

Abington Quarterly Meeting for Business

Tenth Month, 7th, 2019 - held at Upper Dublin MM

Present: Abington MM 4: Byberry MM 0: Gwynedd MM 8: Horsham MM 6:
Norristown MM 2: Plymouth MM 4: Richland MM 1: Unami MM 1: Upper Dublin
MM 14: Pottstown WG 1: Children 3.

Preparing ourselves, we began with several minutes of silent worship. Then Pam Yaller, co-clerk of Upper Dublin MM welcomed us.

AQ clerk Amelia Diamond opened the session, asking for any corrections to our 8th month meeting minutes. None were offered; those minutes were then approved.

Tom Armstrong presented the AQ trustee's report. He said the auditors have given them an "all clear" financial review. Trustees worked on issues of conflict of interest, and bylaws. Having already passed out the trustees' financial report, Tom drew our attention to its positive numbers: "all in all things are pretty good," he said.

Tom then reviewed the AQ Treasurer's Report. One issue was discussed: a \$500 deposit to George school that seems to have been overlooked. This may need reconciliation but that remains to be seen. The trustees report and the AQ Treasurer's financial report were approved and are included in these minutes by reference.

Dan Hazleton Treasurer of the Trustees gave the AQ Trustees treasurer's report. A printed report had been distributed and is included by reference. He noted that drawdowns on some of the funds had exceeded income. Also funds unspent from prior years somewhat covered these excess draws. There was some discussion to clarify what had happened. Several terms were explained: "letters of intent" (documenting that repayment would come from a person's estate) and "swing loans" (for short-term real estate purposes). The treasurer's report was approved and is included in these minutes by reference.

Bonnie Miller gave the Home and Care committee report. Home and Care is the administrative agency for three of AQM's funds: the Spruance, Enabling, and the General Fund for Aging. Rebecca Cratin is the administrator. Bonnie read portions of the written report, which had previously been distributed; it is included by reference. She clarified an issue about documenting how funds advanced will be repaid by an estate after a borrower has passed away. Bonnie noted that there is a tendency for members to be hesitant or shy about asking for help, even though Home and Care funds are earmarked for such purposes; the most common type of

funds advanced by Home and Care are grants or loans to friends of limited means. "Swing loans" are the second most common, typically advanced to friends moving into Foulkeways who need time to sell their prior residences. Friends approved the Home and Care Report.

Tom Rie, clerk of the Quarterly Meeting Fund, talked about the excessively "bureaucratic" process of applying for funds, and the required review before funds can be advanced, particularly as it effects the Junior Friends and Middle School Friends conferences which are held every summer. Applications for JF and MSF conference funding are much the same each year. So the time and paperwork involved is entirely repetitive, year after year. He proposed we make the grant process to the two conferences automatic up to a \$5K limitation. The meeting approved Tom's proposal.

Susan Vorwerk made a presentation about website and communications issues. She began by noting that many churches are closing down; many others are losing membership. She then proposed an AQ communications committee to improve our visibility and outreach. She talked about Upper Dublin's experience setting up a website; in so doing they discovered that the meetings in the quarter all have different "platforms" such as the Quaker Cloud or Wordpress (a popular program for managing website content) which runs on many website servers. Art D'Adamo who manages the Gwynedd website gave us some more background, leading up to the idea that if AQ's local meetings had a central, quarterly support resource it might help to improve visibility on the web for all meetings in the quarter. Then Susan resumed her presentation, encouraging us to consider forming this proposed communications committee. "All boats will float in a rising tide," she said. A friend expressed optimism, while noting we all need to work together. Cost is a consideration. Some meetings in the Quarter are using the "FGC Cloud," but actually it is more expensive than some other alternatives.

At that point it was 10AM, and we adjourned for worship

Following worship with Upper Dublin, and a 20 minute break for refreshments, Amelia rang the "gong" for the Quarterly meeting to reconvene. Returning to the website question she asked for volunteers who would like to join the prospective committee. Sam Laskish spoke up, explained he has a background in software, and volunteered for the committee. He asked if we had thought of hiring a web designer. Amelia said that is a long-term possibility. Then Dan Turner, the current administrator of the AQ website, volunteered. A friend suggested every monthly meeting might want to have someone on the committee. Anna Fox from Horsham volunteered. Rebecca suggested David Miller from Plymouth may want to

be on the committee. Tom Rie, clerk of the Quarterly Meeting Fund, noted that if this prospective committee wants to apply for funding, April 15 will be the next likely deadline for applying for a grant. He also noted there are prerequisites that need to be in order before an application can be processed. Bob Reiff, AQ assistant treasurer, then volunteered. Friends approved the Communications Committee arrangements as discussed.

Karen Shanoski gave the report on the 2019 JF and MSF conferences, and a video presentation of footage at this year's conferences, which were held at George School. The written report is included by reference in these minutes. After her presentation we took time to hear comments about the conference experience. Several children who had attended spoke. Then Karen read a few written comments. Clearly all those who spoke or contributed comments had fun, and were pleased to connect with other Quaker kids. A number of adult members visited on "alumni day", including Ruth Peterson, Tom Armstrong and others. Karen explained that on the last day they ended the program at about 4 in the afternoon and then had a picnic for everyone who could stay. Karen concluded by telling us that after many years it is time for her and Charlie to step down as directors of the program. Joe Schatz and Stephanie Rushie will lead the JF and MSF conferences next year.

Friends approved a minute of gratitude for Karen and Charlie.

Pam Yaller gave a presentation about "Mothers in Charge". She has been involved with them for about 12 years. The organization started in Philadelphia to provide grief support for families that had lost children to gun violence. Then it expanded its scope, hoping to do something to stop the epidemic of violence. It now has affiliated chapters in a number of cities, nationally. Members at Upper Dublin decided to do what they could to help. Pam told us about their interactions with Carson Valley, a school for "adjudicated" girls. Pam said they have been inviting groups of these girls to visit at Upper Dublin. She said they really appreciate the food! But they are also attentive to the educational program that Susan described – most of these girls are African American, and the program is about Quaker history in the abolition of slavery movement. They go out and walk around Upper Dublin's graveyard where African Americans were buried, and are now memorialized by a stone historical marker. Pam told us about showing the girls how to bake muffins or cupcakes in the Upper Dublin meeting house kitchen. A friend asked if Mothers in Charge coordinated with other groups (they do); another asked about educational opportunities (yes, and there are many different types of them). Concluding her presentation, Pam characterized the "Mothers' in Charge" program as "comprehensive community healing."

Pam also mentioned another program called “Lipstick”. This is intended to help or influence young women who are coerced into doing straw purchases of guns for criminals -- whether their boyfriends, family members, or other connections. So long as guns are out there, murders persist. The homicide rate in Philadelphia has actually been going up.

Susan Vorwerk then gave a short presentation about “plarn” – sleeping mats that are woven out of plastic bags. There is an organization called “Spin” that has taken on plarn mat making. Susan says the plarn project now has 8 looms. She asked the AQ membership to consider donating plastic bags. Contact Susan if you want to make a donation. Large and regular size plastic shopping bags are OK, but not skinny newspaper delivery bags.

Betsy Lukshides spoke about the "Worm project" that she has been working on. Many of our monthly meetings have coin collection containers for this project. This was started by the Mennonite Franconia community. They collect money so they can buy medicine that counters the parasitic worms that are serious health problem in Africa. It only cost 2 cents a pill, and 2 pills eliminate worms in one child.

We concluded the meeting with a short moment of thankful silence.

Dan Turner

Amelia Diamond

Note Taker

Clerk