

Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Yearly Executive Committee Meeting

11 Fourth Month 2025

MINUTES

The meeting began with Silent Worship at 9:20 a.m. During the silence several messages were shared.

Clerk Bill Carlie opened the meeting from the silence at 7:09 PM with the following quote:

We are not sent into this world to walk it in solitude. We are born to love, as we are born to breathe and eat and drink. The babe is hardly separated from his mother's womb before he stretches out a tiny clasping hand, and from that time forth he will constantly stretch out to touch the world that lies about him and the folk that dwell therein. The purpose of our growth in life is to bring us into unity with the universe into which we are born, to make us aware that we are not lonely individual meteors hurtling blindly through an abysmal dark but living parts of a living whole.

- Kenneth Boulding, William Penn Lecture, 1942
SEYM Faith and Practice, 4th Ed., pg. 76

The Proposed Agenda was amended to add a report from the SEYM Organizational Documents Committee. There were no other amendments. The Proposed Agenda was approved.

Audio/Visual Improvements at DaySpring Camp and Conference Center

The Clerk reported that he and Vicki and Erin Childs and Brandon Coldicott, attenders at Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting, recently visited the Dayspring Conference Center to learn about improvements to audio and video technology for our upcoming virtual meetings. The technical problems experienced in the past few years have been resolved. The Conference Center will now provide both high quality video and audio for those on Zoom and those present in person. The Clerk requested that a minute of thanks to DaySpring be drafted.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that there were no changes to his most recent report. He pointed out that the report was now simpler and included some graphics to make it more accessible. He noted that SEYM had experienced about a \$5,000 deficit during the last fiscal year. He also noted a need for more support to fund the Youth and Young Adult Coordinator position. The Trustees agreed to fund $\frac{2}{3}^{\text{rds}}$ of the YYAC salary for the next three years provided that SEYM members and attenders demonstrated their support by donating the remaining $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{rd}}$.

Jean Larson, Gainesville Monthly Meeting, expressed a concern that their apportionment had increased in each of the past three years and now constituted half of their budget. That proportion was making them increasingly concerned about their financial sustainability. Their major

contributors were getting older. She wondered how many other meetings were having the same concern.

The Clerk reminded her that the apportionments were not invoices, just a sharing of information and the amount of apportionment donations was entirely voluntary. Neil Anderson agreed, noting that Tallahassee had the same problem but because of the difference between the Tallahassee Meeting's fiscal year and SEYM's fiscal year, Tallahassee split their apportionment between two fiscal years.

He added that the Yearly Meeting budget had experienced a large increase when it added the Field Secretary for Earthcare and the Youth and Young Adult Coordinator salaries in the same fiscal year. He agreed that the published apportionments were provided for informational purposes and not as invoices.

In his opinion, however, too many monthly meetings were not paying their fair share of yearly meeting expenses. He recognized that contributions to monthly meetings had not increased. Increasingly just a few members were having to shoulder more and more of monthly meetings' budgets. The situation needs to be addressed, but not by taking "drastic measures." To that point, the Clerk noticed that there had been an increase in interest and engagement in Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting since November. Over the long hall, therefore, he believed that SEYM was headed in a positive financial direction.

One Member asked the Treasurer about the impact of current market volatility on SEYM's endowment. He responded that Friends Fiduciary typically takes a long view of market fluctuations. They do not sell for that reason. They are continuing to pay dividends. The Clerk added that Friends Fiduciary invests conservatively. For that reason, funds under their management are not as likely to be impacted by such fluctuations as those managed more aggressively. Neil added that SEYM has been following the Friends Fiduciary recommendation based on the 4% rule.

The report was accepted.

Nominating Committee Report

Brian Olson gave a brief oral report. Nominating committee is looking for people to fill the positions of Yearly Meeting clerk and Gathering clerk. They will have a more detailed report by Thursday of next week.

The report was accepted.

SEYM Administrative Secretary's Report

Susan Wade reported on her efforts to communicate with meeting clerks, committee clerks, and worship group conveners, regarding overdue reports. She emphasized the Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports because it informs everyone across the SEYM region of what has happened during the previous in each meeting and worship group. She is also engaged in working with clerks of various committees and preparing documents for Yearly Business Meeting.

The report was accepted.

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee Clerk had nothing to add to the Finance Committee Report as published.

The report was accepted as published.

Trustee's Report

Neil gave a brief oral Trustee's report confirming the information included in the Treasurer's Report.

The report was accepted.

Half Yearly Meeting Report

Susan Wade reported Wekiwa Springs State Park Youth Camp has been reserved for Thanksgiving weekend 2025. How they were planning to handle the required meals, however, was still an issue they were working on.

The report was accepted.

Membership Recorder's Report

Ed Lesnick had nothing to add to the report published in the DIAs. There was some discussion about the accuracy of the numbers printed in various sources as they relate to apportionments. The Treasurer reported that he had updated the apportionments based the current membership numbers.

The report was accepted.

Ad hoc Quaker Call Committee Report

John Palozzi, acting clerk of the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee (QCC), reported there were no changes to their report as published in the DIAs. He highlighted the section of that report in which the QCC was requesting the creation and appointment of a standing committee for establishing a school in Florida.

The report was accepted as published.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee Report

Peace and Social Concerns committee had no report at this time although Mercedes Soca, attender at Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting, reported with gratitude on a successful Alternatives to Violence Project workshop held at her residence.

The report was accepted.

Worship and Ministry Committee Report

Lisa Erazmus and Jan Dahm, Co-Clerks along with Richelle Ogle, had nothing to add to their report as published in the DIAs.

The report was accepted.

Child Abuse Prevention Program (CAPP) Report

Cheryl Demers-Holton reported on successful CAPP training events resulting in 27 CAPP-registered volunteers.

The report was accepted.

Gathering Committee Report

Clerk Bill Carlie reported on behalf of the Gathering co-clerk, Vicki Carlie, that DaySpring Camp and Conference Center was filled to capacity with registrations greatly exceeded their estimates. Brian Olson added that Roger Mason, Miami Meeting, would be contributing to the Gathering music program by organizing sing-alongs.

The report was accepted.

Youth and Young Adult Coordinator (YYAC) Report

Rachel Dellinger reported on her activities as YYAC. She was looking forward to the Gathering. Fifteen children and young adults had registered, and she was pleased to announce that Kody Hersh is attending. Joel Cook congratulated Rachel on recruiting a Young Adult, Gavin Sherrod of Orlando Monthly Meeting, to attend the Section of the Americas Meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. He recommended that Friends recruit and fund another volunteer for next year. Rachel was please to announced that Gavin was so impressed that he has volunteered to help coordinate the next Section of the Americas Meeting of FWCC.

The report was accepted.

Organizational Documents Committee Report

Dan Vaughn, clerk, summarized the report and because the report had been filed late, Executive Committee members were encouraged to meet with Dan during yearly meeting to discuss the report.

The report was accepted.

Field Secretary for Earthcare Committee Report

Beverly Ward said that in her written report yet to be submitted she will recap the year, and what has happened since Winter Interim Business Meeting. Mercedes expressed gratitude to Beverly for facilitating the AVP workshop at her building.

The report was accepted.

Archives Committee Report

Phoebe Andersen reported that she had spoken with committee clerk, Bill Rapp, who told her that he wished to lay down the clerkship of the committee. She has committed to assume clerking of the committee.

The report was accepted.

Minutes and Letters Relating to Current Litigation

Clerk referred to several Minutes and Letters from Clearwater Monthly Meeting, Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting, Tallahassee Monthly Meeting, SEYM's Committee for Ministry on Racism, and Southeastern Yearly Meeting, published in the Documents in Advance that have been issued with respect to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement litigation. They were published to keep everyone informed about actions being taken in response to the current U.S. Administration's actions against the Religious Society of Friends.

Announcements:

Cheryl Demers-Holton announced that she knew of a fully paid registrant for the SEYM Gathering who had become unable to attend. The Clerk suggested that she report that vacancy to Vicki Carlie, Gathering Committee co-clerk.

There being no further business, and with thanks to those Friends in attendance for their participation, the Clerk closed the meeting with silent worship at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Vaughn, Recording clerk