

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Minutes of April 26, 2015

Attendees: Bill Sweet, Ruth Lofgren, Ken Southwood, Janet Southwood, David Bristol, Michelle DiGiacomo, Bill Wilkinson, Carol Redfield, Beth Guajardo, Doug Balfour, Pam Spurgeon, Suzanne Wright Crain, Carol Balliet.

The clerk opened the meeting with the following quote: “The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.” *-Martin Luther King, Jr., 1957*

1. Minutes of March 15 business meeting:

In the absence of the recording clerk, the clerk of the Meeting read the minutes for the March 15 business meeting. **The minutes were approved as read.**

2. Memorial Meeting for Worship for Sal DiGiacomo:

The clerk announced that a memorial meeting for worship for Steven Sal DiGiacomo will be held on Friday, June 5, at the meetinghouse from 6:30pm to approximately 7:30pm. Sal, Michelle DiGiacomo's brother, died on Easter Sunday, April 5. Michelle will prepare text for a memorial program that will include photos. Jim Spickard will design the program. Michelle explained that the date for the memorial meeting was chosen because it is Sal's birthday, and it is also World Environment Day. Sal had an abiding interest in reducing assaults on the world's environment, as shown in the organizations and causes with which he worked.

The clerk read an email she had requested from a former clerk of the Meeting, explaining how to conduct a memorial meeting, since those attending may not be aware of Quaker practice. The clerk is to briefly explain the way Quaker meetings for worship are conducted and how attenders may speak in memory of the memorialized individual. The clerk ends the memorial meeting when it is clear that no further words in memory will be offered. We will plan to have light refreshments after the service.

3. Treasurer's report:

The treasurer read the report of FMSA's financial activities from March 1st through the 31st. There was no unusual activity last month.

- The small increase of \$1,178.15 showing on the balance sheet represents a typical fluctuation in normal monthly operating income and expenditures.
- On the statement of activities, grounds expenses show as higher than usual because the increased rain this spring has nurtured all plantings robustly, but increases the frequency of lawn mowing. Other property-related expenses reflect minor repairs, the painting of the pergola, and the construction and installation of the new bench at the top of the serpentine walkway.

- We received a customer rebate of \$435.00 from our property insurance company.
- Our year-to-date net loss is almost completely accounted for by the \$6,500 contribution to RAICES (Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services). Almost all of the funds for this contribution were donated by individual Friends before the end of 2014, so this expenditure in 2015 was covered by donations rolled over from last year.
- At the close of the first quarter, the Meeting is essentially breaking even.
The treasurer's report was accepted.

4. Property Committee report:

The committee clerk reported on progress of seven activities.

- Update on planning for the Spice Fair to be held in our parking lot on May 16 (rain day, if needed, will be the following Saturday): Karen and Gretchen are the main organizers of this new spring event. They are making signs and flyers to be distributed wherever possible throughout the community. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) have been mailed to local neighborhood newspapers and radio stations, and a sale permit from the city will be obtained. Promotional materials identify this event as a way to "get to know your neighbors," and a wide range of goods will be offered including yard sale items, organic vegetable seedlings, home-grown fruits, baked goods, handcrafts, books, children's games and toys, and healing soaps and salves. Refreshments will also be available. Proceeds will be donated to humanitarian groups, with information on these groups available during the sale hours.
- Minor electrical repairs and exterior painting have been completed.
- The grounds look especially lovely as a result of the spring rains, and neighborhood residents have been enjoying and photographing our field of wildflowers near the street. Our yucca plants, however, present some danger from their sharp thorny parts. The committee has solved this problem by placing erasers or very visible ornaments on the sharp plant parts for safety.
- The committee has researched the feasibility of making the internet available on site. Because of our metal roof which limits the use of a "mifi" option, it would be necessary to install a hard-wired unit through our phone line, with cable lines running to rooms where wireless service could then be available. This service could be turned off except when actually being used. This kind of service would probably cost about \$50 a month as part of our phone bill. The committee questions whether our quiet and respectful atmosphere is simply contrary to the purpose of an internet system, and whether there will be enough occasions to warrant this expense. No decision was made on adding internet service, but the

committee now has the technical information to refer to, if and when Friends agree that they wish to make this service available.

- To further our Meeting's long-term goals of supporting our children's interest and spiritual development, Friends are asked to consider creating "prop boxes" with materials on a favorite topic or profession linked to Quaker teachings. This would be available to help Friends teach and facilitate learning. For example, a biologist might fill a box with tools of her trade such as a beginner's microscope and slides, collection jars, magnifying glasses, terrariums, etc. The committee has further details on how to set up and store such boxes for easy use by those volunteering to work with the children in First Day sessions. Friends expressed interest but no decision was made.
- The committee organized an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday, by creating and then hiding baskets with live plants in them. Many of the baskets found were taken to local extended-care facilities.
- The committee has checked on the availability of master keys that lock and unlock every door on our property. The committee keeps a list of Friends who have keys, as it is important that anyone expected to open and close the meetinghouse at the beginning and end of use have a key. Some door locks work better than others, and solving this problem is on the committee's "to-do" list. Anyone needing a key can simply ask the committee for one.

The report was accepted as read.

5. Outreach Committee report:

The committee clerk read the report, and also distributed a handout of background information on the International Association of Human Values (IAHV). The report included detailed information on two matters, both concerning use of our property by outside groups.

- Project Welcome Home Troops seeks to use the Meetinghouse on Sunday afternoons. It is a local part of the IAHV, which offers programs to reduce stress and develop relationships for human values to flourish. **Friends approved this application.**
- Two proposed changes to the Conditions of Use form.

First, there have been two misunderstandings that occurred with Celebration Circle, regarding the conditions of use of our property. Both involved the advertising for appearance of musical groups, for which donations were invited. This is a violation of our form's denial of income-producing programs. To solve this problem, the committee recommended a change in the wording of the Conditions of Use form, to read: "The Meeting does not provide space for commercial purposes, nor does it allow fees to be charged for, or profit to be made from events that are being held on FMSA property. If users of the property would like to publicly advertise non-profit events that they want to

hold at the Meetinghouse for their groups, the Meeting must be informed prior to the advertising so that it may evaluate the event for alignment with the Quaker principles of nonviolence, equality, respect for all people, and peaceful resolution of conflicts.”

This change to the Conditions of Use form was approved.

Second, a change was recommended to clarify exactly what we mean by “sponsorship” of a group by a Friend, since there are now several groups using the Meetinghouse on a regular basis which have been identified as “sponsored by” an individual Friend. In these cases, a Friend paid the deposit amount for the group. The question that has come up is: What is a Friend or active attender required to do in order for their sponsored group to be able to use the Meeting property without charge? After extensive discussion, the proposed change in wording was: “Events sponsored by Friends' organizations, or individual Friends or attenders actively involved may use the facilities without charge. Sponsors must participate fully in the events that they sponsor.” A Friend requested that we

further consider the meaning of the word “sponsor,” to be certain that it is consistent with Quaker practice.

Along with this query, Friends agreed to hold over for seasoning this recommended change in wording until a future business meeting.

The clerk expressed gratitude to this committee and the scheduler for the careful work accomplished in maintaining our Meeting's positive relationship with the outside groups that use our property.

6. Ministry & Oversight Committee report:

The committee has just met and does not have a written report. The convener of the committee reported that two letters have been received from Friends asking for approval of a change in their membership status. Heidi Pidcocke's Meeting in San Francisco, CA wrote to request our approval for her to be considered a sojourning Friend to our Meeting for a period of one year. Sharon Shen wrote to request that her FMSA membership be transferred to Berkeley Society of Friends in Berkeley, CA. **Both requests were approved, and the clerk of the Meeting will write a letter to each of these Friends' Meeting signifying our approval.**

With no further business, the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business ended with a period of silence.

Carol Balliet, clerk of the Meeting

Dianne Vinson, recording clerk (absent)