Naming Committee has a commitment from one more Friend
- It would be best to have at least one more new member.

Friends shared a concern that was voiced in the committee report:

"We view the difficulty we have had as a Naming Committee as a symptom of a core challenge that Executive Committee and SEYM will be increasingly faced with in the years to come. As a gathered body, SEYM is blessed by the gift of many talented and amazing servants. But we must honestly acknowledge that this blessed body is older, continuing to age, already very busy and tired, and shrinking in size. As a Naming Committee, we are asking ourselves how SEYM might sustain itself or reinvent itself in order to move forward as a faith community. We now pose this query to EC and SEYM."

Treasurer's Report: Friends accepted Joel Cook's Annual Report for end of Fiscal Year 2017-2018, June 1, 2017 thru May 31, 2018, (attached to the FIBM Minutes). The Treasurer expressed concern about the roughly \$9,000 net loss in total cash flow for FY 2017-18, noting that this is the second year SEYM has shown a loss. Monthly Meeting and Worship Group contributions met 95% of budget expectations, but we spent 97% of budgeted expenditures. Joel will research whether there is a pattern to which meetings are not meeting their apportionments.

Friends noted that two programs had a shortfall, Michener Lecture and Yearling Meeting Gathering. These committees may need to revisit the amount of fees they ask of participants. The FSE fund also had a shortfall, and perhaps meetings are not donating as much as was hoped, separate from their basic apportionments.

A Friend suggested that SEYM consider assessing the overall health of MMs and WGs, fiscal and otherwise, and that it look for ways to help struggling groups restore themselves.

Trustees Update: Neil Andersen advised that the Trustees meet on October 6th. He explained to changes to Trustee Investments:

- The Domini Fund has been laid down and that money moved to Friends Fiduciary (FFC) Unrestricted (budget line 1225)
- SEYM's investment in FGC Meetinghouse Fund (line 1250) has been moved to FCC Meetinghouse Support. [Note: the FGC Meetinghouse Fund Board still exists to help meetings get loans from new sources.]

Youth Committee Report: Vicki Carlie reported that Orlando Monthly Meeting is clear to provide the use of Webster Cottage as a private residence for Kody Hersh from January 1st 2019 until January 1st 2022, while he is serving as SEYM Youth & Young Adult Coordinator. Friend approved the following minute:

18FEC03. SEYM Executive Committee is extremely grateful to Orlando Monthly Meeting for providing Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, Kody Hersh, with housing at Webster Cottage for the term of his employment.

Ministry and Worship Committee Report: Clara Diaz shared a concern raised by Mercedes Soca Gil on behalf of Havana Unprogrammed Worship Group (HUG), which did not hold meetings in 2017. Mercedes gave YM clerk Bill Carlie a report following plenary session of the 2018 Gathering, requesting SEYM support for HUG. The committee itself has no budget and therefore is referring the concern to EC.

In discussion, Friends asked what form of relationship SEYM has or could have with HUG. Miami Friends related a long history of informal involvement with this ministry. Friends approved the following minute:

18FEC04. SEYM Executive Committee approves forming an ad hoc committee including Phoebe Andersen, Shawna Doran, Clara Diaz, Jack Bradin, and others to consider a way forward with Havana Unprogrammed Worship Group (HUG).

EC as Personnel Committee: Following this session, EC members will reconvene without visitors and staff as Personnel Committee, in order to consider annual personnel appraisals.

Meeting ended with silent worship.

Submitted by Mike Shell, EC/IBM Recording Clerk
10/6/2018

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

EC members present were:

Bill Carlie, YM Clerk, Earthcare Co-clerk, Orlando MM
Nancy Corindia, IBM/EC Clerk, Sarasota MM
Mike Shell, IBM/EC Recording Clerk, Jacksonville MM
Joel Cook, Treasurer, Palm Beach MM
Phoebe Andersen, Publications Clerk, Archives, Faith & Practice, Tallahassee MM
Clara Diaz, Worship and Ministry clerk, Miami MM
Andrea Hoskins, Gathering Committee clerk, Miami MM
Susan Taylor, Ministry on Racism Committee co-clerk, Tallahassee MM
Ellie Caldwell, Nominating Committee clerk, Palm Beach MM
Peter Schmidt, Finance Committee clerk, Naming Committee, Tampa MM
Vicki Carlie, SEYM Admin. Secretary, Orlando MM (ex officio)

Others present were:

Neil Andersen, Trustees, Archives, Tallahassee MM
Beverly Ward, Field Secretary for Earthcare, Earthcare, Ministry on Racism, Tampa MM
Dianna Langan, Bookkeeper, St. Petersburg MM
Warren Hoskins, QUNO Rep., Peace & Social Concerns, Miami MM
Shawna Doran, Finance Committee, Gainesville MM
Jay Ortega Rand, Visitor, St. Petersburg MM

Appendix 1

Secretary's Report • Fall Executive Committee 2018

Since we last met in June, I've had some time to relax & take vacations, but I've also been getting work done and facing some challenges.

As mentioned in June, I worked on helping the Archives Committee find missing documents, and worked with Phoebe Andersen, Publications Clerk, to find way forward with publishing since Lyn Cope retired.

The Zoom account for video conferencing has been set up, and so far has been used once, by the Peace & Social Concerns committee. I encourage all committees to take advantage of this new way to work together.

Early in the summer, I encountered problems with the eNews system, and had to find a work around that included using a different (free) eNews/bulk email provider.

This has been the second summer that New England Yearly Meeting carried a selection of SEYM pamphlets at their yearly meeting bookstore. They were pleased, and so are we, at how well they sold, and they will order more next year. I will plan on doing another Publications publicity flyer to send out to yearly meetings.

Half Yearly Meeting Registration is open! Pick up a flyer here, and visit to the HYM webpage: <http://seymquakers.org/news-events/half-yearly-meeting/>. Flyers have been mailed to your Meeting and Worship Group clerks. Please help us publicize this event by seeing that the flyers are handed out and that it is regularly announced on Sundays. And, especially if you've ever attended HYM, please share your enthusiasm and encourage new Friends and attenders to go.

I was, unfortunately, also busy over the summer with website problems. Some elements and processes in the site were suddenly broken. I worked with our web consultants to fix and restore them, which used up a large amount of the block of time SEYM bought----a \$1500 block of labor that should have lasted a year. While the site is currently working OK, the consultants have told me that 'it could break any minute now' - -- though I am somewhat skeptical that the situation is as dire as that. They say the site needs complete updating, and some re-working and coding to make it function well; and that the typical website lifespan is 3-5 years. After I narrowed the focus of what actually needed to be done, they came back with a quote of a minimum of \$2000 to fix it. Though I have used this firm for a couple of years now, given this high estimate, I am looking for cheaper website support. I am contacting other providers for estimates.

What I need to proceed is your approval to spend up to \$2000 in additional costs for the website for FY 2018-2019. I will do all I can to spend less, but I do need to get going on fixing the problems.

Once the problems with the site are addressed, I will be looking at how I can redesign the header, layout, and navigation of this site to be more contemporary---to prolong its lifespan in a design sense.

With thanks for all your help and support,

Vicki Carlie, Secretary

Naming Committee Report

Dear Executive Committee and Southeastern Yearly Meeting Friends,

We, Stephanie Preston-Hughes and Peter Schmidt, write to you as the members of the current SEYM Naming Committee. Over the course of the past year, we have had an extremely difficult time identifying individuals to serve on the SEYM Nominating Committee. We request your assistance in finding a way forward.

We were tasked with identifying at least two people, but hopefully three, to replace others (Kathy Hersh and Elaine Martin) who completed terms of service and were cycling off of Nominating Committee in 2018. We are grateful for their years of service. So far, we have found only one person, Ed Lesnick, who has agreed to serve. His term will conclude at the beginning of YM 2021. The other two current members of Nominating Committee are Beverly Ward and Ellie Caldwell (Clerk), but they will both conclude their terms of service at beginning of YM 2019 in just 6 months.

In discerning whom to ask to serve on SEYM Nominating Committee, we believed it was only appropriate to ask individuals with a history of participating in our yearly meeting in some capacity as well as a knowledge of or relationship with other Friends within our yearly meeting. As of the writing of this email, we have asked seven different people if they were led to serve on Nominating Committee, and received a no response from all seven of them. We are respectful of their responses and do not stand in any judgment of their reasons for saying no. In summary, most of these folks cited their reasons as extremely busy personal lives, important family matters to attend to, or already serving SEYM or their own monthly meeting in ways which demand a great deal of their time.

As Naming Committee, we have met in person, talked via telephone, and emailed back and forth on multiple occasions to see how Spirit might be moving. It pains us to inform you that we are stuck. We stopped short of simply going through the alphabetical list Friends in our SEYM Directory until we found two people simply willing to say yes. This approach, while possibly yielding an outcome of placing two people on the Nominating Committee, could also result in having those said people being in over their heads or saying yes for the wrong reasons.

We view the difficulty we have had as a Naming Committee as a symptom of a core challenge that Executive Committee and SEYM will be increasingly faced with in the years to come. As a gathered body, SEYM is blessed by the gift of many talented and amazing servants. But we must honestly acknowledge that this blessed body is older, continuing to age, already very busy and tired, and shrinking in size. As a Naming Committee, we are asking ourselves how SEYM might sustain itself or reinvent itself in order to move forward as a faith community. We now pose this query to EC and SEYM.

We are trusting in the light,
Peter Schmidt and Stephanie Preston-Hughes