

Minutes
FMSA Meeting for Business
November 19, 2023

Attending:

- In Person: Bill Wilkinson, Rachael Cundey, Pat Sweet, Kara McGinnis, Carol Redfield, Val Liveoak, Stephen Shearer, Pam Spurgeon, Carmen Merrill, George Feden, Denise Wilkinson, Gretchen Haynes, Jim Spickard
- On Zoom: Lee Gugerty

The meeting opened with silent worship.

Clerk's Announcements:

The annual meeting of the Trustees will be held on January 21, 2024 following Meeting for Business.

Prior Minutes

The minutes of the October 15, 2023 Meeting for Business were approved without corrections.

Treasurer's Report: *reported by Pat Sweet*

Balance Sheet

- ✓ There is no unusual activity to report.

Statement of Activities

- ✓ Undesignated contributions in September totaled \$4379.26. Contributions to date are 66.1% of the 2023 budgeted general contributions at 83% of the year.
- ✓ Unexpended funds of \$599.94 were returned to the Relief Fund.
- ✓ Income for Facilities Use is \$172.00, 76.6% of budget at 83% of the year.
- ✓ The CPS bill In September is \$209.28 (\$344.99 last month) for 1.587 MWh (2.595 MWh last month) of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave us a credit of \$218.80 (\$253.12 last month). After charges for additional services, the bill totaled \$44.76 (\$142.15 last month).
- ✓ Expenditure for electricity is 61.1% of the annual budget at 83% of the year.
- ✓ From the initial connection through September, payment for solar-generated electricity totals \$7998.94, which averages to \$177.75 per month compared to the amortized capital cost of the panels of \$131.40 per month.
- ✓ San Antonio Water System charge in October was \$164.57, which is higher than typical but reasonable given the amount of drought-induced watering of the landscape.
- ✓ Coffee was the refreshment expense.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine.

DISCUSSION: A Friend pointed out a typo in the first Statement of Activities bullet point that the undesignated contributions refer to October, not September.

A Friend asked if we are concerned that contributions are lagging this year. We did receive a couple of typical December gifts earlier in the year, so we cannot expect as high of a December total this year.

A Friend asked about online options for giving to the Meeting. Friends were reminded that options include Zelle at treasurer@saquakers.org. Bill Sweet has the routing number for the bank for autopay options. There is also a box for checks, or checks can be handed directly to Bill Sweet. SCYM is in the process of setting up an online option for donating, and we will consider whether that system could work for us as well.

Friends accepted the Treasurer's report with the correction from September to October.

Finance Committee: *reported by Pat Sweet*

The Committee met by Zoom on 11/9 from 3-4 PM. Present were Bill Wilkinson, Carol Redfield, Joe Redfield, Pat Sweet and ex officio member Bill Sweet, Treasurer.

We first reviewed the phone/Internet situation because of a substantial increase in monthly charges. We decided to switch to a less expensive VoIP phone line Jim discovered and switch the Internet provider from Spectrum to Astound. This will reduce the internet costs by \$30-40/month.

Second: 2024 Budget

In response to our current financial situation as shown in the October and earlier reports, we have decided that that budget for 2024 will require that we take the full amount of the semiannual distributions from our Friends Fiduciary investments as a revenue source for our operating budget. Previously only half of this amount has been taken and the other half has been re-invested. Details will be decided and presented in the 2024 budget in December.

Third: Beyond 2024

Recognizing the trend in the past several years of decreasing undesignated contributions, the Finance Committee plans to present a series of forums on planning our financial future beyond 2024 and supported by traditional Quaker notions of financial responsibility.

DISCUSSION: Our Spectrum plan was originally \$88/month and eventually rose to \$128/month for mediocre service. As far as we know we have never made an outgoing call from the meeting, but Jim receives a text when we receive a call, which is generally spam. In the past month, however, we have had four important messages left for us which confirmed the importance of having a phone line.

The Astound plan will be around \$70/month. Astound does not have the same phone service, but VoIPly is willing to treat us as a private household rather than a small business for a much-reduced rate of \$8 with the same phone number. Jim will be initiating these changeover processes soon.

For the budget plan, we will not be taking principal out of Friends Fiduciary Fund, just the entire distribution as a stopgap measure as we discuss in 2024 our financial plan for 2025.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

Ministry & Care Committee: *reported by Val Liveoak*

Ministry and Care met on November 8, 2023; Gretchen Haynes, Val Liveoak, and Julie Crum attended.

Review of worship

- We intend to start the new year with renewed efforts to welcome visitors and newcomers, including regular invitations at the rise of meeting to talk to committee members with questions about Quakers and our meeting.

Forums

- Quaker Basics has two more chapters, Meeting for Business on November 12 and Wider Quaker World on December 10 (this is a change).
- Additional forums are planned in the new year on the subjects of membership, being an effective LGBTQ ally, and the annual State of the Meeting report preparation.

Christmas

- Religious Education is tentatively planning a brief Christmas play, to be presented between the rise of meeting and Meeting for Business in December.
- Christmas Eve will be as usual: Set up at 5:30, worship at 6 followed by a simple meal.

Immigrant aid

- We received a request for help funding bus passes for immigrants in San Antonio. We approved this minute:

Ministry and Care approves sending \$2,600 from the Immigrant Aid Fund to the Interfaith Welcome Center for the purchase of bus passes for 2,000 immigrants.

Dream Week

- We plan to offer a potluck followed by Worship Sharing centered on anti-racism on Wednesday, January 17, at the time of our monthly Wednesday evening soup and worship.

2024 budget

- We discussed the 2024 budget and plan to submit our request to the November Meeting for Business.
- We discussed the needs of individual friends.

Israel/Palestine

- This committee is in agreement with the minute to be offered by the Peace and Justice committee of South Central Yearly Meeting, which has requested that meetings write minutes in solidarity with conscientious objectors and non-combatants in wars around the world.
- We intend to offer our minute at December's Meeting for Business.

Proposed next meeting is Wednesday, December 6.

DISCUSSION: We only have \$521.31 as of Oct 31st in the Immigrant Aid Fund. The Relief Fund has almost \$7,200 and would be another potential source of funds. The minute was edited to reflect this. The

amount of money requested is the Coalition's monthly expense for bus passes which they requested we cover for one month.

MINUTE 2023.11.01 FMSA approves sending \$2,600 from the Relief Fund to the Interfaith Welcome Coalition for the purchase of bus passes for 2,000 immigrants.

Friends approved the minute.

***ADDENDUM FROM THE TREASURER (who was away on FCNL business this weekend):
[edited by the co-clerk for clarity]***

The Immigrant Aid Fund did, in fact, have enough money in it to pay the amount listed in this minute. In September, Meeting directed that we park unused monies in the Frost Bank savings account where they might earn interest. This left the \$521.31 on the IAF line item in the checking account. Interpreting the Meeting's original intent, the requested amount was transferred from the saving account back into the Immigrant Aid fund and expended from that account.

As a reminder, the Relief Fund is primarily intended for short-term support of individuals or families within the broadly-defined Friends Meeting of San Antonio "family", whereas the Immigrant Aid Fund is for support of the class "immigrants", or in unusual cases, a single immigrant or immigrant family.

MINUTE 2023.11.02 Friends Meeting of San Antonio stands in solidarity and support with persons around the world who are Conscientious Objectors to wars and political violence. We ask Friends and others committed to peace in the world to join in our long-standing opposition to war.

We call upon the leaders of all belligerent groups to:

- 1. negotiate a ceasefire in all current hostilities,**
- 2. follow all Geneva Conventions preventing the killing of civilians, and**
- 3. allow only humanitarian assistance in any aid packages.**

A Friend asked how are we making/publicizing this call. Bill Wilkinson will be sending letters with this message to elected officials in his role at SCYM. Bill will provide the text to Jim, who will send letters from FMSA to the relevant officials. We may also pass the message on to local faith groups. Jim will post a link to the front page of the website if he is provided with the text.

Friends approved the minute.

A Friend asked if Religious Education is supposed to be planning forums. Another Friend responded that M&C would be happy to see forums planned by Religious Education in the new year.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

Property Committee Report: *reported by Jim Spickard*

During the past month, we:

- Held a successful workday, followed by an 'eclipse party' in our parking lot. Great fun.
- Replaced the handle on the 'Von Keairns Memorial Furnace Closet' so that it can be turned from the inside.
- Discouraged our overnight 'visitors' by:
 - Speaking to those we find sleeping on the property, asking them not to do so.
 - Installing the signs that we reported ordering last week. Two of them were destroyed the first night they were up. The other two have survived so far.
 - Installing two motion-activated cameras, one in the window of the Community Room that can view the porch and the other in the upper corner of the Meeting Room that can view the back deck during the day.
 - Removing the hose and faucet handle from the informal 'showering and laundry station' on the northeast corner of the Community Room. We decided that this was an attractive nuisance, and our doing so has seemed to reduce our visitor numbers.
 - We also authorized the police to come onto the property if we call them without one of us having to be present. We have not yet settled on a policy of when we might make such a call, except if we see violence or partying via our cameras.
- Reset the timer on the porch sconces to provide light to our evening renters.

Meetings:

The Property Committee met twice on Sunday, November 5th: once (briefly) at the Meetinghouse and that night by Zoom. Julia Hitz, Jim Spickard, Pam Spurgeon, and Bill Sweet were present at both meetings; Von Keairns joined us for the Zoom meeting.

- Our noon meeting was to decide stains and sealings for the Meetinghouse gate. Kara and her father have volunteered to refinish the gate, and Kara wished to check with us about the recommended stains and sealants. We chose something grayer than the current too-red stain. We very much appreciate Kara and her father's offer to do this project.
- We also spoke briefly about the situation that Jim found on the porch that morning, with ashes and pee near the left bench and pee near the ramp and along the front edge of the porch. He also found a shopping cart at the top of the ramp and food waste dumped over the railing. He cleaned this up, then washed and swept the porch, as Bill had had to do before our renters came the previous week. We also had to do this before Marian's

memorial. D_____ was clearly the source of this problem, though he did not admit it when asked.

Jim then spoke with D_____ to get information for our evening Zoom meeting.

- At that Zoom meeting:
 - Jim shared what he learned about D_____, health issues. We noted that he had been the only person visible on camera for the previous few nights. This does not mean that we had no visitors staying in other places, but they seem rarer. (Porch traffic the next morning indicates that someone was sleeping outside the range of the camera; D_____ was not present that night.) Pam agreed to explore local health assistance.
 - We talked about adding or moving cameras:
 - We could move the camera that scans the back deck to the outside, where it can better pick up overnight visitors. We would need to hire an electrician to install an outlet.
 - We could repair the existing motion detector that (supposedly) controls the lights. Pam and Von will try to find the circuit, with an eye to replacing the lights if they are burned out.
 - We could add a third camera in the northwest-most window of the Meetinghouse to scan the area by the Memorial Garden
 - We could potentially add cameras to scan the other parts of the porch that are not visible from the Community Room.
 - Jim and Bill reported issues with our phone/internet service. These are not technical issues; they are financial. We support changing providers and possibly dropping our phone service, as most of the (robo)calls we receive are SEO spammers seeking to raise our Google rankings. We could perhaps substitute an internet number for incoming calls, as that is all we need.
 - Beyond our usual 'Meeting for Weeding' tasks we will be working on the path lighting at the Nov 18th workday and will also be restoring order to the tool closet.
 - We are working on updating our wiring diagram.
 - We know we need to fix two of the porch fans.

DISCUSSION: Another sign was destroyed, so we now have one left. The water handle has been replaced along with a locking cap preventing water usage. The committee has yet to work on the path lighting due to other urgent concerns.

A potential renter decided against renting from us due to individuals sleeping on the porch. The committee welcomes any guidance from Friends.

A Friend asked whether Property Committee should be solely/primarily responsible for the issue of unhoused people on the property as it raises many practical and ethical issues. The committee has a range of views on where lines should be drawn. Our insurance does not allow overnight stays. Jim has told the responding police officer as well as D_____ that no one is authorized to stay overnight. City policy is essentially to tell people to move along.

We could try more direct signs made of tougher materials such as metal. We could theoretically hire a security patrol to visit throughout the night for \$500/month.

D_____ is aware of Catholic Worker and has used their services before.

Many years ago, when vandalism was occurring on the property, Friends were against having any police officers on the property as they are armed.

Property would appreciate M&C's advice on living our Quaker values in this matter.

Friends can contact Jim if they would like to receive motion camera notifications.

A Friend noted that some bushes block the view of meetinghouse sign when coming up Eisenhower Road.

Friends accepted the committee's report with gratitude.

Religious Education Committee: *no report this month*

Nominating Committee: *reported by Stephen Shearer*

Val, Denise, Julie and Stephen meet via Zoom to discuss nominating on November 6. We are offering for 2nd reading in red and first reading in blue.

Trustee [1 year]

Clerk Pat Sweet 2024

Clerk Carol Redfield 2024

Member Carol Redfield 2024

Secretary Pat Sweet 2024

Member Bill Wilkinson 2024

Treasurer Bill Sweet 2024

Ex-officio Treasurer

Member Bill Wilkinson 2024

Nominating Committee [3 years]

Monthly Meeting [2 year]

Member Julie Crum 2026

Clerk Val Liveoak 2025

Member Stephen Shearer 2026

Rec. Clerk Rachael Cundey 2024

Member Val Liveoak 2026

Treasurer Bill Sweet 2024

Member Denise Wilkinson 2026

Recorder Jim Spickard 2024

Finance Committee [2 years]

SCYM [2 years]

Member Val Liveoak 2024

Member Bill Sweet 2024

FCNL [2 years]

Member Julia Hitz 2024

Property Committee [2 years]

Clerk Jim Spickard 2025

Member Julia Hitz 2025

Member Von Keairns 2024

Resource Pam Spurgeon 2024

Ministry, Care and Guidance Committee [3 years]

Clerk Julie Crum 2024

Member Gretchen Haynes 2024

Member Val Liveoak 2024

Member Stephen Shearer 2024

Member James Goslin 2025

Religious Education [2 years]

Clerk Gary Whiting 2024

Member Gretchen Haynes 2024

Member Roberta Russell 2025

Member [Dale Keairns](#) 2025

DISCUSSION: A Friend noted we keep returning to the same people for work-intensive roles.

M&C is planning to start inviting people to consider membership in the new year.

If Val is approved as clerk, she will drop from M&C and Nominating Committees. M&C is already down a person since Joni moved, although the Clerk sits on all committees ex officio.

We read names twice, allowing Friends to address any concerns with Nominating Committee.

The names in blue will be up for approval at our next business meeting.

The Meeting closed with silent worship.