

LEYM Executive Committee Meeting – November 9, 2019

Oberlin, Ohio

Present:

Jo Posti, Clerk; Peter Wood, Recording Clerk; Nancy Reeves, assistant clerk; Janet Dando, Nominating; Peggy Daub, Bulletin Co-Editor; Jeff Cooper Pub & Archives, Bulletin Co-editor; Kate Enger, Youth & Children; Ellen Barnes, Advancement & Outreach; Tom Kangas, Treasurer; Shelley Kotz, Ministry & Nurture; Thomas Taylor, Nominating; Becky Morehouse, Ministry & Nurture; Jon Sommer, Arrangements & Site; Mae Hasbrook, Earthcare; Joe Mills, Finance; Joel Ottenbreit, Peace & Justice; Susan Loucks, survey, (phone attendance).

Guest – Lyn Cope

We opened with a brief period of open worship

EC 01 **Review of Survey results.** Susan Loucks summarized results of the survey:

There were difficulties creating a paper report from the survey tool. The results are available in an Excel version. Some filtering by geography is a possibility. N = 138 (119 actually finished the entire survey). Overall, there may have been a bias toward the positive. There was effort to reach out to people who may never have been to annual sessions.

Many, perhaps most, meetings are content with their financial situation.

Susan expressed surprise at the number who felt that their children's and young adult programs are strong, a pleasant outcome.

There seems to be some tension between needs of aging communities on the one hand, and the need for inclusivity and deeper change on the other.

There is diminishing interest in individual ministries or youth programming in favor of addressing theological diversity and racism in the culture.

The majority of respondents were connected with Friends outside their meetings, though their connections with nearby meetings was not a large factor in this. This speaks to the value of wider Quaker connections.

What next: how to make use of the data collected. We need to look at communication modes in terms of effectiveness.

Discussion: from the findings, what are the areas to be explored further? Might we have focus groups with individual meetings or at the LEYM annual sessions? Some meetings are hungry for visitors as a way of contacting other Quakers. Committees in one meeting could have virtual meetings with similar committees in other meetings. Should there be more quarterly meetings? Suggestion: A survey of individual meetings about the kinds of programs they would wish to see at annual sessions (partly to see how the answers would square with the results of the current survey). How do we communicate better when so many people are unaware of or don't use the forms of communication available (e.g. web site, social media, newsletter.) Some people consult LEYM media for specific purposes, not for general

communication. We may need to have wider discussions about how current media would serve us. How can we integrate these quantifiable results with Quaker spiritual processes of discernment, especially given the relatively low N of respondents?

We might develop a discussion guide for meeting-wide discussions to amplify or correct for the results of the survey. Perhaps the survey material could shape the discussion guide. The point would be not so much about ranking priorities as to get more expansive ideas about areas of interest. We could assess which meetings have programs or ideas to offer, which ones have needs. How do we find the feelings/thoughts of people who were not already interested enough to fill out the survey?

Who might develop a discussion guide for monthly meetings that would describe the survey's themes to explore further, and some suggestions on how to conduct the discussion and a template for written responses to come back to the YM.

Joel Ottenbreit and Shelley Kotz step forward as the nucleus of such a group. Mae Hasbrook would be a reader/editor.

EC 02 - Policies and Procedures – Jeff Cooper

Jeff focused today on Procedures. Procedure changes will involve minor changes in wording, or ones reflecting current procedure in practice. Those needing substantive change will be reserved for later.

- 1) We first considered the items needing minor changes in terms of clarification, wording, or placement of items. These changes are approved.
- 2) Changes in practice relating to the duties of the recording clerk, reflecting changes in actual practice. Some duties performed by the recording clerk in the past are now taken on by the data base manager and meeting worker. These changes are approved.
- 3) Changes in wording reflecting new circumstances, (e.g. responsibilities toward Friends School in Detroit which is being dissolved); slight modifications of or extensions of existing procedures or clarification of duties of LEYM positions of responsibility. These changes are approved.

EC 03 – Publication & Archives

Peggy Daub reported. Annual records and Bulletin were sent out this fall. \$1815 was the cost of mailing these items. Photos were received to add to the Bulletin. A new Annual Records editor is sought. The Bulletin editors seek a spring deadline of May 1, 2020 instead of May 15. This would affect the arrangement and site and adult program committees most. Clerks of these committees are agreeable.

EC 04 – Advancement & Outreach

Ellen Barnes reported. Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting, which has care of Manitou Worship Group, is seeking ways to revitalize that relationship. Grand Rapids is also in a discernment process with Tustin worship group, who need a sponsoring Monthly Meeting now that Pine River, which used to provide care, has now itself become a worship group. Material from the A&O display on using social media has been largely reproduced on the LEYM fall Bulletin.

EC 05 – Finance Committee

Joe Mills reported on the LEYM audit, the financial report of which was published in the Fall Bulletin, the Travel Contingency Fund, and scholarship funds. There was some discussion of application procedures for scholarships and how to announce the decisions made regarding scholarships. We agreed that names of scholarship recipients should not be published. A question arose as to whether scholarship funds might be available to young people who might want to represent LEYM at FCNL meetings. Travel reimbursements in general might be considered by Finance, since the travel contingency fund covers travel expenses, preferably not housing and definitely not registration. Tom Kangas points out that though there is a travel line item in the budget, there is no travel fund as such, now that it has been rolled back into the general fund. The full report is located in the Executive Committee Google drive.

EC 06 – Ministry & Nurture

Shelley Kotz presented

Ministry & Nurture has been working on the annual query. Discussions on supplemental materials continue. A scholarship for attendance at School of the Spirit was approved.

EC 07 – Nominating

Janet Dando outlined the spots that need filling which the nominating committee is now considering. The full list is on the EC Google drive.

EC 08 – Peace

Joel Ottenbreit reported. P&J have had a Joint meeting with Earthcare to explore cooperation or merger. P&J are having monthly virtual meetings to explore purpose, propose topics of interest, perhaps leading to a letter that will come to the YM annual sessions.

EC 09 – Earthcare

Mae Hasbrook reported on how overlapping work between P&J and Earthcare might work, e.g., right relationship, climate change as it affects social justice as two topics that might be explored with the intention of bringing a report to Representative Meeting. Greater outreach and gathering of new members are of importance.

EC 10 – Adult & Family Program

Thomas Taylor reported. Thomas listed the Committee's members. After reviewing evaluations from last year's annual sessions, the committee proposes the following:

The theme of the 2020 meeting will center on listening, and will be entitled "Letting Go: listening with open hearts and minds."

The plenary speaker will be Paula Palmer of Boulder Meeting, who will also lead a workshop. Her talk will be entitled "Listening to the People of the Land."

The talent show will be the Saturday Night feature. The addition of skits as part of the talent show is proposed.

The committee invites comments on and suggestions for the Committee report, which is located in the Executive Committee Google drive. Please send suggestions to Thomas Taylor.

EC 11 – Arrangements & Site

Jon Sommer reported. The dates of the yearly sessions will be July 30 – August 2. There will be some construction barriers to be negotiated. Instructions will be sent to attenders of the annual sessions.

EC 12 - Youth & Children

Kate Enger reported.

25 people attended the fall youth retreat. She spoke of the camp's very welcome atmosphere, and the site is beautiful, but can be a problem for people with allergies.

Some teens might take part in the workshop that Paula Palmer will present, and the suggestion is that it be presented at a time that won't compete with other teen activities.

Robb Yurisko is interested in helping facilitate teen retreats like the Quake That Rocked the Mid-West from years ago.

Activities which explore diversity will continue to be offered.

Noah Hogan, who works with Passion Works Studio in Athens OH, may be approached to help create a T-shirt design. There was discussion of the possible funding for this, and agreement that this should be part of the annual sessions budget.

It seems that there is a full roster of teachers for the annual sessions.

Young adult Friends need support in their emerging identity as young adult Quakers at annual sessions.

EC 13 – Ad Hoc Harassment Committee

Five people have expressed interested, and more diversity in the committee is sought.

The RM is in Pittsburgh April 4, with hopes that construction problems on the Meeting House will be solved by then.