

Bellingham Friends Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
September 10, 2017
Approved Minutes

Present: John Hatten (clerk). Janine Bruton (substitute recording clerk), Lisa Farino, Don Goldstein, Nan Macy, Virginia Herrick, Susan Richardson, Dusty Andersen, Mark Hersh, Laurie Glenn, Sharon Trent, Joanne Cowan, Mimi Freshley, Dave Hopkinson, Don Reinke

Meeting opened with silent worship.

The agenda was approved and minutes from the July meeting were approved as amended.

2017.09.01 Member concerns

2017.09.01.01 Don G. informs Friends that Becca Renk, a member of the Jubilee House Community and the staff of the Center for Development in Central America (CDCA) in Nicaragua, has two requests of Friends and others in Bellingham. Friends have long supported their work. Her requests are that a daytime tea be hosted on September 28 or 29 so that she can talk to the community about the work of CDC and that she be hosted overnight. Joanne Cowan will check her calendar and more information will be in the e-news.

2017.09.01.02 Dave H. suggested that food and drink be banned from the downstairs room where spills would stain the carpet. Another friend suggested water and tea do not stain. A Friend with long experience at Explorations offered that many dinners and food related events are held in that room. It was acknowledged that we want to be good tenants whether we ask Explorations for the rules of the house or set our own rules. A Friend reminded us that we are still experimenting in the downstairs room and that perhaps this conversation is premature, though another Friend reminded us that next week is our retreat when we plan to have food in the room.

A distinction was made between beverages during worship and beverages during second hour by one Friend. It was decided to continue this discussion if need be when the retreat was discussed.

2017.09.02 M&C Report (Attached)

Susan R. read the report

Susan invited discussion of the annual camping experience.

One Friend who had attended thought the \$259 group camping fee too expensive for the low turn-out. Another Friend suggested that the trip be timed before school begins for a better turn-out. Other Friends reported calendar conflicts and anti-camping sentiments to explain their absence while others stated how

fond their grandchildren were of the camping and a good introduction to Quakerism. Another suggested a campground with cabins for our aging population.

2017.09.03 Gender Inclusivity Minute

Nan Macy read the report from the ad hoc committee (**Attached**).

2017.09.03.01 A Friend suggested adding the five definitions on the back to the minute. Neither of the committee members present objected to the proposal. Another Friend pointed out that the definition was not part of the minute as it came to us or as we had been seasoning it. The apparent "sense of the Meeting" - - although the clerk did not say so -- was that we then reverted to considering the minute as originally proposed.

The Minute was re-read and APPROVED as seasoned.” (Minute is attached) The definitions on the back were recognized as a useful appendix to, but not a part of, the minute.

2017.09.03.02 The Ad Hoc Gender Inclusivity committee will be laid down after the October 1 2nd Hour . If the Meeting feels the need for continuing work then the Social and Environmental Concerns committee will make a recommendation.

2017.09.04 Outreach and Welcoming Committee (Report attached)

Don G. presented the report which relates to the storage of the new signage. It was decided to table decisions on the sandwich board sign until a decision is made about where we will meet ie. up or downstairs.

2017.09.05 Meeting House Committee

2017.09.05.01

Virginia H. presented the report which relates to finding a property at 1005 Sunset Ave (Northwest Ave and Sunset) consisting of a house and a rundown garage on almost an acre, accessible by bus, for \$300,000. It is outside Bellingham city limits but has a Bellingham address. She was quick to say that this property does not meet our needs but pointed out that other properties farther afield from Bellingham in this price range might meet our needs if we are willing to search outside Bellingham.

A brief conversation ensued with several points being raised including zoning, Sunday buses running infrequently, and Ferndale venues having always increased our numbers implying that Ferndale would not be too far.

2017.09.05.02 Discussion was opened on the pros and cons of the downstairs meeting room.

One Friend suggested that we need more time to figure out all the elements of the move downstairs such as parking and other factors; it is too soon to make a decision. Another supported this by reporting that two problems occurred that morning impeding a smooth start: the room where we store our calendars and signs was locked and we had no key; and tables were blocking the emergency exit and its accessible building entrance. Other housekeeping details still need to be addressed.

A Friend raised the issue of security and suggested that the outside doors be locked at 10 minutes after the hour to secure the building. Others pointed out that latecomers would be locked out and a chorus of people offered suggestions about the variety of doors that could be left open or locked.

It was noted that the downstairs is not accessibility friendly (i.e. via the stairs) though one Friend suggested that access to the upstairs kitchen can be achieved after worship through driving around the building. A Friend questioned whether it would be cold downstairs in the winter months. Another Friend now prefers parking in the back and prefers the meditative atmosphere offered downstairs. Another supported with an expression of love for the room and noted the number of Friends who linger in the room after worship to talk amongst themselves. The flexibility in the lighting and comfort of the chairs was noted.

Regarding the sound system, John H. (who has been bringing the equipment from home) stated this is not sustainable and that he will be working on simplifying the sound system and exploring what sound system is available in the building. The suggestion was raised that others would become involved.

A Friend stated that on several occasions she has lost her child in the building since we have moved downstairs.

Regarding the October 1 Potluck: a Friend suggested we host it downstairs to see if snacks and potlucks are viable downstairs. Mark H. pointed out it is a lot of "shlepping" and he is willing to do it but the Meeting will have to provide additional resources. There is a sink and a mini fridge downstairs and it is unknown if they will meet our needs for dish washing downstairs.

An Ad Hoc committee of Mark Hersh and Don Goldstein was appointed for pre-planning of the October 1 potluck logistics. They will meet with the Meeting House Committee at 5pm on September 26 to discuss the feasibility and/or logistics of a potluck held exclusively downstairs.

A Friend re-visited the topic of locking outside doors suggesting that we lock the upstairs door at 10 after but keep the downstairs door from the parking lot unlocked for latecomers. Another Friend suggested that we could monitor the building.

It was AGREED that we continue the experiment of worship downstairs for one more month.

2017.09.06 Retreat Planning. Don G. presented the report from the ad hoc committee. (Report attached)

The hours are from 9:30 -4:00 and the adult program will be held down stairs while the potluck lunch and mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks will be served upstairs, with overflow seating at those times available in one of the upstairs classrooms.

Dusty A. will transfer by car those who so desire to snacks upstairs.

John H. will bring a flipchart of paper and an easel for the presenters' use.

2017.09.07 Interfaith Coalition

Sharon T. presented an announcement that the coat drive is beginning and includes all warm accessories, toiletries, and washable yarn. Give to Sharon by the end of September.

2017.09.08 Children's Program Committee (report attached)

Virginia H. announced that most of the weekly time slots seeking teachers have been filled except for Halloween and Thanksgiving weekends. She is willing to take those weekends if someone wants to switch with her.

2017.09.09 Member Concerns (continued)

John H. raised his concern that as Clerk he enjoys fulfilling the role of clerk at the MfWfB but is not so good at the pastoral role and would like a co-clerk who better fulfills that role. A Friend asks if that's not M&C's role and a short discussion of M&C splitting into two committees ensued with the issue being referred to Nominating committee.

The meeting closed with silent worship.

Ministry and Counsel Committee Report

Bellingham Friends Meeting

September 10, 2017

1. We met on August 15 and again on September 5.
2. September query is from Britain Yearly Meeting's *Advices and Queries* #32 - "Bring into God's light those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in yourself which lie at the root of destructive conflict, acknowledging your need for forgiveness and grace. In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?"
Second Hours dates and topics & OWC requested dates and topics:
September 3--Potluck + report on FGC Gathering and NPYM A.S

September 10--MFWFB

September 17--"Unprogrammed Worship" presented by John Hatten

September 24--PNQM, no Second Hour

October 1 - Potluck + Minute of Inclusion: Welcoming All Genders

October 8 - MfWFB

October 15 - Spiritual Journey?

October 22 - Discussion on Financing a Meetinghouse

October 29 - Intergenerational Activity by Children's Committee

3. Camping trip at Excelsior was appreciated by those who attended, but fewer attended than last year for various reasons. We would like further comments from others about the value of continuing this tradition.
4. Retreat: We would encourage people to attend the upcoming retreat, which we expect to be spiritually deepening both for individuals and for the meeting as a whole. This is a valuable opportunity for many of to benefit from the experience by Ben Lomond Center coming to us. Travel and stipend expenses will be \$600.
5. Next meeting: tbd (possibly Sept 25).

Gender Inclusivity Minute Ad Hoc Committee Report
For Sunday, September 10, 2017
Meeting for Worship for Business
Bellingham Friends Meeting

Information items:

The Committee will offer a second hour on Sunday, October 1 in conjunction with the Meeting's monthly potluck. This second hour will focus on the Gender Inclusivity minute itself and on its practical and spiritual implications for our Meeting.

In preparation for that second hour, we are including the following:

- A copy of the related minute our meeting is currently seasoning
- The revised version of the minute that those attending North Pacific Yearly Meeting annual session in July united with
- An information packet that traces the origins of and changes in the minute that resulted in the final, approved form.

Action items:

At this time, the Gender Inclusivity Minute Ad Hoc Committee recommends that Bellingham Friends consider both versions of the minute, and consider uniting with/approving the aforementioned revised minute. It is the Committee's belief and understanding that if Bellingham Friends do so, we are collectively making a commitment to continue to deepen in how we live into it.

The Committee wishes to remind Friends that this group came together on a temporary, ad hoc basis, and requests that the committee be laid down after the aforementioned October second hour.

Minute of Inclusion: Welcoming Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People

Bellingham Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends seeks to be an open and affirming faith community. We welcome all to share in worship and the activities of our common life.

Bellingham Friends understand that the Divine Source is leading our meeting to honor the gender identity and expression of each person, as understood by that person. We affirm that gender expression and identity may be fluid and changeable. We recognize that when we embrace the Light within the full spectrum of gender identities in our Meeting, our worship deepens and our community is enriched.

As part of our evolving struggle to live our testimony of equality, Bellingham Friends Meeting minutes our commitment to becoming an affirming, safe, and nurturing place for everyone to live fully into that which the Spirit is leading them to be. We extend our loving care to people of all genders, including, but not limited to transgender, genderqueer, cisgender, gender-fluid, agender, gender non-conforming, and intersex persons, their families and friends. We will continue to educate ourselves and our communities and take appropriate action to bring about a more equal world.

Children's Program Committee Report
Sept. 10, 2017

1. Information: Childcare Helpers. Committee reviewed the Childcare Responsibilities document to delete references to a Children's Program Coordinator and added a line indicating that Childcare Helpers must be at least 14 years of age, and have permission and support from a parent if they are under 16. We also added a note that if the treasurer is out of town for several weeks and a childcare helper needs to be paid before the treasurer returns, Virginia or Kristen will pay them and get reimbursed.

2. Information: Background checks. We have our nonprofit status established with the Washington State Patrol, so we can now run free background checks on anyone in Meeting who would like to be a volunteer backup childcare worker when none of our paid helpers is available. So far, in addition to Lily, Anna, and Dora, these Friends have background checks, either through their work, or by BFM: Virginia Herrick, Wendy Goldstein, Jessica Bee, Kirsten McLewin, and Aurora Fox. The committee decided that background checks should be run routinely every five years, and asks Friends who work regularly alone with Children to provide the committee with name and birthdate every five years.

3. Retreat Planning.

a. Program and volunteer facilitators. The committee intends to have three hours of Children's Program, and needs one more facilitator to volunteer to work with the children from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. If any Friends who've had the opportunity to go to Ben Lomond Center and experience the long version of this workshop there would be willing to work with the Children, that would minimize other Friends missing out on the program. It is our intention to utilize the *Friends Through Time* curriculum, as in keeping with the *Roots to Shoots to Fruits* theme of the retreat.

b. Registration. So far, we have only one child registered to attend. It is very helpful in planning program if we know how many children will be there. Parents, please contact Joanne, of the Retreat Planning Committee, or Virginia, and let us know if your children will be attending all or part of the retreat. Thank you!

c. Schedule.

Adult schedule:

9:30-10:45 – Program

10:45-11:00 – Break

11: 00-12:00 – Program

12:00-1:30 – Lunch

1:30-2:45 – Program

2:45-3:00 – Break

3:00-4:00 – Program

Proposed Children's Schedule:

9:00-9:30 – Setup (Dora and Virginia)

9:30-10:45 – Virginia

11:00-12:00 – Childcare only (Dora?)

12:00-12:45 – Lunch

12:45-1:45 – Sharon

1:45-2:45 – Childcare only

3:00-4:00 – **Facilitator TBD**

**Report from Outreach and Welcoming Committee to Bellingham Friends Meeting MfWfB,
September 10, 2017**

(Information) The Outreach and Welcoming Committee has decided to try modifying the existing sandwich-board sign to remediate some of its problems, rather than purchasing a new sign at this time. The modifications include smoothing the sides to help prevent splinters and installation of a carry handle on the bottom. Don Reinke has taken charge of making those modifications, which might also including coating the sign with something to reduce weathering. Another possibility that appeals to me personally would be to seek permission from Explorations Academy to store the sign in the front hall, right behind theirs, in order to reduce the amount of carrying needed to deploy it on Sundays.

(Information) One of OWC's responsibilities is general oversight of the Greeter function. We are in the process of trying a new setup for the Greeter in which the nametag wallets are stationed apart from where the Greeter stands to welcome arriving Friends and assist newcomers and visitors in making temporary nametags. Regular attenders will be expected to find their own nametags. This arrangement works if the red tray and most of its contents are stowed in the top drawer of the rolling card while it's in use. We continue to welcome feedback from Friends as to how well this arrangement is working. The Greeter Guidelines will be changed as appropriate, once the Meeting has decided where our usual worship location will be going forward.

(Information) Our next committee meeting will be on Saturday morning, September 30th, beginning at 10:30 am at Lynne Lohr's residence. All interested Friends are welcome, but please let me or Lynne know in advance if you will be coming.

--Don Goldstein, Clerk of Outreach and Welcoming Committee, 9/7/17
Other OWC members are Dusty Andersen, Lynne Lohr, and Don Reinke

**Report from 2017 Retreat Planning Committee to Bellingham Friends Meeting MfWfB,
September 10, 2017**

(Information and discussion) The 2017 Retreat Planning Committee recommends that the adult program during our retreat be held in the downstairs auditorium, with use of the adjacent small rooms for small group activities. If the microphones and speaker could be available that would be helpful, but we believe they are not absolutely essential. The Commons will be used for the potluck lunch, with overflow seating in the library or an adjacent classroom, and the usual Children's Program space upstairs will be available to children and their program facilitators. Snacks will be provided during breaks in the morning and afternoon programs.

The Runyans have requested the use of a flipchart and easel for their workshop, so I am hereby requesting to know whether any of us can provide the flipchart or whether I should go ahead and purchase one. I believe that the Explorations Academy's easel will be available for their use.

We continue to request that Friends let us know in advance of their plans to attend by using the signup sheet or contacting Joanne Cowan (360-229-1212 or orderlypursuits@gmail.com). I will be sending Kathy Runyan an estimated count of adults in the next day or two.

--Don Goldstein, Clerk of 2017 Retreat Planning Committee, 7/13/17
Other committee members are Wendy Goldstein and Joanne Cowan

4. Fall Quarterly Teaching Schedule

Sept. 16 - (Annual Retreat)

Sept. 17 – Virginia (Anna)

Sept. 24 – Aurora (Dora)

Oct. 1 - Jessica

Oct. 8 - Rachel

Oct. 15 - Virginia

Oct. 22 - Sharon

Oct. 29 -

Nov. 5 - Susan

Nov. 12 - Sharon

Nov. 19 - Virginia

Nov. 26 - (Thanksgiving weekend) –

*Need facilitator

*Willing to trade or yield this date

5. Junior Friends Programming.

a. Program: In order to provide a regular program specifically for Junior Friends, we would need an adult Friend who had both time and inspiration for this work. We ask Friends to let us know if there is someone in Meeting with such a leading. Perhaps a special program for teens could be offered on First Sundays?

b. Since all our Junior Friends at the moment are in the same family, the fun of “hanging out” outside of CP hours together is significantly reduced. Virginia will contact the Children’s Program Committee clerks for nearby Meetings and see if there are Junior Friends activities outside of Quarterly Meeting and Annual Session, where our kids could get together with others from around the area.

6. Next Meeting will be at 4 p.m. Sept. 25. Please contact Virginia if you have a concern for the committee or would like to attend.