

SCQM Spring Gathering Minutes - April 17th, 2016 - Claremont Meeting

Opening Worship

State of the Meeting Reports & Large Group Worship Sharing (First Half)*

Plenary I -

Opening Worship

Roll Call: All Meetings and Worship Groups were present, with the exception of the following: Las Vegas WG, Marloma Long Beach MM, San Diego MM, Whitleaf WG

Clerks Report & Announcements: Dan Strickland, Orange Grove MM (OGMM), reported. Robin DuRant, Presiding Clerk, is away at a nephews wedding, so Dan is filling in for her today.

- **Peters Fund:** A note was made about the Peters Fund.
- **Meeting for Memorials and Births:** Dan announced that the Ministry & Counsel (M&C) Committee were presenting a new element to Spring Gathering - Meeting for Memorials and Births - that would be held at the end of the day.
- **PYM JYM Committee Request for FRAPS:** Rose Nadis, Santa Barbara MM, announced that Pacific Yearly Meeting's Junior Yearly Meeting program was looking for Friendly Responsible Adult Presences (FRAPS) for PYM's Annual Session.
- **Thank you to Hosts:** Appreciation was given to Claremont MM for hosting us today.
- **FCLCA Fundraiser:** Friends Committee on Legislation in California will host a fundraiser in Southern California on June 11th.
- **SCQM Fall Fellowship Save-the-Dates:** SCQM Fall Fellowship will be held November 5th and 6th at Temescal Canyon in Pacific Palisades, CA.
- **Rides to PYM:** Santa Monica MM will be arranging rides for people in the Quarter to travel to PYM Annual Session. They are renting a van. Arthur Kegerreis (Orange Grove MM) noted that in the past there has been a PYM Ride Coordinator(s). He served in that role in the past. It was unclear whether one had been appointed this year.
- **Quakers Religious Education Collaborative:** Gail Thomas, a recent transplant from Baltimore YM, now attending Santa Monica MM, noted the existence of a new group that is aimed toward helping Quakers with parenting and teaching religious education. Their website is <http://www.Quakers4RE.org/>
- Jeanette Norton announced that she is looking for a traveling companion to Friends General Conference (FGC)

Finance Committee: Sharon Gates (Orange Grove MM) reported that the Finance Committee is currently without a clerk or convener. She expressed willingness to fill the role and is waiting to hear from Nominating Committee.

- Sharon presented the proposed budget(s) which included four different options to choose from: the first proposal had no change to the assessment (\$6) or rate of contribution (about 50%), the second proposal projected no change to the assessment and an 80% contribution rate, the third proposed budget projected no change to the assessment and a 100% contribution rate, and the fourth option provided estimates based on an increase of the assessment to \$10 and an 80% contribution rate.

- The SCQM fiscal year starts in June. Fall Fellowship costs us more than we thought it did. We keep fees low to encourage attendance. Finance Committee is considering a sliding scale.
- Our target amount to keep in our reserve is \$18,000. It is currently at \$11,000.
- Finance Committee is encouraging bare bones spending in light of our deficit.
- Monthly Meetings are sending 50% of assessments based on how many members we appear to have.
- The new Treasurer intends to send letters to Monthly Meetings and will follow up.
- One Friend proposed raising the assessment to deepen the reserve.
- Further discussion was held over the various options presented and the budget was laid over to the afternoon plenary.

Teens:

- Rose Nadis (Santa Barbara MM) and David Shaw (Santa Monica MM), Co-Clerks of Pacific Yearly Meeting (PYM) Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) teen committee reported. They noted that their program is still looking for day and night Friendly and Responsible Adult Presences (FRAPs) for the Annual Gathering, and the deadline is approaching.
- Alyssa Nelson, PYM Youth Programs Coordinator (YPC) introduced herself and reminded us that she is a resource to us for youth programs. She also reported that the PYM Children's Program is looking for volunteers to work with the children at PYM Annual Gathering. She noted that there are benefits - including having your registration fees waived, but that those who have served have reported having an "awesome time", and that serving in this way is a different way to experience the Annual Gathering.
- A Friend also spoke briefly about the service project that the teens are working on during the day today - helping to build a trellis for the Claremont Meeting's garden.

Nominating Committee: Dan Strickland (Orange Grove MM), Clerk of Nominating Committee, reported that no slate would be presented today since there are no new nominations since Fall Fellowship.

- We have the following vacancies: Presiding Clerk, Recording Clerk, Arrangements Committee Clerk, Ministry & Oversight Clerk (and some additional members), Youth Programs Committee Clerk, Finance Committee Clerk or Convener. Dan reported that despite these vacancies, we do have good membership on committees. We settled into silent worship.
- One Friend expressed that it can be fun to serve, but often the same people step up to serve. They are susceptible to burnout and need support and new energy.
- One Friend expressed that we are choosing between the vitality or death of Quarterly Meeting.
- One Friend noted their sense of competition between the Yearly Meeting and Quarterly Meeting for committed Friends who are willing and able to serve.

Clerks Committee:

A Minute concerning the role of Clerk's Committee was presented. The background and proposed minute are attached to these minutes (Attachment 1). Some discussion was held and the following minute was **APPROVED**:

- **MINUTE 2016.04.20-1:** The Clerk's Committee of SCQM is authorized to approve interim nominations and budget adjustments. They are also authorized to approve any other urgent business that is not ready for approval at Fall Fellowship or Spring Quarter or requires approval before the next quarterly meeting. All of these decisions will be reported at the next Fall or Spring Gathering.

Unseasoned Concerns/New Business

- **Claremont MM, Hosts:**
 - Katrina Mason, Claremont MM, reported about the Claremont Homeless Advocacy Program (CHAP), which the Meeting has participated in for 2½ years. CMM provides space for 11 men to sleep. The goal of the program is to find sustainable housing. They focus on emphasizing the dignity of the individual, encouraging growth toward employment and support.
 - Eleanor, Claremont MM, presented the lunch menu, which included organic and local ingredients.
 - We thanked Claremont MM for hosting us.

- **FWCC Gathering in Peru:** Anthony Manousos, Orange Grove MM, reported about his attendance at the FWCC Gathering in the Pisac, Peru. Sustainability and Peace were the unifying testimonies. The theme of the gathering was transformation. Anthony noted that there are 320,000 Quakers worldwide. 320 Quakers from 37 countries attended this gathering and came to unity regarding sustainability.

Plenary I closed with worship.

State of the Meeting Reports & Large Group Worship Sharing (Second Half)

Plenary II

Finance Committee: After some discussion we **APPROVED** the following two minutes:

- **MINUTE 2016.04.20-2.** SCQM approves raising the monthly meeting assessment to \$10 per member.
- **MINUTE 2016.04.20-3** SCQM approves the 2016-2017 proposed budget (Attachment 2) which included the increased of the assessment to \$10 per person and estimated income and expenses if Monthly Meetings contributed 80% of what they are assessed.

The Treasurer, Peter Neumann of Santa Barbara MM will work with Finance Committee in the coming year on several tasks, including sending letters to Monthly Meetings regarding the assessment, and following up.

Clerk's Committee: At their meeting in the spring, Clerk's committee considered the attached proposed minutes from Santa Barbara MM and agreed to have them presented today.

Proposed Minute to Establish an Administrative Assistant position (Attachment 3):

The minute proposes creating a fund to hire a clerical position to support the Clerks in carrying out their duties. The goal is to help make the Clerks feel supported. The document proposed a 2-3 year trial period, and would require increasing the assessment to \$15-\$20 per Member. One Friend noted that Ministry and Counsel and Finance Committees should season this, as well as monthly meetings. One Friend suggested that rather than a paid position that would require an augmentation to the budget or assessments, that an internship be established where a student could receive school credit for their engagement with the organization. After some discussion we **APPROVED** the following minute:

- **MINUTE 2016.04.20-4** SCQM approves of scheduling a threshing session at Fall Fellowship to consider establishing a clerical position to support Quarterly Meeting.

Proposed Minute to Establish a Communications Committee:

The minute proposes establishing a new committee to support the web and listserv clerk. One role of the committee would be to help discern what messages go out to the listserv. Currently, the Presiding Clerk and the Ministry and Counsel Clerk have been helping with that discernment. It was suggested that this committee start out as a subcommittee of Ministry and Counsel and that the scope be limited. It was also noted that Ministry and Counsel can create a subcommittee without approval from the wider SCQM body.

Nominating Committee:

New Nominations:

Nominating Committee brought forward the names of Gail Thomas as Co-Clerk of Ministry and Counsel and Sharon Gates as Clerk of Finance Committee.

Casa de los Amigos:

Ministry and Counsel invited Burton Housman of La Jolla Meeting to give a short report on the Casa de los Amigos. They are in good condition financially, but donations are always welcome. Friends can donate by sending checks to Orange Grove Monthly Meeting, made out to Orange Grove Monthly Meeting, with Casa de los Amigos in the memo line.

The focus of their work is currently on hospitality and migrants and refugees. For many, Mexico is thought of as a haven of freedom. The Casa in particular acts as a haven for independent journalists and migrants.

The Casa de los Amigos will be having their 60th Anniversary celebration this fall, and Burton shared his belief of the Casa's readiness to face Mexico and the world's issues.

Burton also reminded us regarding the minute we passed last year that approved establishing a line item in the budget to support a mutual exchange of visitors between the Casa and the Quarter, and to support sending a volunteer for an extended time from the Quarter to the Casa.

Closing Worship - Memorials and Births:

Ministry and Counsel experimented with hosting a Meeting for Memorials and Births, which coincided with Closing Worship.

4/2016

1. Minute concerning the role of Clerks' Committee

Background:

The Clerks' Committee, originally called Executive Committee, was established to provide support to SCQM Committees. Part of the Committee's function has been to fill in when committees are under-filled. Over the years, committees needing support have included Children's Program Committee, Youth Planning Committee, Arrangements, M&O, and Finance and Nominating. Currently all our committees function fairly well.

It has served as the planning committee for quarterly gatherings.

Issue: From time to time, business arises that needs attention before the twice yearly meetings. Clerks' Committee has needed to approve interim nominations, budget adjustments, and make financial decisions for Fall Fellowship without any clear authority to do so.

Friends are reminded that the budget is usually presented at Spring Quarter. Committee terms typically begin in June, and should be filled by Spring Quarter.

Proposed minute:

The Clerks' Committee of SCQM is authorized to approve interim nominations and budget adjustments. They are also authorized to approve any other urgent business that is not ready for approval at Fall Fellowship or Spring Quarter or requires approval before the next quarterly meeting. All these decisions will be reviewed at the next Fall or Spring gathering.

	2015-2016 Approved Budget	2015-2016 Actuals	2016-2017 Proposed Budget			
			with no change to assessment or contribution	with 80% contribution current \$6 assessment	with 100% contribution current \$6 assessment	with 80% contribution \$10 assessment
Income						
Assessment	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 1,164.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,665.60	\$ 2,082.00	\$ 2,776.00
Fall Fellowship		\$ 5,229.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Directories	\$ 600.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Faith & Practice	\$ 50.00					
Subtotal	\$ 3,050.00	\$ 6,393.00	\$ 9,100.00	\$ 9,665.60	\$ 10,082.00	\$ 10,776.00
Transfer from reserves	\$ 2,875.00	\$ 2,825.00	\$ 4,630.00	\$ 4,064.40	\$ 3,648.00	\$ 2,954.00
Total Income	\$ 5,925.00	\$ 9,218.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00
Expenses						
Accountant	\$ 750.00					
Fall Fellowship		\$ 7,948.00	\$ 9,250.00	\$ 9,250.00	\$ 9,250.00	\$ 9,250.00
Directory	\$ 600.00	\$ 524.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Other Committee & Officer Expenses	\$ 1,595.00	\$ 560.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Insurance	\$ 180.00	\$ 179.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 180.00
Website & Email list	\$ 550.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 550.00
Travel	\$ 750.00		\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
Way Fund for Youth Scholarships	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Clerk's Discretionary Fund	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Total Expenses	\$ 5,925.00	\$ 9,218.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00	\$ 13,730.00

Notes

1. "Contribution" means the proportion of members for whom assessment is paid. 2015-2016 contribution estimated at 56% (based on assessments received and estimate of membership number from PYM 2015 Statistic Report).
2. SCQM minuted our intention to keep at least \$18,000 in reserves. Current reserves are \$11,534.
3. None of these scenarios budget any addition to our reserves. Even \$10 assessment with 100% contribution would budget approx. \$700 transfer from reserves.
4. Fall Fellowship income budget assumes 100 registrations averaging \$75 each. Separate proposal to use a sliding scale for Fall Fellowship registration fee, noting that actual total cost is approx. \$100 per bed.

On January 11, at the Santa Barbara Monthly Meeting for Business, the following minute was adopted:

“We ask Southern California Quarterly Meeting to consider the creation, description, and funding for a part-time secretary position.”

Rationale: Any successful organization should be structured for steady progress and a high probability of improvement. Since all organizations are staffed by ordinary-average folks, successful organizations must be structured and resourced, so that these average folks succeed. To the extent that organizational executives seem steadily ineffective or less, the organization is failing, not the individual. To the extent the executive faces a stream of problems with very slow or nonexistent resolution, the organization is failing. To the extent that only by dint of heroic effort, luck, previous experience and a particular persona an executive succeeds, the organization fails, because that executive seems irreplaceable. And on and on.

A secretary would keep the annual calendar, reminding everyone well in advance. A secretary keeps track.

A secretary would be available to help committee folk quickly get the information to speed implementation.

A secretary would greatly ease the burden of clerks having to track and repeat and goad and keep the lid on.

Being thus released, Clerks would have time to focus on effective problem resolution, planning and implementation.

FRINGE BENEFITS:

Clerks would be more successful, and end their terms without a sure sense of burnout, the handmaiden of unsupported hard work and frustration.

The pool of available and potential clerks and committee members would increase, since the jobs would be clearer, more resourced, less stressful and-possibly-fun. Very likely, the larger pool would also include a wider range of personas.

The organization could move forward without the annual sense of “reinventing the wheel”.