

Minutes
FMSA Meeting for Business
Nov 17th 2024

Attending:

- In Person: Pat Sweet, Lisa Craig, Julie Crum, Stephen Shearer, Carol Redfield, Gretchen Haynes, Roberta Russell, Denise Wilkinson, Bill Wilkinson, Val Liveoak, Rachael Cundey

The meeting opened with silent worship.

Clerk's Comments: I attended the global Friends Peace Teams meeting last week, and after 18-20 hours on Zoom I may be a little more frazzled than usual. Secondly, Representative Meeting of SCYM is Friday and Saturday this week. No registration is required, and there will be a Zoom link on scym.org. It is useful to get to know Friends from other meetings and observe how they do things. Other Friends within SCYM are as warm and welcoming as we aspire to be.

PRIOR MINUTES

Friends approved the Minutes from the Oct 20th Meeting for Business without corrections.

TREASURER'S REPORT: *reported by Pat Sweet*

Balance Sheet *(attached at the end of these minutes)*

- ✓ \$20,000.00 from Operating Cash, \$10,000.00 from Immigrant Aid and \$5,000 from Relief Fund, a total of \$35,000.00, remains "parked" in the savings account. Because of this "loan", the balance sheet shows a deficit (in parentheses) in Immigrant Aid: the available balance is \$6,156.31 (\$10,000 minus \$3,843.69).
- ✓ There are no other items of note.

Statement of Activities *(attached at the end of these minutes)*

- ✓ Undesignated contributions of \$1854.04 in October brought the year-to-date total to \$17,857.23, being 57.1% of the annual budget through 83.3% of the year.
- ✓ Income for Facilities Use in September is \$524.00, which totals 140% of budget at 83.3% of the year.
- ✓ Cleaning supplies were replenished for \$88.15.
- ✓ Minor Repairs and Maintenance was \$1,100 for replacement of the library door glass.
- ✓ The CPS bill in October is \$301.04 (\$396.99 last month) for 2.406 MWh (3.156 MWh last month) of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave a credit of \$197.31 (\$216.08 last month). After charges for additional services, the bill

totaled \$159.71 (\$236.12 last month). Expense for electricity to date is 107% of the 2024 budget.

- From the initial connection through October, payment for solar-generated electricity totals \$9,939.74, which averages \$174.38 per month compared to the amortized capital cost of the panels of \$131.40 per month..
- ✓ Due to billing cycle and change of service, telephone and internet in October is 256.71.
- ✓ San Antonio Water System charge in September was \$112.38, which is about typical.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine.

DISCUSSION: Friends accepted the Treasurer's report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: *presented by Pat Sweet*

12 November 2024 Attending: all by Zoom: Carol Redfield, Pat Sweet, Bill Wilkinson; Treasurer, *ex officio* Bill Sweet

1. **Committee Minute:** The funds in the Sinking Fund currently in excess of the goal of \$30,000 will remain in that account until a specific reallocation is Minuted. Whenever expenditures reduce the balance in this account below the goal, \$750 per month will be transferred from Operating Cash into the Sinking Fund until the balance is \$30,000.
2. The present, nearing-year-end financial status was reviewed. Historical trends in national economy and Meeting's income and expenses were analyzed with reference to projected near- and intermediate-term economic conditions. A budget proposal for 2025 is being developed and will be presented at the December Meeting for Business. It is expected to be available for inspection on the Meeting's website for review well before that Meeting.

DISCUSSION: We had been adding \$500 a month to build the Sinking Fund. This committee minute will build it faster when the balance drops below \$30,000. Since the balance is currently above \$30,000, we are not adding to it now.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

MINISTRY & CARE REPORT: *reported by Julie Crum*

James Goslin, Stephen Shearer, Val Liveoak, Bill Wilkinson, and Julie Crum met via Zoom on November 12.

1. Query for December:
In this time of winter darkness and cold, where do you find the light in your life?
2. We are preparing for the memorial meeting for worship for Ken Southwood, which will be on Saturday, December 7 at 1 pm. Ken's children will be attending, as well as distant family via Zoom.

3. Memorial minutes for Ken Southwood, Michelle DiGiacomo, and James Mize will be prepared and sent to SCYM by March.
4. We are very pleased to present this Ministry and Care minute for Meeting's approval:
Minute: Roberta Russell has completed the clearness for membership process. Ministry and Care happily recommends that her membership be approved.
5. We are contemplating getting an AED (automatic defibrillator) for the meetinghouse. We would need training for members and renters in the use of the device, plus CPR and other basic life support. We seek feedback from friends as to whether to pursue this course.
6. It is becoming increasingly critical that FMSA have a frank discussion about its finances, how to plan for economic uncertainty, and the role each of us plays in this discernment. Finance Committee and the Treasurer have been carrying this concern and find that reports in Meeting for Business do not provide time for adequate dialogue. We urge Friends to attend future forums as they arise regarding our financial health.
7. We discussed concerns for Friends.

Our next meeting is proposed for Wednesday, December 4 at 2 pm on Zoom.

DISCUSSION: We are not currently in dire straits financially but need a long-term plan for the Meeting's financial priorities.

MINUTE 2024.11.01 FMSA approves Roberta Russell for membership.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT: *presented by Stephen Shearer*

Nominating Report - November 2024

We are offering a first reading in [blue](#)

<p>Trustee [1 year]</p> <p>Clerk Carol Redfield 2025</p> <p>Secretary Pat Sweet 2025</p> <p>Treasure Bill Sweet 2025</p> <p>Member Bill Wilkinson 2025</p> <p>Monthly Meeting [2 year]</p> <p>Clerk Val Liveoak 2025</p> <p>Rec. Clerk Rachael Cundey 2025</p> <p>Treasurer Bill Sweet 2026</p> <p>Recorder Jim Spickard 2026</p> <p>Finance Committee [2 years]</p> <p>Clerk Pat Sweet 2026</p> <p>Member Carol Redfield 2026</p> <p>Member Bill Wilkinson 2026</p> <p>Property Usage Coordinator Jim Spickard</p>	<p>Nominating Committee [3 years]</p> <p>Member Julie Crum 2026</p> <p>Member Stephen Shearer 2026</p> <p>Member Denise Wilkinson 2026</p> <p>Member Bill Wilkinson 2027</p> <p>SCYM [2 years]</p> <p>Member Val Liveoak 2026</p> <p>Member Bill Sweet 2026</p> <p>FCNL [2 years]</p> <p>Member Suzanne Cole Sullivan 2026</p> <p>Property Committee [2 years]</p> <p>Clerk Jim Spickard 2025</p> <p>Member Julia Hitz 2025</p> <p>Member Von Keairns 2026</p> <p>Member Rebecca Cole Sullivan 2026</p> <p>Resource Pam Spurgeon 2026</p> <p>Communications Coordinator Denise Wilkinson</p> <p>Web Master Jim Spickard</p>	<p>Ministry, Care and Guidance Committee [3 years]</p> <p>Clerk Julie Crum 2027</p> <p>Member James Gostin 2025</p> <p>Member Bill Wilkinson 2026</p> <p>Member Pat Sweet 2027</p> <p>Member Denise Wilkinson 2027</p> <p>Religious Education [2 years]</p> <p>Clerk Lisa Craig 2025</p> <p>Member Robertta Russell 2025</p> <p>Member Dale Keairns 2025</p> <p>Member Gretchen Haynes 2026</p> <p>Peace and Social Concerns [2 years]</p> <p>Convener Bill Sweet 2025</p> <p>Member Karen Ball 2025</p> <p>Member Annabelle Ball 2025</p> <p>Member Donna Dickerson 2025</p> <p>Librarian none</p> <p>Newsletter none</p>
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DISCUSSION: For context, the Nominating Committee’s report from last month concerning Peace & Social Concerns is reproduced here:

“Nominating Committee is aware that the Peace & Social Concerns Committee continues to wrestle with its responsibilities. Given that the Meeting is aware of the challenges around member burnout and maintaining healthy active committees in general, the Nominating Committee seeks advice regarding an alternative to staffing the Peace & Social Concerns Committee.

We propose that the Meeting meet as a "committee of the whole" with attention to peace and social concerns at its Meetings for Business in January, April, July, and October. Additional time in Meeting for Business would be set aside during these months to discuss matters related to peace and social concerns.

Friends are often called by a "leading" to engage in a social justice action. As such, it is important to understand that we, as Friends, take these leadings very seriously as they exhort us to act upon the urgings of the Spirit. The South Central Yearly Meeting (SCYM) Draft Faith and Practice defines a leading as, "An inner conviction that impels one to follow a certain course under a sense of divine guidance." Friends with specific leadings would be asked to submit topics to the clerk no less than one week in advance during these designated months

and be prepared to discuss their leading during Meeting for Business. Reports from other committees may need to be abbreviated to allow time for discussion except for critical issues. Friends would be encouraged to speak to the clerk about bringing more urgent matters to Meeting for Business in months not designated for peace and social concerns.

In September, the Treasurer would provide a list of organizations the Meeting has supported financially at any point in the past five years to be posted on the website of the Meeting. Based on the budget for organizational giving, the Meeting would determine which organizations in which amounts it wishes to support during the October Meeting for Business. Any Friends interested in supporting an organization not previously funded would be invited to provide information about that organization for the Meeting's consideration. The list of organizations and the amount of their contribution would be minuted at the October meeting." [end report]

Friends discussed the activity of Peace & Social Concerns this year, which has been limited to their proposal for our yearly charitable giving. Bill Sweet as Convener sent out an email detailing the above proposal and looking for feedback from committee members. He received no response. Nominating Committee feels it is time to invite the Meeting as a whole to bring up concerns as they arise.

The Clerk requests that Friends consider this proposal along with the first reading of nominations and bring any concerns with the proposed plan or the names listed in blue to the committee. Next month Nominating Committee will bring a minute to the December Meeting for Business for our consideration.

A Friend suggested that part of the problem in filling this committee may be that in the past an individual would raise a concern and expect Peace & Social Concerns to address it alone, putting many off from serving on the committee.

Friends appreciate Bill Sweet's efforts in serving as convener for Peace & Social Concerns and at the same time feel that this type of work may need a Clerk to be sustainable for all involved.

Friends discussed the usual functions of Peace & Social Concerns. A Friend suggested the reason for the committee's existence is to bring issues of peace and social justice to the Meeting as a recommendation that we provide support in various ways as a whole or as individuals. Although in recent years the committee's activities have largely been limited to the allocation of donations from the Meeting, in the past the committee would also announce community events such as protests that Friends could participate in or bring a proposed letter to the editor on a social issue to be sent by the Clerk on behalf of the Meeting.

A Friend shared that the Meeting united around the Eyes Wide Open exhibit of shoes representing military personnel and civilians killed in U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan but has seldom coalesced around one social concern-related activity otherwise. While other meetings such as Friends Meeting of Austin have longstanding, active service projects such as prison ministry, a Friend feels this Meeting is more focused on internal spiritual concerns

and will only move to social action that rises from a deeply felt and widely held spiritual concern.

A Friend expressed concern that we are missing the point if we do not carry our spiritual growth into action in the wider community, especially under current political circumstances.

Bill Wilkinson would like to remind Friends of the relevance of the situational analysis report which addresses Friends' concerns about burnout, lack of activity, and the need to be more flexible with our committee structure. Friends are encouraged to review the report again as we make this and other decisions about the future of the Meeting.

Friends explored the tension between involving new Friends in the life of the Meeting and trying not to burden new Friends with unwanted and perhaps poorly understood responsibilities. Friends expressed concern both for Friends who left Meeting because it became a place of heavy responsibility when they needed respite and for Friends who "check out" of Meeting life because they are not supported in following leadings they feel strongly. Friends agreed that we want all to feel they can follow their leadings with the Meeting's support and not to feel pressured into activities to which they are not called.

A Friend expressed that the newsletter has been an important vehicle for unity within the Meeting and asked that we seek someone to take it on. Another Friend reiterated the concern expressed above that we want to support Friends in exploring whether they are led to do this but not to pressure someone with no interest or capacity.

A Friend felt that as a Meeting we are emerging from a large period of exhaustion with new energy and strong committees forming, but we need to take care of ourselves to avoid old patterns of burnout.

A Friend expressed that involving all Friends in Peace & Social Concerns work is a positive development that will allow all to consider and weigh in on our responses to important issues without "passing the buck."

Jim Spickard, *in absentia*, suggests that the "Web Master" title no longer describes what he does. "Tech Coordinator" is more apt. Yes, we need a "web master" to coordinate web postings, updates, hosting issues, etc. But we also need to have someone with the-buck-stops-here oversight of all other tech (phones, internet, Zoom, security cameras, Hi-Drive, etc.). The term "Tech Coordinator" covers that plus the web structure and hosting; other people are now able to post, too.

(As usual, 'coordinators' don't do all the work themselves; they just make sure it gets done. We now have numerous people who contribute to this process. Yay!!) [end Jim's comment]

Nominating Committee is happy to make the title change suggested above by Jim *in absentia*.

Friends accepted the report on first reading.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting's meetinghouse was destroyed by Hurricane Helene. The local Presbyterian Church has graciously offered them space to meet. They have made the hard decision to demolish the building. Many Swannanoa Valley Friends have lost their homes and are in financial need. They have established a disaster relief fund for demolition costs and support of local Friends. Friends decided that time is of the essence for this issue and wish to act today.

MINUTE 2024.11.02 FMSA authorizes the donation of \$5,000 from the Relief Fund to the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting disaster relief fund.

The Meeting closed with silent worship.