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Representative Meeting

April 6, 2013

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Minutes of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Representative Meeting April 6, 2013

Hosted by Pittsburgh Friends Meeting

RM13-1 Opening Worship, Reading of Epistle from Australia Yearly Meeting

The Meeting opened with silent meeting for worship at 1:21 p.m. Out of the silence, the 2013 Epistle from Australia Yearly Meeting was read by Sally Weaver Sommer, Assistant Clerk.

[<http://australianfriend.org/af1825>] Its themes included climate change, sustainable living, and building peace, and ended “Our challenge now is: how to continue to believe in a loving Spirit, which can guide our actions; that is, how to use intuitive knowledge and experience to balance scientific logic. We need our hearts as well as our heads.”

RM13-2 Roll Call

The Roll Call of Friends from constituent meetings and worship groups was made as follows, giving a total attendance of 43:

Akron	2	Kalamazoo	3
Ann Arbor	6	Kent	0
Athens	3	Mid-Ohio Valley	0
Birmingham	1	North Columbus	2
Broadmead	4	Oberlin	0
Cleveland	1	Pine River	0
Delaware	0	Pittsburgh	5
Detroit	6	Red Cedar	0
Grand Rapids	2	Wooster	4
Granville	1	Worship Groups	3
Holland	0		

RM13-3 Clerk's Report

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor) gave the following report.

The Executive Committee met three times since the close of Annual Sessions. Once before scattering from Bluffton to introduce ourselves to each other as this year's Executive Committee and to plan a time for a fall meeting, and then again in Oberlin at the end of October and last night here in Pittsburgh.

One of the important things that came out of our October meeting was a decision to purchase insurance for the yearly meeting. This had become a requirement for future use of the Adrian Dominican facilities where we have held our fall Spiritual Formation retreats for the last several years. It was also noted that such insurance could prove useful in conjunction with our children, youth, and teen programs.

I am happy to say that we are continuing to work on the three priorities for the yearly meeting identified last year: 1) communication, 2) supporting youth activities, and 3) provision of service opportunities. You will be hearing more about these in the reports to follow at this meeting.

For your approval I bring forward the following names, to serve on a Naming Committee that will have responsibility for identifying people to serve on the Nominating Committee: Nancy Taylor and Seth Reichenbach.

The names of Nancy Taylor and Seth Reichenbach to serve as a Naming Committee for 2013 were **approved**.

RM13-4 LEYM Mailing List & Friends School in Detroit

The clerk invited Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) to bring forward a concern that has arisen among several Friends in Broadmead Meeting. She asked if the yearly meeting were willing to make the Yearly Meeting mailing list available to Friends School in Detroit whenever they would like to use it without the need for approval each time it is requested. The list could be used for fundraising or other appropriate purposes as the school saw the need. The rationale is that the school is under the direct care of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, and can be viewed as a ministry of the yearly meeting. The request did not come from the school.

During discussion it was also noted that the Yearly Meeting has historically supported Olney Friends School as well. Some concerns were raised, asking that the list be used for fundraising and the disseminating of information about the school only, and that the list not be sold. It was clarified that this involved only the postal list. It was pointed out that the list needs to be updated. The following minute was approved:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting will make its mailing list available on an on-going basis to Friends School in Detroit for use in direct fundraising and informational mailings.

RM13-5 Ad Hoc Task Force on Youth

Becky Morehouse reported for the Ad Hoc Task Force on Youth (members: Becky Morehouse, Ann Arbor, Carla Pratt-Harrington, Athens, and Diane Mott, Broadmead). The task force has been charged with building a sense of community among LEYM First Day schools and other youth volunteers. It also seeks to establish concrete means to support and encourage them in communicating with and supporting the work of each other.

In First Month, 2013 Becky and Carla attended a weekend gathering in Philadelphia on “Collaborating to Support Quaker Religious Education” with participants from Baltimore, Philadelphia, South Central, and Lake Erie yearly meetings. Although the gathering was funded by the Pickett Fund, the yearly meetings, and FGC, it was independent of those institutions.

The task force is working to determine how best to plan for a face-to-face opportunity for First Day school teachers to touch base and learn from one another. There is interest and enthusiasm for supporting a gathering around religious education as a means of supporting and growing meetings. The Advancement & Outreach Committee expressed its willingness to support the work of this Ad Hoc committee.

RM13-6 Ad Hoc Service Committee

Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor) reported the committee has identified an opportunity to work in conjunction with Habitat For Humanity Lima (HFHL) prior to Annual Sessions this year. It appears that HFHL might have work available in either Lima or Delphos, both less than one hour away from Bluffton. HFHL is used to having groups of disparate people come in for relatively short periods and is ready to accommodate them. If details for such a work party/service project can be worked out, the Ad Hoc Service Committee will create a detailed advance announcement to let people know of this service opportunity.

RM13-7 Publications and Archives

Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh) reported.

- 1) The committee sent out a notice to all monthly meetings and worship groups requesting that unneeded copies of the 2012 Annual Records be returned to the Yearly Meeting for redistribution. This request was responded to and copies of the 2012 Annual Records are now available for those who need them.
- 2) The committee is trying to locate several albums containing photographs of past Annual Sessions. Joe Mills located one album, but the others are still being sought. Members are asked to keep an eye out

for them. Photographs from the 2012 Annual Sessions are being readied for possible display at this year's Sessions.

- 3) The committee suggested that another reminder with a deadline be sent out in the upcoming Spring Bulletin encouraging more participation in the Yearly Meeting oral history project.
- 4) The previously announced deadline of April 14th for the Spring Bulletin is unnecessarily early. It was decided that May 1st would be the new submission deadline.
- 5) The committee does not currently have plans to update the printed directory of the Yearly Meeting.

The committee stressed that even without plans for a printed directory it is important to continue getting updated information on individuals from the Yearly Meeting's constituent groups so that the database is accurate.

RM13-8 Advancement and Outreach Committee

Dolores Avner (Pittsburgh) reported the committee considers its most pressing challenge is to reach children and young families, laying the foundation for future growth of the Yearly Meeting. It is also paying close attention to FGC's New Meetings Project. The Shoemaker Fund has given Friends General Conference \$400,000 over two years to help it seed up to ten new meetings and worship groups. Brent Bill was hired in September by FGC to head the resulting New Meetings Project. The first significant step taken by the Project was to hold a "Consultation" at Pendle Hill last January, where 15 yearly meetings were represented. Sally Weaver Sommer and Mike Holaday (Grand Rapids) represented LEYM at this Consultation. Other LEYM members, including Connie Green (Cleveland), Marty Grundy (Cleveland) and Merry Stanford (Red Cedar) are involved in this Project as well.

RM13-9 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Mike Hinshaw (Wooster) reported that \$27,063, or about 90% of the anticipated annual contributions from constituent meetings, had been collected so far this fiscal year. He also reported that \$23,390, or about 77% of the annual budget, had been spent. He was confident that the Yearly Meeting would operate within its budget this year. He also reviewed funds balances. Mike urged the use of forms available on the Yearly Meeting website for advances or reimbursements for expenses. Use of these forms will greatly expedite bookkeeping.

RM13-10 Finance Committee

Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) reported for the committee, as follows.

1. We are grateful to Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor) for completing an **audit**. The audit was more work than any of us had envisioned, including a complete reconstruction of the year-end report for 2011-12 and a full reconciliation with bank statements. Susan's written report includes a list of 13 recommendations, most of which apply to how the treasurer maintains records, though a few involve policy. We have begun to implement these.
2. We withdrew the three Certificates of Deposit with Urban Partnership Bank, which were paying about 1% interest or slightly more, and **established two accounts with Friends Fiduciary Fund**, which currently has a "payout" (an effective interest rate) of 4.5%, and which has socially responsible investing. We maintained the arrangement whereby one account pays interest into the Granville Youth Fund, while the other reinvests its interest; in the transfer process, we added \$690.92 to this latter account.
3. We **arranged for General Liability Insurance**, from the Cincinnati Insurance Companies, for an annual premium of \$500. The coverage is valid for all events that LEYM sponsors and for which we pay part of the expenses. This includes youth events, Spiritual Formation retreats, consultations, Executive Committee meetings, sponsored work camps, even this Representative Meeting. We thank our treasurer, Mike Hinshaw, for finding this good rate and setting up the insurance.
4. The committee is working on **revising the LEYM Financial Manual**. It is intended to reflect current

policy (rather than create new policy), but we expect to bring a couple of small policy questions to Annual Sessions.

5. **Draft budget for 2013-14.** [Copies of the draft budget were distributed to those present.] Returning to prescribed practice, we are presenting a draft budget at Representative Meeting. We note those budget lines where we are proposing different figures than last year. We have tried our best to keep the budget lean, reflecting recent spending patterns. We have added a line for liability insurance (\$500). We propose increasing the budget line for the High School Teen Retreat Program from \$4900 to \$6000; this includes an increase in the stipend – last increased eight years ago – by \$100 per retreat (\$1100 increasing to \$1200) and propose increasing the balance of this line from \$500 to \$1200, to include the costs of the Retreat Coordinator’s travel. We propose decreasing the Travel budget line by \$1000 (\$6000 down to \$5000). With these and other smaller adjustments, the total expenses are \$30,240, down from \$30,450 in the current year.

We note too that membership is decreasing, and for this draft budget we have used the figure 725, down from 750 in the current year. The total expenses divided by 725 members rounds up to \$42 per member, up from \$40 currently.

Comments are welcome before Annual Sessions, when we will need to approve a budget.

6. **Covering the cost of Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting is intended to be self-supporting (thus is not part of the budget), and an Annual Meeting Fund provides a cushion. Four years ago, this fund had what seemed a needlessly large cushion of over \$6000, and we decided in 2009 to offer a 1/3 discount to first-time attenders and in 2010 to cover all Annual Meeting costs for youth and children. Four Annual Meetings later, this cushion has dwindled to \$371. Last year the expenses were somewhat greater because of the costs of the “extra” teens that attended the Teen Retreat Program held at Annual Meeting, but we also for the first time invited contributions to support the costs of the youth and children attending, and received some \$1100. We believe that both the first-time attender discounts and the children/youth scholarships are greatly beneficial to the Yearly Meeting, but we now must find a way to break even on the Annual Meeting.

To this end, we propose increasing the registration cost by \$5 (\$50 for early bird, \$60 for later registration) and decreasing the scholarships for youth and children, so that they would be charged 1/3 of the costs for meals and lodging. (Registration for youth and children remains free.) The 1/3 discount for first-time attenders will remain in place. Finance Committee is authorized to make the final decision on these costs and discounts, but we seek the discernment of Friends gathered at Representative Meeting.

We are immensely grateful for the Annual Meeting contributions last year, and ask that a contributions line again be included on the registration form this year.

The report was accepted. It was noted that monthly meetings should be notified of the new policy so they can properly support their members attending Annual Meeting as well as other Yearly Meeting events for children and youth. The meeting supported the principles the committee followed in setting fees and assistance for this coming year’s Annual Meeting.

RM13-11 Nominating Committee

Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor) reported for the committee. The committee brought forward for approval the appointment of Rick Todd (Kalamazoo) to the Earthcare Committee and of Flo Friender (Kalamazoo) to the Ministry and Nurture Committee. These appointments were **approved**.

Thomas reported that the committee is also seeking to fill positions on the Advancement & Outreach, Earthcare, Ministry & Nurture, Publications & Archives, Adult Program, and the High School Youth Program committees. It is also seeking representatives to FWCC and FGC. In subsequent discussion, it was noted that an assistant teacher is needed for this summer’s annual sessions, with both the Nominating and Youth and Children’s Program Committee working on this need.

RM13-12 Ministry & Nurture

Paula Deming (N. Columbus) reported that the Spiritual Formation Group had its regular fall retreat last September and will meet again on May 4th in Livonia, Michigan for the Spring retreat. The theme of the 2013-14 Spiritual Formation Program is "Nurturing our Spiritual Life through the Practice of a Spiritual Discipline." Della Stanley-Green will lead. The dates of the retreat are September 6-8 and it will once again be held at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan.

Paula reported that eight monthly meetings responded to this year's query. The committee generated a consolidated response from the eight responses. This was read and accepted.

RM13-13 Peace Committee

Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor) reported the committee is offering a workshop on immigration led by Mike & Carmen Kelly (Detroit) at the Annual Sessions. The committee would like to know of particular concerns and projects about peace and conflict undertaken by Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups.

RM13-14 Youth and Adult Program committees

Carla Pratt-Harrington (Athens) reported for the Children and Youth Program Committee that additional leaders for the high school program during the Annual Sessions are needed. Individuals who are not parents of the attending children would be especially welcomed. The committee is clarifying responsibility during Annual Sessions for high school students both when they are with and without teachers. Parents will be notified of these expectations. Steve Deasy (Ann Arbor) and Thomas Burnett (Athens), who will present song and stories on Saturday night, will also work with the children.

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor) reported on behalf of the Adult Program Committee. The early morning hour that has been used for Bible Study in recent annual sessions will be used for Meeting for Worship this year. Bible study will be offered as a workshop instead. The committee is developing two afternoons of workshops, with five or six workshops being offered on both Friday and Saturday. The Annual Sessions Registration Form will ask for interest in workshops, so that proper-sized rooms can be prepared. In keeping with this year's theme for the Annual Sessions, the committee has planned a Friday-night panel presentation by four people who have experienced the yearly meeting in different ways. Conleth Crotser (Cleveland), John Howell (Athens), Don Nagler (Pine River), and Abbey Pratt-Harrington (Athens) will comprise the panel. The committee will remind people of the Oral History Project to interview people before Annual Sessions. A simple meal will be offered on Thursday evening of the Annual Sessions, with those interested to sign up for it on the registration form.

RM13-15 Arrangements & Site Committee

Jon Sommer (Broadmead) reported that this year's Annual Sessions will be held at Bluffton University July 25 -28. In 2014 they will be held at Bluffton University July 24-27.

RM13-16 Committees not meeting here

In response to queries from the floor, the following news of committees who did not meet at this Representative Meeting was shared. The Earthcare Committee has been meeting and plans a workshop at the Annual Sessions. The High School Teen Retreat Program Coordinator Robb Yurisko has planned four retreats this year, of which two have taken place thus far.

RM13-17 Thanks

Thanks were expressed to our hosts, Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting, for their welcoming hospitality.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Dale, Recording Clerk
Peggy Daub, Presiding Clerk