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Minutes of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Executive Committee October 30, 2010

Hosted by Oberlin Monthly Meeting

ATTENDING: Jeff Cooper (Ad Hoc Policies & Procedures revision), Peggy Daub (Clerk), Judy Greenberg (Earthcare), Mike Hinshaw (Advancement), Mathilda Navias (Meeting Worker), Olwen Pritchard (Youth Program), Amy Ranger (Recording Clerk), Clemence Ravaçon-Mershon (Adult Program), Jon Sommer (Site), Sally Weaver Sommer (Finance), Merry Stanford (Assistant Clerk), Nancy Taylor (Peace), Thomas Taylor (Nominating & Ad Hoc Queries)

The meeting began at 10:15 with a brief check in among the group, and then worship, in which we remembered the grief facing Birmingham Monthly Meeting at its memorial for Norris Lee that day, and Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting on the death of Carolyn Diem a few days earlier.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting were approved with the following corrections:

- Nancy Taylor to be added to those in attendance
- In item #1, the web features Mathilda brought to our attention should not be described as “new”.

Friends were reminded that at the Representative Meeting in March we announced that Executive Committee Minutes would be posted on the web. We do not intend to do that retroactively, but will going forward, beginning with the set just approved.

2 Nominating Committee

Thomas Taylor reported. We affirmed the approvals of late additions to the slate of committees made earlier by email (so that these names could be included in the published Annual Records). In response to a question of what business is appropriately conducted without being face-to-face, we stated our intention to make decisions by email for minor issues when time is an issue, and when there is a clear sense among the group.

The Nominating Committee has asked other committees to prepare descriptions of their responsibilities and processes in order to describe these to prospective new committee members. We affirmed that these committee-prepared descriptions need not match the descriptions of committees in Policies & Procedures, which reflect a broader view of why the committees exist and what they do without specific instructions on the processes of how they work.

Nominating is also responsible for naming representatives from the Yearly Meeting to the World Conference of Friends in Kenya in 2012 and has advertised the application process. We **agreed** that the money the Yearly Meeting sets aside to support attendance at FWCC Triennial events can be used to partially support these representatives in 2012. (It is not known yet when the FWCC triennials might begin again.) Although final cost figures are not known, it is suspected that our representatives may need more assistance than is allotted in this way, and the committee will prepare requests to go to monthly meetings and individuals asking for donations for this purpose.

3 Ministry & Nurture

Ellen Barnes submitted a report in absentia, stating that the annual query has been distributed to monthly

meetings, and that the Spiritual Formation program had a retreat for 23 participants in September, led by Patricia Thomas.

4 Advancement & Outreach

Monongalia Monthly Meeting (and Buckhannon Preparative Meeting) are moving forward with changing their affiliation to Baltimore Yearly Meeting. We will expect to hear more about this soon. The A & O Committee plans to visit some of the smaller meetings this year. We applauded the committee for their attention to local meeting's information on websites, but advised that now the YM Database Manager can be responsible for the accuracy of the information wherever we report it, letting the local meetings be responsible wherever they report. The Committee has reviewed an earlier booklet that advises monthly meetings on creating a website, and will work with Mathilda Navias to have it reprinted and put on the LEYM website.

5 Publications & Archives

No representative was present, but Jeff Cooper reported that the Annual Records were published on schedule. We also learned that the fall Bulletin is now out. We agreed that the next Bulletin should include a notice on how to register to get updates from the LEYM website.

6 Peace

The minute on defense spending approved at our Annual Sessions has been distributed to monthly meetings with a request to tell us what they do with it. A minute on immigration from Intermountain Yearly Meeting and endorsed by Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting was also distributed. We affirmed that the purpose of the Peace Committee is to use our amassed strength to become a stronger voice for peace, not necessarily following a legislative agenda at all times. We encouraged the Peace Committee to step back and examine their purpose, possibly contacting monthly meetings, and seeing if there are issues on which they can collaborate or lend strength.

7 Earthcare

We noted that this committee, like Peace, is one of our two "outward looking" committees, not concerned with the work of the Yearly Meeting itself, but with Quaker work in the world. Judy Greenberg recounted several places to which the watershed map travelled recently; it has been an attractive addition to teen and youth work.

8 Annual Meeting Review

We heard reports from four committees related to this year's annual sessions in July: Adult & Family Program, Children's Program, Site, and Finance. We reviewed evaluations, attendance figures, and financial figures, trying to understand the overall effect on annual sessions of moving them later in the summer and of offering financial incentives that made it easier for families with children to attend. We learned that a greater number of children and families attended in 2010 than the immediately preceding years. Since the changes were made simultaneously, we don't know which changed it more, though anecdotally it seemed that the financial incentives were probably a stronger motivator for attending. Working against attendance in 2010 was the close geographical proximity of FGC. We do not have a fiscal report on the annual sessions, but will get it and have it published in the Bulletin, per approved practice. Sally Weaver Sommer for Finance Committee said that we should consider how to continue providing financial assistance for families to attend annual sessions. The Finance Committee will develop a proposal for this.

9 Adult & Family Program Committee

The theme for 2011 Annual Sessions will be "Mindful Consumption as a Spiritual Practice." A summary of evaluations from 2010 were distributed. We noted the overcrowding for the plenary address and will consider holding that event in a larger venue on the campus.

10 Children's Program Committee

The Children's Fall Retreat at Temple Hills was successful, drawing in more participants from a wider region of the Yearly Meeting.

11 High School Teen Retreat Program

Clemence Ravaçon-Mershon reported that there have been two very successful retreats for teens since annual sessions, and we are very grateful for the good work of Cari Burke in planning and leading these gatherings for our youth. However, Cari has been struggling to get the adult assistance she needs to facilitate these retreats, and we suggested that the support committee for this YM activity needs to become more active. We recognize that it probably needs additional people to do this work successfully, and asked Nominating Committee to work on this. Other suggestions included finding an intern to work with Cari, and asking a local monthly meeting to "host" the fall retreat and hence pick up some of the tasks of supporting the retreat at its site.

12 Ad Hoc Committee on revising Policies & Procedures

Jeff Cooper reported that the group has made extensive changes in both arrangement and content of our Policies & Procedures document, so it will not be possible to describe "line by line" alterations for review. Instead, the Yearly Meeting will be asked, through a cover letter prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee, to review the whole document to see if it makes sense and reflects our policies and procedures accurately. A draft should be distributed in February, with first discussion of it in April at Representative Meeting.

13 Ad Hoc Committee on Queries

Thomas Taylor reported that a lot of interest has been shown in the draft version of the Yearly Meeting's Advices and Queries. The text is available on the Yearly meeting website, where it is readily viewed and downloaded. The committee expects the review to proceed apace, with input at the Representative Meeting, a second draft produced, and further review and/or approval at annual sessions.

14 Clerk's Report

Peggy Daub reported that Representative Meeting will be held Saturday, April 2, at the Ann Arbor Meeting. Our Yearly Meeting has been accepted by FGC as a participant in their pilot project to develop a system that will make additions and changes to websites much easier. Members of an Ad Hoc Committee to work on this have been named by the clerk: Peggy Daub (clerk), Mathilda Navias; Bill Warters; Les Walden, and Amy Ranger. In response to a query raised by the Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, it has been determined that the Yearly Meeting does not have legally certified 501c3 status; however it appears that this status is not required because we are a group of "ecclesiastical organizations". We recognize that in the past 9 years there have been situations in which the status of religious organizations has been scrutinized more closely than hitherto, with some bodies requiring official record of being tax exempt. Potentially this could pose problems for us, but we do not yet feel compelled to seek the formal recognition of our status with the federal government for tax purposes.

The Assistant Clerk, Merry Stanford, will begin clerking the Yearly Meeting's Ad Hoc Committee on Youth, which is looking for additional members.

The Recording Clerk reported that she sent our epistles from the annual sessions in electronic form to appropriate parties. It was suggested that we look for volunteers to translate the epistles into French and German (besides Spanish and Japanese, as is currently done).

15 Minute of Appreciation

The group extended a minute of appreciation to Connie Bimber for her assistance in arranging for us to use the facilities at Kendal, Oberlin, and for providing our breakfast. The meeting ended with worship.