

Minutes of the 195th Business Meetings of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Wednesday July 29, 2015

1. The first business session opened with a period of centering worship.
2. In the absence of Rex Sprouse, Stephen Angell is acting as presiding clerk.
3. Steve Angell welcomed Friends to the first session of the 195th business meetings of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.
4. **Roll Call of Representatives**

Friends who were named by their monthly meetings as representatives to the yearly meeting annual sessions identified themselves. A complete list of all representatives is appended to these minutes. Other OVYM Friends and visitors introduced themselves.
5. Gratitude was expressed to those who are working with our young people.
6. **Delegates to other business sessions**

Susan Lee Barton will serve as our representative to the children's program and Ben Griffith will visit with our middle youth.
7. **Whitewater Quarterly Meeting Report**

Dinah Duvall encouraged Friends to bring the minute adopted by the quarter on their concern with racial profiling in law enforcement to their monthly meetings. It was also referred to the yearly meeting Peace & Social Concerns Committee for consideration.
8. **Miami Quarterly Meeting Report**

The 2014 joint quarterly meeting had low attendance, resulting in less income than needed to cover costs. A subsequent survey of members did not reveal any clear-cut reasons for the low attendance figures. As a result, Miami QM cancelled the joint meeting planned for this fall, but the quarter intends to host joint meetings in the fall of 2016.

The minute on fossil fuel divestment, approved by the quarter, was read. A threshing session on this minute is scheduled for later in the week.
9. **Initial Nominating Committee Report**

Ben Griffith presented an initial list of nominees for the coming year. It was noted that only one person will remain on the Nominating Committee at the end of the current sessions. Friends were reminded of their obligation to assist the committee in identifying those who could serve the yearly meeting.
10. **Executive Committee Report**

The attendance at the June meeting in Indianapolis was very low. This raises the question of whether we should change when and how often the committee meets, or if the yearly meeting should consider restructuring the way we conduct our business.

An ad hoc committee to explore restructuring was **approved**. Deborah Jordan, Terre Holada, Michele Tomarelli, and Ann Pellegrino will serve as members. The committee may be augmented at future sessions (see minute 19).

11. Religious Nurture & Education Committee Report – State of Society Summary

Nikki Coffey Tousley summarized the State of Society Reports received from our monthly meetings. The committee was encouraged to see many of our meetings are actively engaging with the challenges they face. On the other hand, meetings do not seem to feel a need for a strong relationship with the yearly meeting.

12. The minutes of the first business session were **approved**.

13. The session closed with a period of waiting worship.

Thursday July 30, 2015

14. The session opened with a period of centering worship during which Steve Angell read an extract on what it means for Friends to be an expression of God's community today from Ben Pink Dandelion's *Open for Transformation: Being Quaker*, the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.

15. Steve Angell welcomed Friends to the second business session.

16. Roll Call of Representatives

Friends who were named by their monthly meetings as representatives to the yearly meeting annual sessions identified themselves. A complete list of all representatives is appended to these minutes. Other OVYM Friends and visitors introduced themselves.

17. Nominating Committee

Ben Griffith introduced the other members of the Nominating Committee. Lisa Cayard and Gail Koehler were brought forward to serve on the 2015 Epistolary Committee. **Approved**.

18. Delegates to other business sessions

Michele Tomarelli will serve as our representative to the teens and Victoria Burke will meet with Young Adult Friends.

19. Stephen Angell and Shannon Isaacs were **approved** as additional members of the ad hoc committee to explore restructuring (see minute 10).

20. Quaker Heights Care Community

Wendy Waters-Connell, Executive Director, reported for Quaker Heights, our largest ministry. She introduced Sydney McBride, a recent Earlham College graduate and administrative intern at Quaker Heights.

“These are very trying times” for the facility; it currently has a \$418,000 deficit. Occupancy is down, despite a record number of admissions and discharges. This is because the average length of stay is down as a result of cuts in insurance coverage.

In order to cut administrative costs and to finance the conversion to all private rooms, the board has approved selling the right to operate 28 beds to a Cincinnati-based, religious not-for-profit organization. The sale is not yet final.

She highlighted the results of the Ohio Department of Aging Nursing Home Family Satisfaction Survey. Quaker Heights received a score of 90.1, compared to the state average score of 85.8. They believe they are very good in caring for their residents, and it is nice to have their families confirm this.

Currently, Quaker Heights has a four-star rating from Medicare, that is, it is in the top one-third of all facilities in the country. Their goal is to be in the top 10%, a five-star rating.

OVYM deeply appreciates the leadership Wendy Waters-Connell gives Quaker Heights Care Community. She embodies Quaker principles in her management style. Under her leadership Quaker Heights has grown to become one of the top eldercare facilities in the nation. We ask Friends to hold her in the Light as she continues the work of OVYM's ministry.

21. Minutes 14-20 were **approved**.

22. **Statistician's Report**

Frank Huss reported the total membership in the yearly meeting declined only slightly in the past year from 664 to 661 members.

23. **Treasurer's Report**

The past year involved a lot of talking about budgets and asking for extra financial support. Wilson Palmer reported meetings and individuals donated \$18,315 toward the teen trip to Costa Rica and teen fundraising activities raised another \$1,427. Individuals also responded to the OVYM appeal letter, contributing \$3,430 (as of July 31) toward our efforts to balance the budget in fiscal year 2015-16.

The budget deficit for 2014-15 was about \$1700 - almost \$8000 better than expected. This was achieved in large part because most monthly meetings continue to support OVYM at the proportional share level and some donate even more. In addition, lower than expected expenses reduced the net budget loss. We budgeted for a Middle Youth coordinator that we did not hire, many Friends who traveled in support of OVYM committees did not ask to be reimbursed, and the Adult Young Friends have been mostly self-supporting – not spending their budget.

Wilson also highlighted two new funds. First, a memorial gift from Eileen Bagus was used to create the Spiritual Nurture Fund. The Religious Nurture & Education Committee will use this legacy to enrich and deepen us spiritually. Second, the Braddock Fund is now under the care of the yearly meeting. Friends who feel called to prison ministry can request help from that fund for financial assistance.

Note: Final figures for the teen trip are not included in this report. A complete report on the 2014-15 fiscal year will be presented at the fall Executive Committee meeting.

24. **Proposed Budget from Budget & Finance Committee**

Ben Griffith presented the draft budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year. The committee worked very hard to bring a balanced budget. This was achieved by increasing expected income – mostly in the form of individual donations – and budgeting expenses at levels closer to what was actually spent in the last year. Although budgeted expenses are less than in last year's

budget, the new budget proposes about \$1000 more than the amount actually spent in the last fiscal year.

The proposed budget does not change the contributions that the yearly meeting makes to other Quaker organizations. There was extensive discussion of these donations. Some felt that money given to the yearly meeting should be used only for activities of the yearly meeting – not donated to other organizations. Others felt that we need to recognize that we are only a part of a larger Quaker community and that the contributions made to other organizations strengthens the Religious Society of Friends as a whole. We did not find unity on these questions.

This raised the larger question of what the mission of the yearly meeting is and whether we are giving sufficient support to meet it. There is no written mission statement, although one Friend pointed us to our *Book of Faith & Practice* for guidance.

The budget was **approved**. Friends were encouraged to bring their concerns to the Budget & Finance Committee so that they could be addressed in the budget for next year. It was noted that an open session on the budget is held each year on the morning of the April Executive Committee meeting and a draft budget is sent to all monthly meetings for review.

A threshing session on financial concerns was scheduled for Friday at 9pm.

25. **Braddock Fund**

All moneys have been moved out of the institutions holding Braddock money. Friends **approved** authorizing the treasurer to open an account with the Friends Fiduciary Corporation Green Fund to hold the Braddock Fund.

The Presiding Clerk, Recording Clerk, and Treasurer will be authorized signers on that account. For the next year, these are:

Presiding Clerk: Rex Sprouse, 3476 John Hinkle Place, Bloomington, Indiana, 812-272-3332, rsprouse@indiana.edu

Recording Clerk: Paul Buckley, 3427 Middleton Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio, 513-221-1827, bucklpa@earlham.edu

Treasurer: Wilson Palmer, 821 Dunore Rd, Cincinnati, Ohio, 513-751-4352, wilsoncp@fuse.net

Other investment instruments are available that may meet fossil fuel divestment concerns and offer a higher rate of return. This will require setting criteria and a process for evaluating those funds. The treasurer welcomes help in doing this work.

The yearly meeting needs to create policies and procedures for these funds that are consistent with the ministry specified by the former Braddock Trust, but allow service in the whole of OVYM. This means expanding the original language to allow ministry by those living in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. The Braddock Fund Committee is tasked with writing a governing section for the OVYM Handbook and bringing it to Executive Committee for review and approval.

26. Minutes 22-25 were reviewed and **approved**.

27. The session closed with a period of waiting worship.

Threshing Sessions

28. The Faith & Practice Committee has developed a third draft of a text on Integrity and a first draft of a text on Simplicity. These were circulated during the past year to monthly meetings. Based on the responses received, new drafts of each were written. The new drafts were presented for threshing.

Without discussion, Friends **approved** accepting the draft on Simplicity. It will be printed in the 2015 Minute Book and brought for final approval at next year's business meeting.

In discussion of the section on Integrity, Friends made the following comments:

- A Friend asked about the changes made in moving from the third to the fourth draft. Lisa Cayard described the process the committee followed, but was unable to speak to any particular change. The committee reads aloud all comments from monthly meetings and the text of the current draft. Individual members then may suggest that individual sentences be re-written or eliminated. Sometimes, the committee will labor with single words, seeking to find as true a statement of our faith and practice as possible.
- Another Friend said that her standard was whether a text made her heart sing.
- We were reminded that those seeking membership are referred to *Faith & Practice* in order to better understand who we are, how we act, and what we believe.
- One Friend suggested that "sincerity, honesty and fair dealing," used in the previous draft, may be a better way of describing what we mean by integrity.
- The words "as best we can" in the first paragraph seem to weaken our statement. It was suggested that we should always do the best we can and don't need to say it.
- Another Friend thought acknowledging our limitations with this qualifier was appropriate.
- An alternative suggested was to phrase it as "seeking to discern..." rather than "discerning."
- Friends were reminded that this level of wordsmithing slows the process to such an extent that we will not see a complete draft within our lifetime or that of our children.

With minor changes at the discretion of the committee, Friends **approved** accepting the draft on Integrity. It will be printed in the 2015 Minute Book and brought for final approval at next year's business meeting.

29. Minute 28 was **approved**.

30. A minute on Fossil Fuel Divestment approved by Miami Quarterly Meeting was brought forward:

Miami Quarter of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) commits to divesting our quarter's financial resources from all fossil fuel extraction companies. Miami Quarter will publicize this act of divestment from all corporations involved with extracting coal, petroleum, and natural gas as one way to raise

awareness of the critical global challenge of climate change. We will make these financial changes as soon as reasonably possible to reflect right relationship with Earth, as well as other Quaker values, including equality and integrity.

Friends responded in a variety of ways:

- One Friend asked that nuclear power be included in the minute.
- It was asked what implementation of the minute would mean as a practical matter. What are the financial implications?
- The process by which the minute originated in Community Monthly Meeting, was approved by Miami Quarter, and brought to yearly meeting sessions was reviewed.
- Our money is now mostly held by First Merchants Bank in Muncie. We do not know how that bank invests its holdings or what their loan policies are.
- An alternative would be to invest in fossil fuel extraction companies in order to have a voice in their decision-making.
- When we take our money out of a company, it gives us an opportunity to draw attention to the issue. It is public testimony to our beliefs.
- Approving this minute is itself a form of witness. We can post our action on the 350.org website and elsewhere on the internet. It could be in our epistle and in *Friends Journal*. A press release could go to such media outlets as Green America and *Yes* magazine.
- Divestment is a statement of what we are against. Can we go further and say what we favor?
- Our individual lifestyles speak of our values. If we approve a divestment minute, how do we need to change ourselves?
- This minute is just one small step, a start, not an endpoint.
- This would give us an opportunity to express our beliefs to our elected officials and to other Friends churches and meetings.
- Fossil fuels divestment may be a start at being more broadly socially conscious in how we invest our money, both as a yearly meeting and as individuals.
- QuakerInstitute.org has produced materials that may be of value.
- A list of socially conscious investment funds was read.

The clerk suggested a minute. A few changes resulted in the following minute:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) commits to divesting our yearly meeting's financial resources from all fossil fuel extraction companies. OVYM will publicize this act of divestment from all corporations involved with extracting coal, petroleum, and natural gas as one way to raise awareness of the critical global challenge of climate change. We will make these financial changes to reflect right relationship with Earth, as well as other Quaker values, including equality

and integrity. We will do so as soon as reasonably possible. We encourage our members and other Quaker bodies to take similar action.

It was noted that this minute does not specify exactly what will be done, but rather sets a direction for the yearly meeting. Implementation will require careful and prayerful consideration at each step in a process which may require several years.

The minute was **approved**.

Friday July 31, 2015

31. The session opened with a period of centering worship during which Steve Angell read a section on Friends' reluctance to teach Quakerism as more than personal and individual beliefs from Ben Pink Dandelion's *Open for Transformation: Being Quaker*, the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.

32. The presiding clerk welcomed Friends to the third business session.

33. **Roll Call of Representatives**

Friends who were named by their monthly meetings as representatives to the yearly meeting annual sessions identified themselves. A complete list of all representatives is appended to these minutes. Other OVYM Friends and visitors introduced themselves.

34. **Friends Music Camp**

Because of Olney Friends School's budgeting needs, Friends Music Camp had to increase its rates more than usual this year. As a result, enrollment is down and requests for scholarships are up. They greatly appreciate the yearly meeting's financial support.

There is a proposal to consider moving to Earlham College. They have strong ties to Olney and have developed a good partnership over the years, but with the construction of a new performing arts facility at Earlham, the time is right to look into a potential change. This could result in an overlap between the camp and the OVYM annual sessions.

35. **Development Committee Report**

The Development Committee was established at the 2014 Annual Sessions. The committee's major effort in the past year was an appeal letter sent to individuals in OVYM in the spring of this year. To date, fifty-seven Friends have responded to the letter with contributions of \$3,630.

This summer, they encouraged annual sessions participants to make donations to partially offset the \$12,000 budgeted deficit in the session budget and, as of Friday morning, forty-seven attenders contributed \$3,685.

The differences between the yearly meeting's fiscal year and the monthly meeting calendars has caused confusion for some monthly meetings. This issue has been under discussion by the Budget & Finance Committee. The treasurer noted that different monthly meetings have different budget years. In addition, the expenses of the teens' service trips are often not booked until after the end of the yearly meeting's fiscal year. No obvious solution has presented itself.

The Development Committee was established to help achieve a balanced budget by encouraging individual and Monthly Meeting donations. If the committee is continued, they plan to provide testimony, print materials, and other tangible evidence that demonstrate the value of OVYM programs, services, spiritual support to OVYM members and attenders; and by visitation to monthly meetings. The committee will bring a proposal to the fall 2015 Executive Committee meeting on extending the life of the committee.

The Development Committee is grateful to all those who have contributed.

36. Faith & Practice Committee Report

At the 2014 sessions of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting two documents were accepted for a year of seasoning. “Quaker Testimonies” and “Peace” were published in the 2014 Minute Book and brought to the 2015 sessions for final approval. Friends **approved** both sections.

The committee is concerned that the current approval process takes a very long time to produce, distribute, comment, edit, and finally approve each new section in the book. Moreover, Friends have asked that each piece sent for comment be short, leading to some sections being divided into multiple pieces, each requiring separate approval. If the current process is followed for the rest of the book, they estimate it will take decades to produce a new edition of our book of discipline. Several alternate ways of completing the work more expeditiously were proposed.

Friends expressed confidence in the committee and appreciation for their work to date. It was also noted that the process of review has been of great benefit to our monthly meetings.

A related problem is that because we have approved new sections to replace portions of the 1978 book, there is no easily-accessed, single text that represents who we are.

Friends **approved** encouraging the committee to pursue ways of speeding up the process. A specific proposal will be presented to the fall Executive Committee meeting by the committee.

37. Planning Committee Report

The process of planning the annual sessions has been a joy, a blessing, and deeply fulfilling for the current members, but it is also work that can be demanding. New members, particularly those who could serve as the local contact with Earlham, are needed.

Evaluation forms were distributed and Friends encouraged to provide the committee with the benefit of their wisdom for planning future sessions.

Friends Music Camp’s potential move to Earlham brings opportunities and possible complications.

The committee was praised for rearranging the schedule this year, so that people who could only come for the weekend would have the opportunity to participate in a workshop.

38. Minutes 31-37 were reviewed and **approved**.

39. Friends Committee on National Legislation Report

Diane Randall, the FCNL Executive Secretary, encouraged Friends to come to the Quaker Public Policy Institute, preceding the FCNL annual meetings in November 2015. The

meetings will be focused on peacemaking. She also asked that Friends contact their representatives and senators in support of the Iran nuclear agreement.

Finally, she thanked the meeting for the financial support that we provide. A strong base among Friends is essential to their success.

Paul Kriese, an OVYM representative to the FCNL General Committee, noted it is the oldest faith-based lobby in Washington and among the most respected – “When FCNL speaks, they listen.”

40. Indiana Friends Committee on Legislation

The IFCL was founded in 1970 to represent Indiana Quakers to the state legislature. Bill Chapman, the IFCL Clerk, noted that most of the support for the organization has come from Western YM. He invited OVYM members in Indiana to become more active in its activities. A major issue coming up is the establishment of a non-partisan redistricting process.

Grace Miller, a member of Irvington Meeting and the IFCL lobbyist, introduced herself. She gave a sense of the many issues of concern to Friends that need to be addressed in Indiana and asked for our support – including financial support – and involvement. All are welcome to participate in its monthly meetings in Indianapolis.

A questionnaire was distributed and is available on line to determine which issues are of greatest importance to OVYM members.

41. American Friends Service Committee

Erin Polley and Elle Roberts, AFSC staff from Indianapolis, and Migwe Kimemia from Dayton introduced themselves and briefly described their work.

The AFSC is seeking Friends to serve on national and local committees.

Erin also thanked OVYM, the monthly meetings, and individuals for their past financial support and noted how important its connections with Friends are to AFSC.

42. Minutes 39-41 were reviewed, edited, and approved.

43. Publications Coordinator Report

David Pfaltzgraff-Carlson thanked Friends for the support he has received, in particular, from Deborah Jordan for her work on preparing the Reports in Advance for these sessions.

44. Quill Editor's Report

Deborah Jordan acknowledged the work of Cecilia Shore as *Quill* editor. She asked Friends to let her know if they preferred to receive their copy by email or through the mail on paper.

45. Web Administrator's Report

Lonny Burger thanked Friends for allowing him to continue working on the creative outlet that is the OVYM Website. We have an average of 40 page visits per day with a total of 1100 visits in July. The annual complete rebuild of the site went live on January 1st.

The OVYM Facebook page – accessible by a link on the Website's Home Page – has been up for a year. It is available as an alternate way to post coming events and other news, and to get information about what's going on around the Yearly Meeting. When you “Like” a Facebook page, you get emails when new coming events or news gets posted.

If you have something you want posted to the Website or the OVYM Facebook Page, let Lonny know and please specify the page to update.

46. The session closed with a period of waiting worship.

Saturday August 1, 2015

47. The session opened with a period of centering worship during which Steve Angell read a section on how much we need each other and to know each other in the things that are eternal if we are to truly be Quaker from Ben Pink Dandelion's *Open for Transformation: Being Quaker*, the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.

48. Steve welcomed Friends to the fourth business session. He invited Friends and visitors who had not already done so to introduce themselves.

49. Minutes 43-46 were reviewed and **approved**.

50. **OVYM Earthcare Committee Report**

Bill Cahalan reported the committee's focus continues to be on the global ecological crisis driven largely by the use of fossil fuels. They are encouraged by Pope Francis' recent encyclical. The success of Earth Quaker Action Teams in addressing mountain-top removal coal mining shows how effective nonviolent direct action can be. Bill thanked Marjorie Isaacs for her work on the fossil fuels divestment minute that was approved by OVYM on Thursday (see minute 30).

Bill asked if Friends were willing joining other Quakers in signing the statement, *Facing the Challenge of Climate Change*, which was developed by Quaker Earthcare Witness, the Quaker United Nations Office, and Friends Committee on National Legislation. Friends **approved** signing this statement.

51. **Pfaltzgraff-Carlson Report on their Travels in the Ministry to Japan**

Rhonda and David Pfaltzgraff-Carlson and their two sons, Reid and Bing, traveled among Friends and others in Japan for three weeks in June and July of this year. Their traveling minute was endorsed by Tokyo, Osaka, Tsuchiura, and Mito Monthly Meetings. The endorsements were read. They also attended Shimotsuma Monthly Meeting.

The purpose of their visit was to be a listening presence and to learn more about Japanese Friends. In addition to the five meetings, they visited Quaker schools and other Quaker institutions. Rhonda and David showed pictures of their travels and spoke of their experiences.

Japanese Friends' greatest concerns are their aging population and the resulting decline in their membership, and the influence of the United States on the militarization of their country.

Although David and Rhonda had hoped to spend more time in worship and spiritual conversation with Japanese Friends, the limited time they had was deeply fulfilling. Their message of new life among Friends may find resonance in the future.

The report was **accepted**.

52. Friends Peace Team Report

Frank Huss reported that Friends Peace Teams are involved in three initiatives: *Peacebuilding en Las Américas* (PLA), Asian West Pacific (AWP), and the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI). These initiatives are on the cutting edge of developing new peacemaking tools that really work. They have found that community-building with the Alternatives to Violence Project and AVP-style trauma resiliency workshops has been greatly appreciated. Mediation, non-violent social change work, and development projects to empower the neediest or to enhance further cooperation among villagers has led to more economic security and hope.

53. Friends General Conference

Vanessa Julye, a Friends General Conference staff member, reported that about 100 Quakers (including about a dozen from OVYM) attended the White Privilege Conference that was held in Louisville in March 2015. The conference also led to consideration of privilege and racism by Louisville Meeting. FGC is helping facilitate the next conference to be held in Philadelphia in April 14-17, 2016.

This year's Gathering in Cullowhee, North Carolina was a great success (about 50 OVYM members attended) and they are looking forward to the 2016 Gathering in Saint Joseph, Minnesota.

Among other FGC programs, Vanessa highlighted the Friends of Color Gathering that will take place in Clarkston, Michigan, November 6-8, 2015.

54. Quaker Earthcare Witness Report

Marjorie Isaacs, an OVYM representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness, reported that the primary purpose of the organization is transforming values and attitudes towards the earth and all its inhabitants. She was surprised at how responsive and supportive the organization has been for her and for others involved in environmental action – she encouraged us to discover this for ourselves.

Mini-grants (up to \$500) are available for monthly meetings to facilitate local environmental action.

The report was **accepted**.

55. Minutes 47-54 were reviewed, edited, and **approved**.

56. Young Adult Friends Report

Josh Medlin reported that OVYM young adults made a financial contribution to and were co-sponsored of an Inter-Branch Young Adult Friends Gathering that took place last winter at Community Friends in Cincinnati. One YAF participated in the planning and about half the participants in the event were from OVYM.

57. Youth Secretary's Report

Carol Simmons reported on the summer service trip to Costa Rica. This was the highlight of the past year. Since it has been six years since the last major trip, college-aged Friends were included. She shared pictures and experiences of the trip and the work accomplished. The

group's traveling minute and the endorsement by the clerk of Monteverde Monthly Meeting were read.

The Teen Activities Committee hopes to have a trip of this scope about every five years.

Friends appreciated the work that Carol has done with our teens over the past five years. Her hard work has been a blessing to our young people.

58. Teen Activities Committee Report

Peter Hardy reflected on the importance of our teen activities for the youth who have participated. It has given them a real sense of what it means to be a Quaker. It is expensive, but he has no doubt it is money well spent. He noted that one-third of those in attendance at our sessions this year are young people. One measure of the value of our program is that most attend college – many at Quaker colleges – and their studies reflect the values we are transmitting. He hoped we could continue this vital program.

59. Middle Youth Committee Report

Rachel Gill was grateful for the program that she inherited from Martha Viehmann, and the skills of others who are engaged in it. It has been a lesson to her in the value of “just showing up.”

60. Children's Committee Report

Susan Hyde brought to our attention that several families were not able to attend this year's sessions since school has already started. The same people have served for some time on the committee – new members and the new energy, thoughts and participation they bring, are very welcome.

61. Minutes 56-60 were reviewed, edited, and **approved**.

62. The session closed with a period of waiting worship.

Sunday August 2, 2015

63. The session opened with a period of centering worship during which Steve Angell read a section on “listening in tongues” from Ben Pink Dandelion's *Open for Transformation: Being Quaker*, the 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.

64. Steve welcomed Friends to the fifth business session.

65. Reports from the Visitors to Children, Middle Youth, Teens and Young Adults

Children's Meeting Visitor's Report

Susan Lee Barton emphasized to the children that she was there to let them know that OVYM is here to support them as a part of our wider community. The children expressed their joy at having adults come and visit them. They were also thankful for having their own space at sessions.

Young Adult Friends Visitor's Report

Victoria Burke reported her joy at being with the group.

Teen Business Meeting Visitor's report

Michele M. Tomarelli reported “The Teens are a very responsible and capable group.” They said that that is how they should be described, and fortunately, the statement is true. The teens are also humorous and socially adept. Their 2015 business meeting was well-run according to Friends’ custom and they accomplished all their business with time to spare, even allowing for frequent silences. They have been attentive during the sessions and plenaries, for example, quoting Ross and commenting that the notion of “privilege” has become trendy (i.e., cliché). The teens made sure that younger teens and newcomers would be mentored during activities and arranged for the transition of the new clerks. We are fortunate in our youth.

66. Nominating Committee

Paul Kriese shared Ben Griffith’s thanks to all Friends willing to serve.

Final Nominations were brought forward and **approved**.

67. ad hoc Committee on Restructuring Report

The committee met and will prepare some suggestions on how to proceed to the Executive Committee.

68. Minute of Appreciation for those leaving service to OVYM

The Yearly Meeting thanks Ben Griffith for his dedicated service in many roles, including most recently, convening the Nominating Committee and the Budget & Finance Committee. Appreciation was expressed to Steve Angell for acting as presiding clerk during these sessions and to Terre Holada for her service as recording clerk for the last four years.

69. Greetings to Absent Friends

During our 2015 Annual Sessions, greetings were sent to the following absent Friends: Rex Sprouse, Ria Collee, Diann Herzog, the Bruner family, Tunia McClure, Ron Haldeman, Andrew Garrison and Cecelia Shore, Caroline Taylor, Paul Ricketts, and Yoshiya Togami.

70. Planning Committee

The 2016 sessions of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will be held at Earlham College. Final dates will be reported to the fall Executive Committee meeting.

71. Registrar’s Report

Eric Wolff reported that 165 persons were registered for this year’s sessions, including 68 men, 96 women, 24 Adult Young Friends, and 24 Children (3 aged 0-6; 6 aged 7-10; 7 aged 11-14; and 8 aged 15-18). (Note: a final Registrar’s Report with corrected counts is appended below.)

Thanks were expressed to Eric for everything he has done before and during sessions.

72. 2015 Epistles

Epistles from the Children, Middle Youth, Teens, and Adult Young Friends were read and **accepted**.

The 2015 Epistle of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting was read and with a few modifications, **accepted**.

73. The remaining minutes were reviewed, edited, and approved.

74. Closing Worship was held in Stout Meetinghouse

Roll Call of Monthly Meeting Representatives

Bloomington:	Jeanette Shetter
Campus:	Dale Hayes
Clear Creek:	David Garman
Community:	Lisa Cayard
Dayton:	Nikki Coffey Tousley & Barbara Robinson
Eastern Hills:	Wilson Palmer
Englewood:	Kay Wheeler
Fall Creek:	Josh Medlin
Fort Wayne:	Terre Holada
Green Plain:	(No representative present)
Hopewell:	(No representative present)
Lafayette:	Ann Pelligrino
Lexington:	Betsy Neale & Richard Mitchell
Louisville:	Beth Parrish
Miami:	Lonny Burger
North Meadow:	Dinah Duvall
Oxford:	Anne Hutchinson
White Rose:	Vaughn Peebles
Yellow Springs:	Deb Kociszewski

Representatives and Visitors from Other Quaker Organizations

American Friends Service Committee	Erin Polley, Elle Roberts, & Migwe Kimemia
Friends Committee on National Legislation	Diane Randall
Friends General Conference	Vanessa Julye
Indiana Friends Committee on Legislation	Bill Chapman & Grace Miller
Quaker Heights Care Community	Wendy Waters-Connell & Sydney McBride
Quaker Heritage Center	Ruth Brindle