

**Bellingham Friends Meeting**  
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business  
Minutes 9/13/20  
Approved November 8, 2020

Attending: Jean Brechan; Janine Bruton; Joanne Cowan; Dorothy de Fremery; Mimi Freshley; Don Goldstein; Lorina Hall; Mary Hansen; John Hatten; Virginia Herrick (recording); Steve Hutchens; Dorrie Jordan; Mary Ann Percy (clerking); Allen Stockbridge.

1. Opening worship began at 11:45 a.m.
2. Clerk's statement on clerking

Good morning, Friends; thank you for joining us today.

A. I want to share with you a couple "moments of Light" Virginia shared with me this week:

*--Appreciation for vocal ministry this month. It has been very rich.*

*--I had the opportunity to spend some quality time with Mary Hansen and Batik this week, which, while too short, was refreshing for all concerned, especially Batik, who got a bath in the hose in my backyard out of it!*

I hope Friends will send me an email during the coming month to let me know of any moments of light--a special kindness, insight or beauty you've experienced in our community! I know you have!

Thank you Friends!

B. I ask again Friends follow our practice of listening fully, with open heart and mind to each Friend's vocal ministry. Please raise your hand or if you're not on video, to say "Clerk please" in order to speak, only after the Friend speaking has finished, please wait to be recognized before speaking, and remember to avoid repeating what another Friend has already offered. Unfortunately, with the Zoom program, it doesn't work for us to stand to deliver ministry, so we will need to discern even more carefully if what we feel compelled to share is from the Spirit. Please take care to allow silence after each person speaks, preserving the "worship" in our Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business. Thank you, Friends.

C. I'm greatly appreciating the query that our Worship & Ministry Committee has chosen for us this month, and in particular "*Are we prepared to let go of our individual desires and let the Holy Spirit lead us to unity?*" I've long been struck by the wisdom of Friends' Spirit-led decision-making process and its correlative necessity of making certain we "check our egos at the door!"

Reflecting on this process, I looked through Michael J. Sheeran's classic book **Beyond Majority Rule: voteless decisions in the Religious Society of Friends**, and on page 49, found these relevant, insightful and instructive words from Douglas Steere:

*The Quaker Meeting for Business opens with an unhurried period of waiting silence, and if the meeting is properly carried through, there emerges something of this mood of openness not to my wishes and my designs and my surface preferences, but openness to the deeper levels where the Guide's bidding may have its way and where the problem may be resolved in quite a different way than had ever occurred to me.*

And may it be so with us!  
Thank you Friends.

### 3. Review of Agenda (as approved, below)

Review of Draft minutes from MfWfB 8/9/20

Member Concerns

Items for worship and action

- a. Social and Environmental Concerns/Racial Justice Working Group
- b. Pastoral Care
- c. Meetinghouse verbal report
- d. Safe Quaker Community ad hoc committee
- e. Worship and Ministry
- f. Nominating Committee

Letter from Whatcom Peace and Justice Center

Closing worship

4. Review of draft minutes from MFWFB 8/9/20; approved with copyedits and minor wording changes. Friends names that were accidentally left in will be changed to "a Friend." Friends are named only if they are making a report, or agreeing to do something. "Clerk" refers to clerk of the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

5. Member concerns: There was discussion of J. Lee's absence, as his membership is up for final approval. Joanne called and left a message inviting him to join us.

6. Items for worship and action

A. SEC/Racial Justice Working Group  
Dorothy DeFremery reporting

Social and Environmental Concerns Report to MfWfB

September 9, 2020

At our recent Racial Justice Working Group Meeting it was decided that as we didn't have a clear path forward, the RJWG would begin meeting with SEC until another project becomes clear, at which point we will act as a working group again to respond to immediate opportunities to carry out the Meeting's commitment to racial justice.

Some of the primary concerns that have come forward are:

- Racial Justice in Education
- Equity in Funding Education
- The Climate Reality Project
- Statewide Truth & Reconciliation Process w/Indigenous people
- Work to create a BIPOC safe space/support center
- Get involved in the Systemic Racism Mapping Project
- Provide an online panel (or panels) aimed at schoolkids to provide to teachers
- Exploring existing curriculum (Project 1619)

Some of us are also exploring a recently formed group: Social Justice, Anti-Racism, and Tolerance in Education" It is largely made up of educators in the Bellingham and Whatcom County Schools. Rather than 'reinvent the wheel' we want to explore possibilities to become involved and support this group in their goals and activities.

Because of the vast areas of concern we realize the need to narrow these down, and that will be discussed at our next Social and Environmental Concerns Meeting set for October 7<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 via zoom. If interested in participating, please contact Virginia Herrick who has set up the Zoom meeting.

We also plan to work to update the SEC committee's job description for Meeting

Discussion: Friend asked that BIPOC be spelled out (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)

~Friend asked for a description of the systemic racism mapping project.

~Another Friend explained that this turned out to be an complex endeavor that wasn't appropriate for us as volunteers to participate in.

~Climate Reality Project co-sponsorship. Friend requested that the information about the event be added to the e-News so Friends can attend.

Action: Friends agreed to co-sponsor this event.

B. Pastoral Care--

Ask Final approval of Membership of J Lee Cook.

Ask Final approval of Committee's Job description.

Mary Hansen reporting

Pastoral Care Committee Report for MfWfB  
September 13, 2020

Action Items:

- Final approval of Membership of J Lee Cook.
- Final approval of Committee's Job description.

Information: The committee clerk has a severe injury that may necessitate surgery. The committee's next meeting will be scheduled after this is resolved.

Discussion: How to celebrate J. Lee's membership; P.C. will discuss how to get a Little Red Book to J. Lee and celebration of his membership with Worship & Ministry; Friends discussed the possibility of a letter of welcome to J. Lee.

Actions:

Approved the membership of J. Lee Cook.

Approved the job description of Pastoral Care Committee job description.

C. Meetinghouse update

Allen Stockbridge, Meetinghouse scout, updates:

~Verona Street Property.

Waiting for formal response from the seller of Verona Street property. They didn't respond yet. They are engaged in the process, however; they did not counter our offer. Their broker wrote a letter saying \$90,000 was too low. They mentioned \$145,000. We requested a written counteroffer.

~Addendum from Larry T., Meetinghouse Committee: (Information) We're quite far apart on price. This will come back to the Meeting as a whole for action. The proposal we offered gives us a lot of flexibility because of the location, access, and wetland issues of this property. If we get to a point of reaching agreement on the amount, there will be a need for the Meeting to authorize spending money for reports.

Discussion:

~Friend would like to see our offer in written form. Expressed concern that everything be consistent with Friends' intent from MfWfB.

~Allen reported that it hasn't been our practice to distribute that to the whole Meeting. He is not reluctant to share it; it is consistent with the terms we discussed at our last MfWfB.

~Treasurer asked that in the future if an amount like \$10,000 is needed, she would appreciate a phone call, because it takes a while to get that amount liquid.

~After discussion, Friends agreed that anyone who wants to see the actual document should request it from Allen and he will send it to them. Janine B. and Don G. said they would like to see the offer.

~Allen: Dharma Hall

Current occupants vacated at the end of August. The Hall itself not suitable; no good place for Children's Program. Rent is \$3500 per month. The downstairs was only a third of the footprint of the building. Access problem.

Discussion: None

~Allen: The Majestic

Regular occasional communication with Alborz. Nothing new. Have not moved storage to Majestic. Paying a reduced rent to Explorations to keep our belongings there.

Discussion: None.

Action: None.

D. SQCC

Dorrie J. reporting

9/13/20 Report from SQCC

The Safe Quaker Community Committee has been working on revising the initial BFM Guidelines for Participation by people accused, charged or convicted of sex offenses. This has been our main focus for many months, especially after Meeting approved the revised Confidentiality Guidelines. We have drawn extensively from other Quaker sources, especially from Britain Yearly Meeting, and revised things to fit with BFM. We believe we are now ready to present these guidelines to BFM to be accepted for seasoning.

The draft of the Guidelines for Participation was sent out early last week to give members/attenders more time to review the document. We can go through the document piece by piece or we could accept general comments, depending on what Meeting wants to do.

After finishing the revision, we briefly looked at other topics, like violence or natural disasters that the adhoc committee could focus on once these Guideline for Participation are approved.

Our next meeting will be held on Oct 11 at 11 AM on Zoom.

Discussion: Friends went through the document section by section (guidelines, the glossary, and the agreement) making wording changes for clarification, which are included in the final document.) There was a problematic paragraph near the end of the agreement, which the SQCC will take back for further discernment.

**ACTION:** Friends accepted for seasoning, and will bring new version of paragraph six next month. The rest of the document will come back for final approval at our next MfWfB; the paragraph 6 will come back for acceptance for seasoning.

## E. Worship & Ministry

Mimi F. reporting

### **Worship and Ministry Report**

9/13/20

#### 1) Advice and Query for September

“When problems and conflicts arise, do we make timely endeavors to resolve them in a spirit of love and humility? How do we use our diversity for the spiritual growth of our Meeting? Are we prepared to let go of our individual desires and let the Holy Spirit lead us to unity?”

from NPYM Faith and Practice, 2nd edition 1993, p. 43

2) Second Hour Schedule:

September 20: Presentation by Janie Pemble, Interfaith Coalition

September 27: virtual Quarterly Meeting--see e-news for information on registering

October 4: World Quaker Day--details TBA

3) We have been working on updating the Care of Meeting Guidelines for Zoom meetings. We are close to having these done and hope to have them posted on our website soon.

4) We are working on revising our job description and hope to have it finalized by October's MfWfB.

5) We are working on setting up a meditative retreat to reflect on applying our Quaker testimonies to the living world. Mary Ann and Rachel will facilitate, either a morning or an afternoon.

Discussion: Would welcome input from Friends regarding inspiration for World Quaker Day

F. NomCom

Virginia H. reporting

Nominating Committee Report to MfWfB Sept. 13, 2020

1. *Action:* Ask Friends to **accept for seasoning** the nomination of Steve Hutchens to Finance Committee.
2. *Information:* Don G would like to lay down his long-time role as **Phone Message taker**. This involves adding BFM to your answering machine message, and then directing any calls to the appropriate party in Meeting. We ask that whoever takes on this responsibility for the Meeting plan to remain in it for several years, as changes in phone numbers require updating many of our outreach materials.
3. *Information:* Everyone needs to **review their job descriptions** and update them as needed this year. If the changes are minor wording changes, they should simply be sent to Virginia H., clerk of Nominating Committee, to be filed. If the changes are substantive, they should come to Meeting for Worship for Business as soon as possible. THANK YOU to Friends who've completed their review of their or their committee's job description! **If you haven't yet done so, please put the job description on your to-do list!**
4. *Information:* **Vacancies in the current slate:** Archivist; Meetinghouse scout/clerk; Children's Program Committee, and Social and Environmental Concerns. Assistant Treasurer role is still vacant; that is also a Finance Committee role.

5. **Information:** Our meeting this month was postponed, because Aurora is ill. Contact Virginia if you have suggestions or leadings to share at or before our next meeting.

Discussion: Don clarified that they are going to have their phone line disconnected next month! Need someone new ASAP!

## 7. Letter from WP&J Center--

*Whatcom Peace & Justice Center*

*Tue. Aug 11, 2020*

*Dear friends,*

*I am writing based on a request from Heather Katahdin and Don Johnson who donated ~\$300 to the WPJC this year. Heather wanted me to share that their donations were in honor of Doris Fern [sic] and in recognition of the timely work that the Quaker community has done putting together the racial justice forum earlier this year. She chose to not be recognized publicly as a sponsor, but asked us to highlight the Quaker's support for IDP and inform you of her decision.*

*On that note, we have just received a check from you! Thank you once again for your generous donation and support for International Day of Peace. Our press release should be sent out soon and we'll make sure to send out our promotional information your way once that's ready. The graphics and speakers for this year are AMAZING and we are so excited to have as many people as possible engaging and learning about the work for racial justice, demilitarization and peace for this year's IDP.*

*Cheers,*

*Aline Prata*

Discussion:

A Friend shared that Sept. 21 is always International Day of Peace.

## 8. Closing worship at 2:15 p.m.