

Minutes of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting

Saturday, May 21, 2016

Michigan Friends Center, 7748 Clarks Lake Road, Chelsea, Michigan 48118

Attending:

From Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting: Phil Volk, Pam Hoffer, Phil Hoffer, Christa Williams, Richard Tucker, Jeff Cooper, Peggy Daub, Joan Sampieri, Cassie Cammann, Jim Crowfoot, Tom Blackwell, Dwight Wilson, Al Connor

From Birmingham Monthly Meeting: Geoff Brieger, Ellerie Brownfain, Jonah Brownfain, Kevin Howley

From Detroit Monthly Meeting: Phil Riegl

From Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting: Mike Holaday

From Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting: Joe Mills, Linda Mills

From Pine River Monthly Meeting: Don Nagler, Nancy Nagler

From Friends School in Detroit: Patrick Padgett

[1] The meeting began at 10:00 with a half hour of silent worship.

[2] Presentation on Renewable Energy for Michigan

Peggy Daub and Phil Volk from Ann Arbor Meeting are encouraging Friends to lobby at the state level in favor of legislation which will mitigate the effects of climate change. As an immediate project, they described a package of four bills currently before the state legislature which will remove obstacles to individual and community level generation of electricity from renewable sources. The package is called the "Energy Freedom" bills and has been spearheaded by Rep. Jeff Irwin of Ann Arbor, with bipartisan co-sponsors for the individual bills. Peggy and Phil emphasized the value of meeting in person with local representatives during the summer legislative recess and provided a sheet of detailed suggestions. They contemplate forming an ongoing, state level, Quaker faith based organization.

[3] Roll call:

Ann Arbor	-	13
Birmingham	-	3
Detroit	-	0
Grand Rapids	-	1
Holland	-	0
Kalamazoo	-	2
Pine River	-	2
Red Cedar	-	0

[4] Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the September 19, 2015 meeting were approved with three changes. In the last line of item [3] the phrase 'or portions thereof' is added following 'CO₂'; in item [11] it is Michigan Friends Center rather than the Friends Lake Cooperative Community that is widening the parking lot; and the first sentence in item [13] should end after 'peace activist' and omit mention of the gathering in Battle Creek.

[5] Naming Committee Report

The Naming Committee consisting of Ellerie Brownfain and Joan Sampieri recommends Jenn Seif from Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting to fill a three year term 2016–2019 on the Nominating Committee. The nomination was approved.

[6] Nominating Committee Report

Jonah Brownfain presented the Nominating Committee report. Raelyn Joyce of Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting is nominated to serve as Clerk, Joan Sampieri of Ann Arbor as Assistant Clerk, Tom Blackwell of Ann Arbor as Recording Clerk, Linda Mills of Kalamazoo as Treasurer and Jeff Cooper of Ann Arbor as the Quarterly Meeting's Resident Agent. These nominations were approved by the Meeting. An additional Trustee for Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting is needed by September. Geoff Brieger was nominated and approved to serve a three year term as Trustee.

[7] Treasurer's Report

Linda Mills reported that all Meetings and Worship groups have paid their assessments. Two meetings have lost members: Grand Rapids is down 4 members and Detroit has lost 1 member. The total income from assessments is \$12,369 and total expenses since July 1, 2015 are \$10,143. In view of budget changes made at the September Business meeting, AFSC and FCNL will each receive an additional contribution of \$50, for annual total contributions of \$8,050 and \$350, respectively. The treasurer's report was approved. Michigan Friends Center and Friends Lake Community thanked the Meeting for its ongoing support. Grand Rapids Friends expressed appreciation for the Quarter making up the difference between the budgeted and actual expenses for the Midwinter Gathering.

[8] Finance Committee

There was no formal report from Finance Committee. It is traditional to present a preliminary budget at the May business meeting which is amended and approved at the September business meeting. The draft budget for the coming year will be the same as that for the current year.

[9] Possible Pendle Hill Clerking Workshop

Joe Mills suggested that Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting might sponsor bringing Art Larrabee from Philadelphia to conduct a one day clerking workshop some time in the Fall. There was broad interest in the idea. Joe will draft an email to Michigan monthly meetings, and possibly include Indiana monthly meetings via the Earlham School of Religion. An organizing committee and a budget will be needed.

[10] At this point, the meeting broke for lunch, organized by Pam Hoffer from Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting. At 1:40 pm the meeting resumed.

[11] Michigan Friends Center

Richard Tucker, secretary of the Board of Trustees for Michigan Friends Center, summarized their March 8, 2016 annual report. A three year project to make Michigan Friends Center more accessible to local community organizations in Chelsea is finishing. This comprises physical improvements including improved access to the building and a wider parking lot as well as active programming thanks to Patrick Zieske, chair of the program committee. There is an effort to promote closer connections between Michigan Friends Center and the Friends Lake Cooperative Community through overlapping Board membership and a shared quarterly newsletter. Marvin Barnes and Phil Stoffregen have joined the MFC Board of Trustees.

The meeting accepted the March 8, 2016 Michigan Friends Center annual report.

[12] Friends Lake Cooperative Community

Richard Tucker also presented the FLCC April 10, 2016 annual report. The year has seen a combination of renewed family energy and Board efforts to be more formal in administrative procedures. They have reviewed the Board Handbook and collected and archived past minutes. There is a question how to clarify daily membership through Michigan Friends Center in a way that does not disrupt Friends Lake regulars.

The meeting accepted the April 10, 2016 Friends Lake Cooperative Community annual report.

[13] Friends School in Detroit

Patrick Padgett, clerk of the Board of Trustees of Friends School in Detroit, reported on progress over the past eight months. The Board consists of Patrick Padgett, clerk, Peter Dale, Joe Mills, Kevin Howley, Paul Savage, Jane Fran Morgan, Mike Kelly, Kineret Gable and Toby Barlow.

There has been some restructuring of the School's debt. All back salary has been paid to the teachers, and some payments have been made for back health expenses. There remains \$19K due for health expenses. No payments have been made to Quaker lenders or to utilities. The electricity, telephone and water in the building are still on. The roof has been patched and no longer leaks, although the roofing job remains incomplete. A court judgement was obtained against the prior roofing contractor. The property insurance has been paid, but by individual board members rather than by the School. The building has not been used in the past year, and Patrick Padgett visits regularly.

There has also been progress in plans to reopen the School. Drew Smith from Friends Council on Education has made several trips to Detroit to advise and to talk with potential funders. He believes there is a place for Quaker education in Detroit. Jane Fran Morgan and Toby Barlow obtained \$62 K of funding from the Kresge Foundation to assess the practicality of reopening the school. This was conducted by the Nonprofit Finance Fund, headquartered in New York City. (Kevin Howley led their East coast operations before moving to Detroit.) The report estimates that \$500 K in renovations to the school building would be needed before reopening, with an additional \$500 K in capital expenses over the following five years, exclusive of the school's debt and operating expenses. The school building has an excellent location and its history is a compelling story.

The Kresge Foundation is supportive of the Lafayette Park neighborhood and has offered to assemble other foundations to provide coordinated support. They are proposing that there be a paid position to develop a proposal for starting a school from scratch. This would include a non-volunteer position for development and have an estimated budget of \$230 K. It would involve a market survey, a capital campaign survey and a 'stay or move' survey among others. The Knight, Kellogg and Community foundations would be invited to participate. A New York Quaker Quarterly Meeting has offered a loan. This coordinated support would overcome the hurdle of each funder waiting for the others to commit in order for the project to have a reasonable chance of viability. Active conversations are stuck at the issue of the School's inadequate financial records. As early as 2012, there was not sufficient information to perform a proper audit.

[14] Minute on Friends School in Detroit

Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting will extend the "Plan and Agreement for Change in Organizational Structure of Friends School in Detroit and Continuing the School" until the scheduled meeting on September 17, 2016. If funding for planning and analysis and maintaining the property is not in place at that time, it is the intention of the Quarter to replace the members of the Friends School in Detroit Board of Trustees and to list the School's property for sale. We acknowledge that the School will not open for the 2016–2017 school year.

[15] Contribution to Friends School in Detroit

The meeting approved a contribution of \$2,250 to Friends School in Detroit, as budgeted for 2015–2016.

[16] Friends School Trustees

Two members have been added to the Board of Trustees of Friends School in Detroit since the September Business meeting, Kevin Howley from Birmingham Friends Meeting and Paul Savage from Detroit Friends Meeting. Kevin Howley was already approved by the Quarter at last September's Business Meeting; Paul Savage's appointment was approved by the three trustees of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting.

The current terms are expiring for three additional trustees of Friends School in Detroit, Patrick Padgett, Peter Dale and Joe Mills. These appointments will be considered at the September meeting for business.

[17] Announcements

The annual picnic for Hiroshima day at Quaker Park in Battle Creek will be held at 11 am on Sunday, August 7, 2016.

The Fall Quarterly meeting will be on Saturday, September 17, 2016, likely here at Michigan Friends Center. Richard Tucker had said earlier that the Quarter would be welcome to use the building.

[18] The meeting closed with silence at 3:10 pm.