

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

July 19, 2015

Attenders: David Bristol, Ruth Lofgren, Ken Southwood, Janet Southwood, Marian Carter, Bill Wilkinson, Carol Balliet, Dianne Vinson, Val Liveoak, Gretchen Haynes, Suzanne Wright Crain.

The meeting opened in silence, and the clerk read the following quote:

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
---Hebrews 11:1, KJV

1. Minutes of June 14, 2015 business meeting

The recording clerk read the minutes. Minutes were approved as read.

2. Clerk's announcements

✠ There will be no Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in August, as is our custom.

✠ We will host Cielo Grande Quarterly Meeting over Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 through 6. The clerk passed around the preliminary schedule for that weekend. FMSA manages the small budget for CGQM expenses which should cover expenses, mainly food for on-site meals during the weekend. Friends will be called on to provide overnight hospitality when we know how many attenders will be staying over on Friday and/or Saturday nights. The manager of La Fiesta Apartment complex next door has agreed to let the attenders and children use the apartment's pool on Saturday afternoon for recreation time.

3. Treasurer's report

✠ The treasurer handed out copies of the report and spreadsheets, and read the report. He noted that the total amount shown under "investments" has not changed since the last meeting because he has not received the official update from the investment fund, but the interest income has been received. This will be updated when the fund's report is received. Earnings are routinely distributed in June and December with 50% reinvested in Friends Fiduciary Fund and 50% to FMSA.

✠ He explained that the previously discussed computer purchase (see June minutes) was taken out of the immigrant aid fund.

✠ He noted that the grounds maintenance line has exceeded the budget, but water and sewer expenses to date are below budget because there has been much more rain than usual. Since we are now in the hottest part of summer, he asked that the Property Committee consider having the grass cut less often.

The clerk expressed gratitude to the treasurer for his detailed management of our finances, and the **treasurer's report was accepted as read.**

The treasurer then expressed joy for the release of refugees from Dilley and Karnes City. Because of this development, new options for the use of the bond fund were suggested. While Friends moved into silence, the following Minute was crafted:

Minute 07-01-2015: *Friends Meeting of San Antonio authorizes its treasurer to disburse money from the RAICES Bond Fund account at his discretion based upon guidance received from the Meeting's working group on immigrant issues. These disbursements will be accounted for in accordance with the process in place for all Meeting finances.*

Friends confirmed that the customary Quaker philosophy guiding these transactions will be that these funds always be used for the highest and best purpose.

Friends were united in approving the Minute as read.

5. Proposed Minute on Retention of Women and Children

✠ Gretchen attended a workshop on immigration at this year's FGC national Gathering and also presented a 90-minute program on our Meeting's actions to bring justice to women and children held in detention in our area. She presented a Minute for consideration on this subject. After editing for accuracy, **the following Minute was approved:**

Minute 07-02-2015:

"The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt." Leviticus 19:34

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement department (ICE), part of Homeland Security, currently detains women and children from Central America seeking asylum in the United States. They are refugees, not criminals, yet they are met with harsh treatment, long detention, and lack of adequate legal representation. The situation at Karnes and

Dilley detention centers in south Texas are little better than prison conditions. Both locations are private, for-profit converted buildings with four bunks, eight people, in a room. For this, Karnes, operated by GEO, charges \$266 per person per day and Dilley, CCA, charges \$300.

In keeping with the Religious Society of Friends tradition of service to those in prison, Friends Meeting of San Antonio strongly urges ICE to close the profit-making facilities in Texas and Pennsylvania. ICE can use alternative measures to assure that persons seeking asylum will appear for their court hearings. We further strongly urge that adequate legal representation and language translators be readily available for the all refugees.

This Minute was prepared for the purpose of sending it to legislators and others responsible for decisions regarding this concern.

6. Long Range Planning Committee.

‡ The Nominating Committee met and finalized a description of the responsibilities of this new standing committee. **Friends approved the following committee description**, which will be added to the FMSA handbook for reference:

Long-range Planning Committee Purpose: *To consider future development of the Meetinghouse property, including all buildings and grounds.*

Functions: The committee will entertain visioning to help members get a clear idea of what we want and our priorities. It will take these projections to create concrete proposals. It will review requirements, enlist the advice of relevant professionals and interested volunteers in order to implement each proposal. Specific proposals recommended by the committee and approved by the Meeting will be undertaken by a Development Committee.

This committee will consist of a representative from Property, Finance, Ministry & Oversight, and Outreach committees, and other interested persons, with staggered terms of four years duration. Members may serve for subsequent terms.

- The Property Committee clerk expressed interest in having a forum to explore developing an outdoor play space for the children, that incorporates areas and equipment that encourage spiritual development. It was suggested that she meet with the Ministry & Oversight Committee to plan this forum

7. Property Committee report

‡ Copies of the report were distributed and read by the committee's clerk.

A Friend noted that she is often cold in the meetinghouse and suggested that air circulation vs. running the condenser might be more appropriate. It was explained that the a/c in the meetinghouse is 10 years old and may need replacement soon. It was suggested that an energy audit be arranged for our buildings. CPS-Energy could be called to arrange for this. **Friends accepted the Property Committee report as read.**

8. Peace & Social Concerns Committee report

The Committee co-clerk read the report from her phone. The Committee seeks suggestions for forum topics on issues of peace and social concerns. In August a forum will focus on The Week of Action to End Immigration Detention Quotas, sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). On the Sunday before the forum, information will be distributed on mobilizing Friends with suggested actions during the week of August 10. In September a forum is planned with Patricia Castillo of P.E.A.C.E. Initiatives, one of the local organizations that our Meeting contributes to. The Committee is working on holding a forum on climate change in October with Bill Sweet, and on the high degree of inequality in San Antonio in November, with Jim Spickard. **The report was accepted as read.**

The clerk of the Meeting asked the Committee co-clerk if she would send out an email to the whole Friends community about the opportunity to take the online course on white privilege, which will begin in August.

9. Our mail service.

The Friend who gathers the mail from our post office box each week suggested that we consider whether we wish to continue receiving mail at the Alamo Heights post office or to have all mail sent to the meetinghouse. Discussion was held on the pro's and con's of making this change. One concern is about the security of the street mailbox in front of our property, since we receive bills, contribution checks, and packages by mail. Our post office mailbox rent has been paid through May 2016, so it was suggested that we should begin changing our address on printed materials, our announcements in Quaker periodicals, web site, etc., soon so that this change is well known by the time we cancel our post office mailbox next spring. No action was taken on this matter at this time.

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

Carol Balliet, clerk of the Meeting

Dianne Vinson, recording clerk