

Fall Sessions 2020
Saturday Morning
November 7, 2020

Clerk: Elaine Learnard
Assistant Clerks: Matthew Scanlon
Robin Gowin
Recording Clerk: Mary Eagleson
Reading Clerk: Robin Mallison Alpern

2020-11-01. After a period of opening worship, Elizabeth (Buffy) Curtis (Mohawk Valley Meeting) read an acknowledgement of the land. The acknowledgement concludes,

“May we have learned in the several hundred years of living on this continent, the abundance that is still here, the meaning of enough, the hospitality that is still offered by our hosts, and respond in gratitude for their enduring love and the care of this land. May we join them in loving care for Earth and each other that will take us into the future.”

Clerk Elaine Learnard welcomed those present and introduced the Clerks’ table. She reviewed the agenda for this session. Sarah Glazer (Old Chatham) gave an introduction to the use of Zoom for these sessions.

2020-11-02. Robin Alpern (Amawalk) read the roll call. Participants “rose” by restarting their videos as their monthly meetings were called, remained on video while their regions or quarters were called, and “sat down” by turning them off.

2020-11-03. Laura Cisar (New Brunswick) presented the treasurer’s report, which is included in the documents for this session. She showed by screen sharing a draft of the October 31 report. She acknowledged receipt from NY Quarter of funds from the Lafayette Avenue Fund and the Barrington-Dunbar/White Memorial Fund. She briefly explained several highlighted expenditures which are noted on the report in red boxes. Finally, she acknowledged receipt of a bequest from Katherine Mott of about \$7,600.

In answer to a question, Laura pointed out that the \$40,000 deposit to Silver Bay is a rolling credit first paid in 2018. She pointed out that the yearly meeting anticipates receipt of more income in the remaining part of 2020, and does not anticipate a deficit by year-end.

2020-11-04. The minutes to this point were read and approved.

2020-11-05. Mary Williams (Bulls Head-Oswego, co-clerk of Financial Services) presented the attached proposed budget for the year 2021, using slides (in the documents for this session) to explain various aspects of the budget. She explained the process by which the proposed budget is generated.

Instead of funding a specific position, Financial Services is recommending that the budget include funding for staff support for children, youth, and young adults (C/Y/YA), with the

exact distribution of those funds among staff support for children, youth and young adults to be left to the general secretary and Personnel Committee. The proposed budget for 2021 offers three levels of expenditure with either no funding, or with \$50,000 or \$100,000 specified for the C/Y/YA staffing.

A question was raised about the role of the Youth Committee *vis a vis* staff support for young people. Steve Mohlke assured the body that he would seek advice from all interested stakeholders, including the Youth Committee, before making a decision on allocation of the C/Y/YA funds.

A Friend asked about sustainability of the budget with \$100,000 for C/Y/YA past the year 2021; at that level of funding, the surplus operating reserve would be spent down in about two years, if contributions did not rise substantially.

Financial Services Co-clerk Mary Williams emphasized that the proposed budget involves a "faith-based risk." She concluded her presentation by acknowledging that none of the potential sources of additional income is sustainable in the long term and announced the intention of the Financial Services Committee to hold threshing sessions to ascertain how the work with C/Y/YA can be sustained into the future.

Clerk Elaine Learnard invited ministry on the proposed budget. Friends spoke in support of budget proposals that included funding for C/Y/YA staffing, at both the \$50,000 and \$100,000 level, some expressing gratitude for the work already done and support received. Others expressed hesitations about such expenditures. A Friend shared that he was dismayed/disappointed that in his view the proposed budget does not reflect the values, energy and commitment expressed in the 2020 Summer Sessions Epistle for the YM and Friends to work to dismantle institutional racism and end violence in our society, to acknowledge the genocide of Native Americans and to convince our nation to provide appropriate reparations. Concern was expressed that the yearly meeting has not explicitly explicitly excluded the possibility of drawing on trust funds currently assigned to Witness committees. Concern was also voiced that the proposed budget ignores the YM's commitment to support numerous Quaker organizations of which it is a member and to which we send representatives, such as American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Alternatives to Violence Project. Continued consideration of the proposed budget was laid over until tomorrow afternoon.

2020-11-06. The minutes on the budget consideration were read, but were not approved, pending consideration of the amount of ministry which should or should not be included. Friends allowed this minute to be crafted outside of a business session, in consultation as needed. Friends may also wish to read the Sunday afternoon minutes, as, taken together these two sets of minutes reflect the ministry and concerns of the body.

Fall Sessions 2020
Saturday Afternoon
November 7, 2020

Clerk: Elaine Learnard
Assistant Clerks: Robin Gowin, Matthew Scanlon
Recording Clerk: Mary Eagleson
Reading Clerk: Barbra Bleecker

2020-11-07. Dennis and Regina Baird Haag (Old Chatham), directors of Powell House, presented their attached report. Regina reported on the skillful and heartfelt responses of Powell House staff to changes required of them by the Covid-19 pandemic. Friends gave ministry on their appreciation for Powell House and its staff.

2020-11-08. Sylke Jackson read the attached description of the Climate Justice Working Group. It is in the form of a *Handbook* page, and will be made available as a reference. Friends are invited to become familiar with the work of the Climate Justice Working Group and to attend their meetings.

2020-11-09. Emily Provance spoke about one of the programs to be made available soon. Support groups for Quaker parents will start in about two weeks. Many parents have been socially isolated with their children for months. The groups will meet about every two weeks, and the program will run for about six months. Quaker parents are asked to indicate whether they are interested in joining a group; so far 45 have signed up. Quakers who are not currently raising children are asked whether they will serve as facilitators for this series, and to publicize the series among Quaker parents they know who are raising children, whether or not they are part of New York Yearly Meeting.

2020-11-10. Barbra Bleecker (Montclair) read the attached travel minute for Emily Provance. Ministry followed. The body directed the Clerk to endorse this travel minute.

2020-11-11. The afternoon minutes were approved as revised.

2020-11-12. The afternoon session continued as a meeting for speaking.