

FRIENDS MEETING OF SAN ANTONIO

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

March 20, 2016

Attendees: Carol Balliet, Dianne Vinson, Marian Carter, Janet Southwood, Ken Southwood, Val Liveoak, Mimi Moore, Gretchen Haynes, Ruth Lofgren, Bill Sweet and Pat Sweet.

To benefit from oppression is to be responsible for changing it.

-- Jim Wallis, *America's Original Sin*

1. Minutes of Feb 21 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Minutes were read aloud by the recording clerk. Minutes were accepted as read.

2. Treasurer's report

The treasurer was absent but reports were handed out and read by the clerk. There were no unusual activities noted and the report was accepted as read.

3. Update on yesterday's work day, March 19

Marian reported that the work day was fun and Suzanne, although ill, did a great job of organizing the 35 workers. Other groups who use the Meetinghouse also worked and contributed to the joy. Also, Bill S did many jobs and Alice prepared lunch. The clerk requested that a collective thanks be recorded. Several issues were discussed briefly: when the trash would be picked up; Walmart was call to take back their shopping carts left in the parking lot; the new bulletin board was installed over the water fountain; Gretchen took photos and Val will help her upload them; and Mimi did some watercolors that she will share. The newly cleaned meetingroom windows, done last week by a professional service, were also noted.

4. Update on Second Annual Quaker Spring Fair on May 14

The desirability of offering a humane petting zoo/pony ride during the Fair was discussed. Suzanne is a friend of the zoo owner and can attest for the owner. Carol has looked into the insurance issues and found that both the Meeting and the zoo owner carry liability but she would like to see the animals in person. Suzanne has offered to pay for half the cost of the zoo.

The total is \$400.00 Friends agreed to pursue a contract for the petting zoo. Friends agreed that we should charge \$1.00 a ride and that a parent or guardian must accompany children with the animals. All proceeds will go toward the refugee fund. Friends agreed that a rainy-day clause must be included in the zoo contract. The alternate rain date for the Fair will be May 28. Gretchen will make the arrangements for the petting zoo.

The question was raised: Are we prepared to have children sign up for First Day School when they attend the Fair? A Friend suggested that we continue our outreach to families through the Fair but evaluate our resources for First Day classes before promoting them. Friends agreed that this should be investigated.

It was noted that James is handling press releases.

5. Update on mentoring new attenders

Discussion included who would mentor, what materials might be used, the formal setting up of mentors with mentees and who would be in charge. Gretchen said that the idea rose out of the concern that Nominating Committee had about no true Outreach Committee to cover all its responsibilities. Friends were united in supporting Gretchen's moving forward with mentoring considerations. Janet noted that informal mentoring has always been present and expressed a concern about the amount of work that will be involved. Val suggested we do the formal mentoring on a trial basis. It was agreed that the topic needs seasoning but should not be postponed indefinitely. Friends expressed gratitude to Gretchen for her work.

Mimi asked, How does one become a member? Bill stated that a letter should be written and addressed to the clerk. A Clearness Committee is then formed to meet with the prospective member, to help clarify the reasons for her-his intent to become a member. A Friend pointed out that membership is not clearly outlined on our web site. Val offered, if time permits, to write something about membership for the web site before our April 10 business meeting.

6. Update on First Day School planning for next Fall

Carol reported that she had met with Alice and Kristal to begin to assess how to reinvigorate our First Day School. She noted that both Alice and Kristal have experience working with children in First Day-type settings. Suzanne

has experience in designing creative play areas. In addition, FGC now has many detailed plans and printable materials for local Meetings of all sizes to use for their own First Day programs. The group identified three main questions that need to be dealt with in planning for strengthening our First Day School: 1) What is taught to the different age levels of kids? 2) Who does the teaching? 3) How is all this scheduled? The group also realized that we will probably have to hire a second child-minder, and everyone working with kids will need a criminal background check, as parents are insisting on that nowadays. We will need to develop a group of reliable volunteers, and should have a training session for volunteers to help them feel comfortable with what they will be doing with the kids on a given Sunday. Examples of activities that might be included are crafts, service projects, and trips to the DoSeum. We might have a once-a-month meeting for worship that includes children for the whole hour, perhaps with a table set up in the meetingroom for quiet crafts. Olympia, WA Friends Meeting does this. We should also have photos of children and relevant information on our web site about what our First Day School is about. Austin Meeting's web site is an excellent example for us to learn from. It was agreed that we will probably not be ready to launch all of these ideas by this coming September, so we would have to begin these plans incrementally over the next 12 months at least. Janet shared her happy memories of her personal experiences as a child in a Quaker meeting, with the loving kindness of adult Friends toward her. Ken reminded us that education of children is everyone's responsibility. Gretchen stated that the mentoring might include children and we could fashion a "secret friend" activity. It was agreed that perhaps the richest experience our children could have is a close friendship with an adult Friend who is part of the Meeting.

7. Consideration of guns and signs

The clerk presented information on other Texas Friends Meetings' responses to the state's new open-carry law and what the law seems to require of groups that refuse to permit guns on their property. The clerk also reported on the decision made by the congregation of a large local Presbyterian congregation. For more detailed information, links to relevant web sites were included on the agenda handout. The clerk suggested that we might facilitate a "teachable moment" by gentle language on a specific sign and a visitors' handout, that would be in keeping with our Quaker philosophy and way of communicating. After much discussion, the following was approved as a handout to newcomers and as poster on the bulletin board:

WE AT FRIENDS MEETING ARE VERY GLAD YOU HAVE COME TO
BE WITH US TODAY. WE ASK THAT EVERYONE COMING INTO
OUR COMMUNITY'S SPACE RESPECT OUR COMMITMENT TO
NONVIOLENCE BY NOT BRINGING A WEAPON HERE. JOIN US AS
WE HELP EACH OTHER LEARN HOW TO LIVE TOGETHER IN
PEACE AND HARMONY WITHOUT VIOLENCE. NO GUNS,
PLEASE.

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
clerk

Dianne Vinson, recording