

**Minutes**  
**FMSA Meeting for Business**  
**April 16<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**Attending:**

- In Person: Bill Wilkinson, Rachael Cundey, Pat Sweet, Bill Sweet, Julie Crum, Carol Redfield, Kara McGinnis, Val Liveoak, Hector Cruz, Pam Spurgeon, Jim Spickard, Denise Wilkinson, David Novogrodsky, Gretchen Haynes
- On Zoom: Lee Gugerty, Kirstin Munro

**The meeting opened with silent worship.**

**Prior Minutes**

Friends approved the Minutes from the Mar 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting for Business without corrections.

Friends approved the Minutes from the Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> Called Business Meeting to approve HVAC replacement with corrections.

**Treasurer's Report:** *reported by Bill Sweet*

**Balance Sheet**

- ✓ The investments held by Friends Fiduciary Corp. increased in value in the first quarter of 2023. The Growth & Income Fund increased \$26,099.67 and the Short-Term Investment Fund increased \$661.67.
- ✓ The value of Buildings & Land increased by the \$600 initial payment (first of two) for the Memorial Garden wall.
- ✓ There is no other unusual activity to report.

**Statement of Activities**

- ✓ Undesignated contributions in March totaled \$1022.03. Contributions to date are 14.3% of the 2023 budgeted general contributions at 25% of the year.
- ✓ Income for Facilities Use is \$955, 34.2% of budget at 25% of the year.
- ✓ \$100 of the \$500 received for Facilities Use (wedding to outside users) was for cleaning services. The usual practice is for that to be paid directly but for this event, the cleaning service was paid by the FMSA representative present for opening and locking the facilities. The representative was repaid. To account for that, a line was added: 62819 Event Cleaning Services. Because this should not be included in the annual total cleaning expenses, line 62810, the annual total for Event Cleaning Services is subtracted from the Facilities Use annual income.

- ✓ The CPS bill In March is \$68.70 (\$147.39 last month) for 1.201 MWh (2.606 MWh last month) of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave us a credit of \$128.77 (\$132.51 last month). After charges for additional services, the bill totaled \$68.70 (\$275.28 last month).
  - Expenditure for electricity is 26.0% of the annual budget at 25% of the year.
  - From the initial connection through March, payment for solar-generated electricity totals \$6,627.07, which averages to \$174.40 per month compared to the amortized capital cost of the panels of \$131.40 per month.
- ✓ The February bill for San Antonio Water System was received in March: \$119.91. The bill for March was also received in March and was also \$119.91.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine.

**DISCUSSION:** Friends accepted the Treasurer’s report.

**Finance Committee Report:** *reported by Pat Sweet*

There are 2 items to report with no minutes required.

- At the Called Meeting for Business on April 2, The Finance Committee was charged with deciding which Fund to take the cost of the HVAC repairs and replacement from. After discussion with the Treasurer we have decided that it will come from the Sinking Fund.
- The Trustees had selected Joni Mize and Val Liveoak as auditors. They met on April 27, 2023 to review the Meeting's accounts for 2022. They had some procedural questions but when those were answered, the report was signed and a hardcopy has been filed in the Trustees's files and with the Treasurer and filed virtually in the Cloud.

**DISCUSSION: Correction:** The auditors met on March 27<sup>th</sup> rather than April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Friends accepted the committee’s corrected report.

**M, C, & G Report:** *reported by Julie Crum*

Val Liveoak, Gretchen Haynes, and Julie Crum met on Monday, April 2, 2023.

Review of worship: We are encouraged that attendance has reached pre-pandemic levels at times over the last few weeks. Vocal ministry is still relatively rare.

Upcoming forums:

- April 9: Fellowship, no formal forum
- April 23: Exploring Margaret Fell “but what canst thou say?” in person & on Zoom, with Gary W.
- May 14: TBD, possibly on parenting (Mother’s Day)
- May 28: Exploring foundational texts with Gary W.
- June 11: To be announced

- June 25: Exploring foundational texts with Gary W.

In the interests of deepening connections between friends and meeting, we plan to invite questions about Quakerism at an upcoming forum.

April 22, 2023 (Saturday): Towne Twin Village is a tiny homes (and other small housing) project that Catholic Worker House is collaborating to build with a program called Housing First. Friends have a tour of Towne Twin Village scheduled for April 22 at 10am. It's a 1-hour visit. There's room for around 15 people. Interested friends should email or text Val (210 287 9723 or [valliveoak@gmail.com](mailto:valliveoak@gmail.com)) to register. For those unable to attend, a later tour can be arranged. We hope to have a group of at least ten.

We discussed concerns regarding friends. We propose this minute in response to Marian Carter's situation:

**Ministry and Care requests that Friends Meeting of San Antonio authorize the Treasurer to send \$5,000 from the assistance fund to Marion Carter's bank account to fund impending expenses.**

Due to the absences of several of us, we won't meet in May unless something comes up.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 6 at noon.

**DISCUSSION: Correction:** The April 23<sup>rd</sup> forum has been rescheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup>.

A Friend wanted to share that Marian Carter has contributed much to the meeting over the years.

**MINUTE 2023.04.02: Friends Meeting of San Antonio authorizes the Treasurer to send \$5,000 from the relief fund to Marian Carter's bank account to fund impending expenses.**

Friends approved the minute.

A Friend noted that meetings have a tradition of supporting their members.

A Friend suggested a forum on Quaker questions for April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Another Friend was concerned that this would be a Sunday without childcare, and most of our new attenders have children. There could be a possibility of special arrangements for an extra Sunday of childcare.

There is no business meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in August, so this could be a good time for this type of forum. Changing the date of business meeting would need to be done months in advance for the current Recording Clerk to attend.

Any changes could be communicated in the email announcements.

The Clerk sent this matter back to the M&C committee.

Friends accepted the committee's corrected report.

**Property Committee Report:** *informal oral report by Bill Sweet*

1. Meetinghouse HVAC replaced Friday-Saturday
  - a. The thermostat is missing a function of the new system. It will be replaced next weekend or following. The temperature is regulated—this is another function. Invoice paid.
2. The Phase I HVAC received spring service. The system was down 5 pounds of refrigerant. Leak detection failed to find a leak. This system will be checked next weekend or following. Invoice to come. It will be significant as freon is \$85/lb.
3. Thanks to all who came to workday yesterday.
4. Tree Wise Men, arborists, completed tree trimming with an emphasis on safety.

**DISCUSSION:** It is unclear whether there was a leak that has since been repaired or one or more individuals has stolen the refrigerant. A lock will be placed on the system when the thermostat is replaced.

We need more property committee members.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

**Ad Hoc Tasks Committee Report:** *presented by Denise Wilkinson*

The ad hoc committee to develop a structure for tasks unrelated to specific FMSA committees met twice since the March business meeting. We sorted these tasks into the following general categories.

**Sunday tasks** - such as opening and closing meeting, bringing snacks, setting up for potluck, running Zoom, etc. There is now a sign-up list for these tasks. Written procedures for opening and closing meeting have been developed.

**Supplies** - We need 1-2 ongoing volunteers to check and renew kitchen, cleaning, and bathroom supplies. Ideally we see this as a multi-month commitment, since it involves a more detailed procedure. A written procedure is being developed. These individuals would consult with our cleaning person regarding cleaning and bathroom supplies.

**Communications** - This involves things like the website, meeting calendar, newsletter, weekly announcements, phone messages, Facebook page and messages, etc. Denise Wilkinson has volunteered to serve as communications coordinator and work with Friends already doing some of these tasks. Denise will start working with Jim in May to learn the aspects that he has been handling. Starting in May, please forward communications about upcoming events or other newsworthy items to Denise, with a copy to anyone else with a need to know (clerks, etc.).

**Tech tasks** - maintain the Meetingroom tech, manage the Zoom account, maintain the website back-end, handle Meet tech questions and issues, prepare tech documentation. We see the need for a tech manager to make sure these tasks are handled. Jim Spickard has been handling these and is willing to continue to do this for the time being, but it would be wise to be looking for another person to work with him on these tasks.

**Miscellaneous tasks** - Friday morning Zoom meeting for Worship, COVID data weekly, interface with outside groups, phone directory. These are currently functioning well with the Friends who are currently handling them, but we include them as non-committee tasks so that they are not overlooked.

It takes a village!

**DISCUSSION:** Tech tasks include occasional responsibilities such as dealing with back-end email and website changes.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

**Other Business:**

- **Summary of March 26<sup>th</sup> discussion of FCNL Reproductive Health Policy** *presented by Jim Spickard*

*(summary is attached to these minutes)*

**DISCUSSION:** Jim felt led to go further in our communications with FCNL and proposed the following statement as a response to the query on what the reproductive health policy should say:

Friends Meeting of San Antonio seeks a world in which all people who can give birth receive affordable and comprehensive reproductive care, including sex education, contraception, pregnancy care, postpartum and well-baby care, family support during and after pregnancy, and access to safe and legal abortion.

One Friend felt internal conflict between the values of autonomy and the sanctity of all life and hoped this comprehensive vision for care might make abortion less common.

Another Friend stressed the importance of boldly sharing our beliefs and recognizing both gun violence's threat to the sanctity of life and the urgency of reproductive healthcare policy following the fall of *Roe v Wade*.

Some Friends had concerns that the statement could more directly address the need for care to be easily accessible, the need of care for minors, and the importance of support for people making these reproductive decisions to understand their options. There was also a request to separate postpartum care and well-baby care in the list.

Friends appreciated that the statement leaves room for individuals to discern their own values for personal decisions.

When Friends were asked if they were comfortable sending this statement with minor corrections to FCNL, Bill Sweet expressed willingness to stand aside.

Friends felt rushed by the short timeframe for feedback to FCNL and concerned that any issues with the statement could not be fully discussed today. There was frustration that

FCNL has held no position on abortion for decades and in its current haste is straining our Quaker process of discernment.

Bill Wilkinson will work on the wording of the statement to incorporate today's feedback, and there will be a Called Meeting for Business next week to further discuss the statement specifically.

A note on standing aside: Friends who stand aside agree that the Meeting may go forward without their agreement. Friends who object and do not wish to stand aside may stand in the way if the Meeting allows it. However, the Meeting may choose to move forward anyway after considering the objection.

**Meeting Announcements:**

- Friends were reminded that Nominating Committee runs on a unique schedule where the Naming Committee appoints members in May. Anyone interested in serving on this committee is encouraged to approach a member of the Naming Committee (Clerk of the meeting, Clerk of Finance, or Clerk of M&C).

**The Meeting closed with silent worship.**

**Friends Meeting of San Antonio**  
**Summary of Our Discussion about Quaker Reproductive Health Policy**

*March 25, 2023*

Fourteen Friends gathered during our after-Meeting forum time to respond to FCNL’s request for guidance about a Quaker policy on reproductive health. Most were in the Meeting Room; a few participated by Zoom. The conversation was attentive and deep. Friends appreciated FCNL’s invitation to share stories from our lives that might illuminate the values, experiences, and issues that should affect a reproductive health policy, and many present did so. Friends used these stories and this time of reflective speaking and listening to focus on the issues underlying the four queries attached to FCNL’s January 30<sup>th</sup> letter.

1. In this discussion, a rough consensus emerged to answer the first query that FCNL posed: “What does reproductive health care look like in the world that you and your community seek?” In that world, all women (and others who can give birth) would have access to comprehensive and affordable health care, family support, and the resources to raise a child safely. They would have as much control over their own bodies before, during, and after pregnancy as do people incapable of giving birth. They would not have to sacrifice themselves on the altar of someone else’s religious vision. And they would be treated with compassion and support during whatever hard decisions they and their medical providers have to make.
2. As can be seen from the comments below, there was a bit of push-back at FCNL’s second query: “How are the Quaker values and testimonies relevant to the issue of abortion?” The issue of reproductive health policy cannot be limited to abortion, and doing so will not lead us out of our present impasse. A reproductive health policy requires at least: comprehensive support for all reproductive choices, including contraception; affordable access to health care before, during, and after pregnancy; and a society-wide family support policy that enables families to raise children safely. Were those all present, many of the Friends present believe that the issue of abortion would be easier to resolve.
3. The consensus answer to the third query, “Should the FCNL Policy Statement be revised on the issues of abortion and reproductive health and abortion?”\*, was ‘Yes’.
4. Friends did not answer the fourth query, “If so, what should the Policy Statement say?” Part of this was time, part was our assumption that sincere Friends from other traditions have

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\* We are not sure why this query uses the word “abortion” twice. The query implies that “abortion” and “reproductive health and abortion” are separate issues. We think they are not; see the previous paragraph and the comments below.

other views and issues to raise, and part was our suspicion that such Friends may not have had a chance to hear voices like ours and understand the issues that we raised in the comments below. Those comments are worth the attentive listening we gave them.

### **Comments**

- One Friend spoke of a horrific presentation in his natal Pentecostal church, and how this (as an adult) repels him and violates his value of compassion.
- One Friend spoke of her attitude toward factory farming, which turns animals into tools. “Don’t do this to women”, she said.
- Another Friend was actively involved in women’s health during her nursing career. In terms of public policy, “abortion should be safe, legal, and rare.” She would love to see a world in which all pregnancies resulted in a loved child.
- A Friend pointed out that the issue is much larger than abortion; it involves care for women and treating them with honor. No God would favor any other treatment.
- Another Friend said there were lots of Quakers who oppose legal and safe abortions.
- A Friend said that any policy on reproductive rights must include adequate contraception for all. And it must respect the participants’ religious autonomy.
- A Friend asked, “How do we treat human beings who are pregnant? With dignity and respect? Or with punishment (including poverty, lack of access to medical care, etc.?)” The job of the government is to take care of the people. We thus need readily available contraception, education, support, medical care, and abortion when needed.
- Another Friend said that limiting access to education, birth control, and reproductive health services is unacceptable violence to people by the stress it puts on their lives. The government should not be limiting people’s access to such things, especially on behalf of those who wish to impose their religious views on others.
- A Friend pointed out that the current situation, when women may have to travel several hundred miles to get an abortion or even good reproductive healthcare, falls most harshly on the poor. Undocumented people cannot travel to another state to get care.
- That same Friend noted that even the Catholic Church has not always banned abortion. Another Friend added that the Catholic Church traditionally did not treat fetuses as having souls until the time of ‘quickening’ – i.e., mid-2nd trimester. American evangelicals did not oppose abortion until the late-1970s, the Southern Baptist Church (for example) advocating for the availability of medically necessary abortions until 1980. Nor did they oppose birth



control. The Friend stated that current evangelical denominations policies are part of the capture of the evangelical churches by the Religious Right.

- A Friend spoke about his wife's miscarriage at 3-1/2 months, which required a D&C to save her life. "Had we been living in a state like Idaho that forbade therapeutic abortions, she would have died. That is unconscionable."
- A Friend raised the issue of how anti-abortion activists justify their ethical stance. He pointed out that philosophers and theologians recognize three separate grounds for ethical decision-making. One is 'rule-based ethics', where decisions are made according to a set of (supposedly) universal principles. This is the kind of ethical decision-making used by anti-abortion activists, for example by saying that abortion violates the fetus's right to life. 'Outcomes ethics' do a bit better, as they consider the outcome of a particular policy, weighing its affect on all parties. This was the Catholic position throughout the 19th-century, which is why that church did not ban abortions (though it did discourage them). The third type is 'relational ethics' (also known as 'responsibility ethics'), which asks what duties our relationships call us to fulfill. This Friend noted that it is impossible to justify banning abortion on 'outcomes' or 'relational' grounds. Even rule-based ethics fail because banning abortions treats women as baby-vessels, making them less than human. The Friend said that we need to be aware of the ethical grounds on which we (and all sides in this controversy) base our reasoning.
- A Friend argued that the individuals who are the most impacted should have the most say in any decisions.
- Another Friend said that the issue is much larger than abortion. She listed issues of honoring women, of access to contraception, of access to adoption options, and of access to abortion. All these go together.
- A Friend noted that it's really important to recognize that 'both sides' have a lot to say. It is important to think about "the incipient wonderful human life". How do we honor both the incipient life-to-be and the mother's life-that-is? This Friend said that abortion should be "safe, legal, and rare". The issue is how to bring that about.
- Another Friend pushed back at the "safe, legal, and rare" phrase, which she said neglects the real lives of the people in the community where she works. They have few options, and there is little chance that any resolution to the abortion debate will give them the options that would make abortion rare.

**Bits and Pieces**

- Any policy that puts limits on women will affect others, including their other children.
- It is violence against women to take away their decisions over their own bodies. And criminalizing their choices is direct violence as well.
- Miscarriages often enter medical records as “therapeutic abortions”. What would happen if the state could search such records and punish the woman for it?
- What would the future of an unwanted child be? Are those opposing abortion willing to support the child so that it can thrive?
- What is the ripple effect of having a child? What is the ripple effect of forcing a woman to have a child?
- If you don’t like having an abortion, don’t!
- If we keep talking about violence, where will things go?
- Issue of who controls women, including the men who might force things on them?
- Even the rape exception is deeply invasive and emotional violating. We know that from studies of what women go through when they report a rape – and how they are treated in doing so.
- We need comprehensive sex education.