

Minutes
FMSA Meeting for Business
Sept 21st 2025

Attending:

- In Person: David Novogrodsky, Von Keairns, Dale Keairns, Pat Sweet, Bill Sweet, Gretchen Haynes, Carol Redfield, Thomas Yee, Tess O'Brien, Judy Grant, Rebecca Cole Sullivan, Suzanne Cole Sullivan, Greg Koehler, Jillian Randles, Matthew Wang Dowing, Val Liveoak, Rachael Cundey
- On Zoom: Lisa Craig

The meeting opened with silent worship.

Clerk's Comments: Friends sometimes struggle to stay connected to the Spirit during discussions of finances. We may need to return to worship if we lose connection. Any Friend can ask for worship.

PRIOR MINUTES

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: *reported by Lisa Craig*

The Religious Education Committee met on August 10, 2025, in person at Lisa Craig's house.

Present: Gretchen Haynes, Dale Keairns, Roberta Russell, Rachael Cundey, Lisa Craig, and Suzanne Cole Sullivan.

Adult Education

Upcoming Forums

- COPSMetro has requested a date in September to discuss their work, particularly around efforts to stop the Marvel project. They will join us on September 28th.
- Rachael suggested viewing the 40-minute documentary produced last year by the Friends World Committee for Consultation World Plenary to glimpse the global Quaker community at work.
- We plan to hold a follow-up forum on white culture in Quakerism, as the first session generated significant discussion.
- Gretchen proposed a forum on Jesus of Nazareth: The Life of the Man Named Jesus.
- We discussed aligning some 2026 forums with what the Young Quakers are studying.
- A possible letter-writing forum for social justice campaigns was suggested.
- Crafting forums (Origami, Holiday Crafts, etc.) were proposed as opportunities for community fun and fellowship.

Other Gathering Ideas

- Family Game Night during the holidays (possibly New Year's Eve).
- Family Movie Night.
- Crafty Day.

Young Quaker Education

The committee discussed challenges in teaching children ages 2–13. Suzanne is developing a transition program for older Young Quakers who want to spend more time in Meeting. This transition will require coordination between Religious Education and Ministry and Care.

Suzanne's Report

This summer, our Young Friends explored foundational Quaker practices, including queries, meeting for worship with attention to business, and the founding of Rhode Island—often with great joy and lively conversation.

We were grateful to have Rebecca Cole Sullivan, our meeting's only trained Faith & Play teacher, join us several times. Using the Faith & Play kits, Rebecca engaged the Young Friends' curiosity and questions throughout the hour.

We continue to adapt our practices to meet emotional needs and accommodate the wide age range of our Young Friends. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, we are finding balance and staying connected with parents as issues arise.

This fall, the Young Friends will study Fables and Parables. Gary Whiting will bring some of his favorite parables to life. Suzanne Cole-Sullivan is honing her storytelling skills to share both traditional and new fables. One of our older Young Friends will begin transitioning into more time spent in worship, with support from parents and the RE program.

Finally, after many years of faithful service, Gretchen Haynes is taking a short sabbatical this fall. We are deeply grateful for her dedication to our Young Friends. Note: half-birthday celebrations will continue without interruption!

DISCUSSION: Friends gave thanks for all the care and attention going into this work including the cake.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

TREASURER'S REPORT: *reported by Bill Sweet*

The Balance and Statement of Activities spreadsheets are attached to the end of these minutes.

JULY 2025

Balance Sheet

- ✓ \$3344.31 from Immigrant Aid and \$5,000 from Relief Fund remains “parked” in the savings account. Thus, the available balance in Immigrant Aid: is \$3,611.81 (\$3,344.31 plus \$267.50).
- ✓ The marked increase in Operating Cash results from the replacement of \$25,000 sent to Nuevos Vecinos at the end of June and replaced, per Minute, on 03 July from the Friends Fiduciary Growth and Income Fund.
- ✓ The 31 July value of the Growth and Income Fund results from withdrawing \$25,000 with the \$920.14 increase in value of the securities in July.
- ✓ There are no other items of note

Statement of Activities

- ✓ Undesignated contributions in July were \$2,677.04, totaling 69.9% of the annual budget for 2025 at 58.3% of the year.
- ✓ Income for Facilities Use in July is \$175.00, which totals 81.2% of annual budget.
- ✓ \$41.45 was reimbursed for Religious Education, Materials & Activities.
- ✓ Minor Repairs at \$1,500.00 was for repairing the fence on the east property boundary.
- ✓ The CPS bill in July is \$375.14 (\$347.94 last month) for 2.744 MWh (2.645 MWh last month) of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave a credit of \$142.33 (\$172.60 last month). After charges for additional services, the bill totaled \$226.14 (\$222.48 last month). Expense for electricity in 2025 is 52.9% of the 2025 budget.
 - Since inception, payment for solar-generated electricity totals \$11,364.79, which averages \$171.87/month. The amortized capital cost is \$131.40/month.
- ✓ Expense for telephone and internet in July is \$116.00.
- ✓ San Antonio Water System charge in July was \$112.32, which is typical.
- ✓ Bank Charges of \$48.00 was safe deposit box rental.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine.

AUGUST 2025

Balance Sheet

- ✓ \$3344.31 from Immigrant Aid and \$5,000 from Relief Fund remains “parked” in the savings account. Thus, the available balance in Immigrant Aid: is \$3,611.81 (\$3,344.31 plus \$267.50).
- ✓ There are no other items of note.

Statement of Activities

- ✓ General (undesignated) contributions in August were \$2691.30, being 78.5% of the annual budget for 2025 at 66.7% of the year.

- ✓ Income for Facilities Use in August is \$1078.00, which totals 105.2% of annual budget.
- ✓ Cleaning service and grounds maintenance (mowing) were each \$475.
- ✓ The CPS bill in August is \$297.80 (\$375.14 last month) for 2.298 MWh (2.744 MWh last month) of electricity. The Big Sun Community Solar off-site photovoltaic panels gave a credit of \$190.34 (\$142.33 last month). After charges for additional services, the bill totaled \$163.47 (\$226.14 last month). Expense for electricity in 2025 is 62.5% of the 2025 budget.
 - Since inception, payment for solar-generated electricity totals \$11,534.03, which averages \$172.15/month. The amortized capital cost is \$131.40/month.
- ✓ Expense for telephone and internet in August is \$115.98.
- ✓ San Antonio Water System charge in August was \$104.85, which is typical.
- ✓ Other expenditures were routine.

DISCUSSION: Facilities use income for August is higher than usual because cash payments for the past 3-4 months were deposited as a lump sum. All cash amounts are recorded when received and designated to specific funds as applicable.

Friends accepted the Treasurer's report.

CONSIDERATION OF FMSA 2025 CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS:

Friends were provided with the list of charitable contributions made in 2024. Friends were reminded that we aim to give 1/10th of our operating budget each year as contributions to Quaker and local organizations, but exact amounts and their recipients must be decided each year with respect to organizational needs and the leadings of the Meeting.

In 2024 a committee brought forward their proposed contributions after receiving thoughts from Friends by email. As we do not have an active Peace and Social Concerns/Peace and Justice committee, these tasks come to the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business as a whole.

Ideally, we like to decide this issue in September, but we can revisit in October if Friends are not clear in this decision.

More information is listed about each organization listed on the FMSA website.

Friends were informed that SA Stands is currently not in need of funds.

Friends raised concerns for RAICES which recently lost significant grant funding, FWCC Americas which has launched significant new programming, FCNL which is busy in the current administration, and QUNO which provides a space for protected international dialogue.

A Friend suggested CASA legal defense fund which works to support undocumented immigrants.

Friends considered whether Friends Journal needs to be a part of our contributions list or would be better considered a budgetary expense in another category.

Carol will convene a group to consider these contributions and come back with a proposal. Rebecca and Thomas will join her. Friends are encouraged to send any concerns or suggestions to Carol along with the reasoning for your proposed contributions.

MINISTRY & CARE REPORT: *reported by Pat Sweet*

August 10, 2025: Bill Wilkinson, Pat Sweet, Denise Wilkinson, Val Liveoak, and Julie Crum met briefly in person.

- The September query will be: How does my life speak of my concern for ecological, economic, and social justice?
- We intend to donate 10 H-E-B cards (\$20 each) per month to Von to pass on to Pastor Diane.
- We discussed criteria for renting the meetinghouse to non-profit groups that have a political tinge, and we discussed concerns for friends.

September 8, 2025: Denise, Bill, Pat, Val, and Julie met via Zoom.

- The October query will be:

How do we nurture a spirit of patience, trust, and discernment—both in our own lives and within our Meeting community—when the future feels unsettled?
- We discussed concerns for friends, including Peggy Dial, whose mother passed away recently. We hold Peggy, Stephen, and their family in the light.
- Last fall, Friends Meeting of San Antonio made a contribution to Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting in North Carolina as they recovered from the damage to their meetinghouse and community during Hurricane Helene. This summer Swannanoa wrote to us to ask how they could contribute to recovery efforts from the Kerrville floods. Val has reached out to a Kerrville pastor for information, which we will pass on to Swannanoa.
- Leada Dietz from SCYM asked for a list of actions that we have taken toward living Quaker testimonies and engaging in social justice. We are sending along this list:

Distributed HEB cards

Distributed “Red cards”, information for people stopped by ICE

Support for immigrants and organizations working with immigrants in numerous settings

Interfaith Welcome Center

RAICES

SA Stands

- We have been made aware from several friends that statements construed as political or partisan during worship and announcements are disturbing to the spirit of worship. We have discussed this as a committee and unite in offering this statement:

Reminder to Friends Regarding Political Expression

Friends are lovingly reminded that our Meetings for Worship are sacred spaces centered in silence, spiritual discernment, and the search for Truth. In the spirit of unity and worship,

we ask that Friends refrain from expressing views or statements—during or immediately following Meeting—that could be construed as political or partisan in nature.

While we each carry personal convictions and social concerns, we are called to speak from that which is eternal, not from transient loyalties or ideologies. Let our words and actions be grounded in Quaker testimonies—peace, integrity, simplicity, equality, community, and stewardship—so that all may feel welcome and held in the Light.

Let us hold to the discipline of listening deeply, speaking, and acting only as led by the Spirit, trusting that in faithful silence, Truth will emerge.

- We will read this statement at the rise of worship on September 28, and it will be published in the October newsletter.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, October 13 at 3 pm via zoom.

DISCUSSION: The statement will not be in the October newsletter.

Friends shared concerns with how the statement on political expression might land as an introduction to the work of the Meeting. Friends considered the relationship of our faith to politics, including the shift in Quakerism from quietism to engagement with political issues and our current political concerns that are deeply intertwined with our testimonies of peace and equality. Actions that are Spirit-led may be related to politics and even appear solely political to others.

The representative of M&C clarified that the statement was written to address vocal ministry and announcements which some Friends felt was not Spirit-led and instead rooted in partisanship, sometimes when Young Friends were in the room. This concern has led at least one Friend to stay away from Meeting. Further details on what discussion disturbed these Friends were requested but were not known by the Friends present.

Friends were concerned that this statement was not brought as a minute because it touches on so many aspects of the Meeting. Friends were not clear that a statement such as this was the best way to resolve such a concern, and that Friends may be better served by being reminded what to do as opposed to what not to do. A Friend lifted up the first and last sentences of the statement as Quakerly instruction.

The representative of M&C shared that a forum on vocal ministry is being planned. Friends were interested in further exploring these issues through worship sharing.

Friends considered how the summary from the August M&C meeting about Meetinghouse rentals may relate to the statement put forth in the September report. The Friend presenting from M&C clarified that the discussion in August was brought forth by the Property Manager.

The body was reminded that we need to speak slowly, loudly, and clearly for the Clerk and others to engage with our ministry. The Clerk also reminded the body to note the meeting time for M&C's next meeting and to attend to help shape the conversation.

Friends continually stressed that the Meeting as a whole should be involved in conversations of this nature before decisions are made. Friends expressed concern that the attempted approach of M&C bypassed conversation among Friends who were uncomfortable with political statements and those making the statements.

Friends engaged in discussion of how to handle this report procedurally given the above concerns before uniting in a minute.

MINUTE 2025.09.01 We received the report from M&C but did not find unity around the second-to-last section. After extensive discussion, we recommend that M&C take the statement back into their consideration. We would like the concern to come back to the body for collective discernment in the way M&C finds most appropriate.

Friends approved the minute.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT: *presented by Rebecca Cole Sullivan*

The Property Committee met on July 31st and September 11th, both by Zoom. Rebecca Cole Sullivan, Julia Hitz, Von Kearns, Jim Spickard, Pam Spurgeon, and Bill Sweet attended the July meeting. Lisa Craig joined us for the first part of the September meeting; Julia was unable to attend.

We discussed the following issues:

1. Our new cleaners need an official point-person to call in case of questions. Jim (as clerk) will handle this, with Pam and Rebecca as backups. We are clear that our agreement does not include holiday pay. We are also clear that we will pay by Zelle rather than Square, to avoid the 3% 'convenience' fee. The cleaners have been so informed.
2. REPAIRS:
 - a. Contracted repairs:
 - i. The fence has been repaired, and Luciano has been paid.
 - ii. The stairs between the two parking lots are still in process. Luciano expects to complete them by September 16th.
 - b. Lighting/wiring project:
 - i. We received a rather high bid for repairing the fluorescent lights in the Community Room and the Children's Room. We are pursuing another bid.
 - ii. We decided to remove the non-working porch fans by ourselves rather than pay an electrician to do so. (To our knowledge, we have never used them.)
 - c. Vandals tore down our two exterior security cameras, above the gate and in the breezeway. *(Even 16 centuries later, those Vandals get blamed for everything.)*
 - i. By the time this report is read, Rebecca and Jim will (probably) have installed an exterior outlet on the high beam connecting Phase 1 and the Meeting Room. If all goes well, they will also install replacement cameras, this time in cages.
 - d. Refinishing the Meeting Room floor. After 25 years, scratches are starting to show. Pam will get bids for this task.
 - e. On our list of things to repair or inspect and possibly repair:
 - i. Replace the wax ring on the toilet in the southmost restroom *(Jim & Bill?)*

- ii. Replace the fire extinguisher in the Phase 1 furnace room (*Jim or ____?*)
- iii. Find the source of the refrigerator water leak (*Bill*)
- iv. Locate and caulk the porch roof leaks (*Rebecca & Liam?*)
- v. Inspect and possibly replace the kitchen faucet sprayer (*Jim & Pam*)

Please add items you find to the list in the Community Room.

- f. Window washing. At least some of the Meeting Room's windows need washing. We spent \$1,100 last September to have professionals do it. We don't think we can afford that this year, so we propose to do the east (large) windows ourselves once bird migration season is over, borrowing the long-handled tools needed to do it.
3. 2026 BUDGET:
- a. Our 2025 Minor Repairs line is \$3,000. We have so far spent a bit more than \$6,000 and have a firm \$700 left to pay for the stair repair (which is a safety issue). **We recommend that the Finance Committee allot \$6,000 for Minor Repairs for 2026.**
 - b. We have spent somewhere over half of our supplies budget: ~\$550 out of \$1,000. **We recommend allotting for \$1,000 for 2026.**
4. MAJOR PROJECTS:
- a. OUR COURTYARD:
 - i. The current courtyard needs considerable work.
 - 1. The weed barrier no longer works, and we spend a lot of effort pulling the weeds.
 - 2. The gravel has thinned in many spots.
 - 3. The hole at the northeast corner is dangerous.
 - ii. Simply replacing the gravel won't solve these problems, esp. as the current crushed granite gets caught in shoes and scratches the floors. 1" river rock would be hard for the kids to play on and would invite window-breaking (see *Vandals*, above).
 - iii. Lisa Craig attended our September meeting to suggest redoing the courtyard (and possibly the area immediately to its south) to make them more kid-centric. **The committee thought that idea worth exploring. We asked her to plan a forum that includes parents so we can talk about ideas.** We would also ask the children what they might like.
 - iv. In the meantime, we suggest Friends visit Charis Park (291 Emporia Blvd, 78209) where a church turned a 1-acre parking lot into a kid-friendly park. We (obviously) can't do anything that big, but we can get ideas. We could almost certainly attract donations for this project.
 - b. REFURBISHING OUR PARKING LOT(S):
 - i. Ideas: Resurfacing, repairing spots, extending the smaller lot 10-15 feet southward and 5-10' eastward, restriping, replacing with permeable paving, etc.
 - ii. Julia collected information about grant money for permeable paving.
 - iii. This is a lower priority, though we will need to do something in the next couple of years.

5. OTHER:

- a. Rain barrels (to catch water from the roof and redirect it toward our plantings). Pam & Jim will explore
- b. We need someone to reorganize the tools shelves in the furnace room of the Meeting Room building.

In short, we have lots of tasks and ideas. Volunteers are welcome!!

DISCUSSION: The stairs were finished yesterday. The replacement of the camera is still in progress as the first purchased camera did not function.

Friends accepted the committee's report.

SA STANDS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT: *reported by Rachael Cundey*

The second Cafecito session on building community safety centered on existing local mutual aid resources and what is still needed. I attended on August 7th and contributed a snack tray. The event was well-attended with enthusiastic discussion. Friends can reach out to me if they would like the list of local resources based in mutual care rather than charity.

American Gateways is planning a legal clinic and will need volunteers. Friends are encouraged to reach out to me if they would like more information.

Please provide me with any announcements we would like to make to the SA Stands mailing list.

DISCUSSION: Friends accepted the representative's report.

OTHER BUSINESS

Suggestion to sign on to Quaker organization statement on genocide in Gaza

DISCUSSION: One Friend was concerned that the statement, by focusing on current and recent events, does not sufficiently address the broader history of antisemitism in Europe. This Friend felt that the statement was tilted toward Palestinian grievances.

One Friend was concerned about the statement's position on the existence of the state of Israel and was reassured by clarification that the statement does not take a position on the state itself but against the current genocide and apartheid legal system and for peaceful coexistence of Israelis and Palestinians.

Friends considered whether we might write our own statement on this issue.

Friends grappled with whether to move forward without the agreement of one Friend or hold over the issue for another time. Friends felt urgency to make a statement due to the dire conditions in Gaza and did not wish to wait for the next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business to address this decision, requesting a called meeting if we could not decide today.

MINUTE 2025.09.02 Friends Meeting of San Antonio is in unity to endorse the statement of 8 major Quaker organizations about the genocide in Gaza [<https://tinyurl.com/mpddkryf>]. However, there are Friends who do not feel it is comprehensive.

Friends approved the minute.

Meeting Announcements:

- The Finance Committee will be working with the Treasurer next month to plan the draft budget for 2026. Committees need to send Finance any changes to their budget items they would like Finance to consider or a message that no changes are needed by the end of September. This year's budget can be found on any of this year's Treasurer's report.

The meeting closed with silent worship.