

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Called Executive Committee Meeting

9 Fourth Month 2021

MINUTES

The meeting began at 4:30 pm with a moment of silent worship.

Phoebe read from *SEYM Faith and Practice*, 4th ed., ch. 4: Blessed Community: Maintaining Unity, page 92.

Focus on "speaking the Truth in love" (Eph. 4:15 NRSV), using nonjudgmental language which invites others into dialogue. For early Friends, "Truth" meant "how the Spirit is working among us," which is much bigger than one's personal ideas. Let the Light show you what your true concerns and motives are. Where the Light reveals a problem, it may show us care for others as well.

To be faithful, follow the process of discerning God's will. Keep an open mind; otherwise, consciously or unconsciously, you will try to impose your own will on a situation. Give up trying to convert others to your viewpoint – instead, share your measure of the Light, respect the views of others and seek the reality that is unfolding. Leave outcomes to God.

Phoebe welcomed Friends and summarized the reason for the called executive committee meeting: to hear a report from the *ad hoc* committee for a crisis response which was appointed at the EC meeting on Wednesday, 31 Third Month, 2021. Kody Hersh is clerk of the *ad hoc* committee.

The committee has formulated a response plan they will present and if we come to unity with the plan, there is a public statement they would like to make with EC's approval.

Kody Hersh thanked Friends for being here and holding this work in loving light. The committee has met twice by zoom and exchanged emails. They have consulted with a number of Friends and other professionals. Kody presented the draft response plan (attached as edited). Some of the steps of this draft are already in progress. Friends discussed specifics, including the limits as to what help SEYM can provide. The draft was edited to incorporate suggestions.

21CEC01 Executive Committee approves the proposed crisis response to the arrest of Javier del Sol on suspicions of child sexual abuse, as edited below. **APPROVED**

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

1. Form *ad hoc* crisis response committee.
2. Determine who needs to be consulted as we discern our response (abuse response experts, Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, etc.).
3. To the extent possible, review registration records and talk with long-time SEYM participants to determine when Javier attended SEYM events, the youth participants at those events, and adult youth workers. Contact former youth participants and youth workers directly to:
 - a) Inform them of the circumstances of Javier's arrest.
 - b) Inform them of who they can talk to if they witnessed or experienced any harmful, inappropriate, or confusing behavior by Javier.

- c) Offer emotional and spiritual support.
- d) Share resources for survivors of abuse.
- 4. Make a statement that includes the information above, as well as our beliefs and current practices about preventing child sexual abuse, that will be posted on the SEYM website and shared directly with monthly meetings and concerned individuals.
- 5. Respond to feedback, disclosures, or other responses to our communications in a timely and sensitive way. Determine and implement necessary and appropriate follow-up steps.
- 6. Reflect on process and make recommendations for potential revisions/additions to our Child Abuse Prevention Program manual and other SEYM policies and procedures.

Kody presented the statement that will be posted to the SEYM website, sent to monthly meetings and concerned individuals (attached). Friends expressed concerns about the statement, including whether we want to include the names and phone numbers of Friends who agree to listen to concerns; whether the statement goes to other yearly meetings; how we will contact former youth who might have had contact with Friend Javier.

21CEC02 Executive Committee supports the statement, with consideration of suggestions for changes to be made by the committee. **APPROVED.** See Attached.

The numbered minutes were read back.

The meeting adjourned after a few moments of silent worship with gratitude for the work of the *ad hoc* committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Dykes, Recording Clerk
Phoebe Andersen, EC/IBM Clerk

Southeastern Yearly Meeting Statement on Arrest of Javier del Sol

Please be aware: There is information below related to child sexual abuse that may be triggering for some people.

The community of Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has received the news that one of our members, Javier del Sol, has been arrested for sexual abuse of a child about sixteen years ago in his home community of Lake Worth, Florida.

Child sexual abuse is an act of violence, abuse of power, and violation of trust that is completely contrary to Quaker values and beliefs. We offer our respect and gratitude for the courage that it took the survivor of abuse to bring her experience to light.

Javier del Sol was an active volunteer with SEYM youth programs for several years, and interacted with both adults and children at our events. While we are not aware of abuse occurring at any SEYM event, we are reaching out as broadly as possible to extend our support to anyone who may have witnessed or experienced harmful, abusive, or confusing behavior within our community, to survivors of sexual violence who may be especially impacted by this news, and to any other current or former participants in Southeastern Yearly Meeting events who might need particular support and care at this time.

If you have experienced abuse, we stand ready to believe and support you. You are also welcome to seek support elsewhere. Some resources for survivors of sexual violence include:

National Sexual Assault Hotline
800-656-HOPE (4673)
Live chat:
<https://hotline.rainn.org/online>

Into Account (supports survivors of abuse in faith communities)
<https://intoaccount.org/reporting-form/>

If you wish to contact law enforcement directly with information about abuse committed by Javier del Sol, you can do that by phone or online:

Crime Stoppers
1-800-458-TIPS
<https://www.crimestopperspb.com>

The following SEYM members are available to anyone who would like someone to talk to:

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

These Friends will provide emotional and spiritual support, but not professional counseling. Anything you share with them will be kept in confidence, unless it involves the abuse of a child *currently* under the age of 18, which they may be legally required to report.

If you have feedback, questions, or concerns about SEYM's response to this situation, you are welcome to contact the clerk of the response committee, [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].