

Concord Quarterly Meeting Planning Committee Minutes July 26, 2020 by Zoom

Present: Debbie Murray-Sheppard (Wilmington, Clerk), Lynne Piersol (Coordinator), Rich Ailes (M), Charlie Spadoni (B), Chris McKenney (B), Marty Boston (B), Deb Lyons (WC), Melinda Wenner Bradley (WC), Steve Kupferschmid (Willistown), Deb Wood (WT),

Excused: Judy Reese (Concord), Julie Senko (B)

Worship

Approval of May 3 and 31, 2020 minutes. The minutes from both meetings were approved.

Review of the QM by Zoom on July 19:

A total of 20 adults were present on Zoom in person or by phone, for meeting for business, representing all of the eight constituent meetings. The short children's program had 2 children participating who enjoyed it, and the program was well done, but we wish more had joined. Worship included many from Western Quarter and about 43 "screens" were present. About 30 people participated in the breakout groups afterwards. 62 Friends had registered for the whole day including WQ, and about 25 of those were CQ folks.

Braver Angels Workshop – about 70 folks registered from all over, including California, including the BA tech folks and moderators! Most were Quaker, some not. About 50 registrants participated fully, with some who had not completed the online module being designated as observers and did not participate in breakout groups (but they didn't leave either!)

Comments: We had a lot more attendance at meeting for business this time, compared with April. Folks enjoyed the breakout sessions at the end with the queries, with appreciation for the technology making it possible. The Braver Angels Workshop went well, with a few tech issues, and a few who found some of the instructions hard to follow. It was exciting to have 70 folks sign up.

Question: Chichester has been part of the roll call of meetings although it has no regular worshippers and Appoquinimink is not included, which does have some regular worshippers. There is a history of recognizing Chichester because the Caretaker there has been present and active. However, she is no longer able to participate. Since Chichester is no longer a monthly meeting (its meetinghouse is owned by Concord Meeting which is part of the roll call) **we agreed to drop Chichester as one of the meetings in the roll call.** Appoquinimink is a preparative meeting under the care of Wilmington so it is represented through Wilmington.

Planning for Quarterly Meeting with Middletown Meeting as host on October 25, 2020:

Quarterly Meeting at Middletown will be a virtual session. Middletown is interested in helping people of limited means through the COVID experience, especially around the issue of food insecurity. We agreed to have the program be on this issue, perhaps with people from local food banks presenting, and an article about these resources for the October newsletter. Rich Ailes asked for support for planning this program, and Debbie Murray-Sheppard and Lynne Piersol agreed to help. with Rich in charge of this "working group". There are food banks in Delaware and Chester Counties Pennsylvania as well as in New Castle County, Delaware and we have meetings and members in all of those places.

The program will be on a separate day, as we did for the recent Quarterly Meeting. A program for youth will be planned around this theme as well.

Tentative Business Agenda for October not necessarily in this order...:

- Query: (either at beginning, or as part of sharing at the end)
- Joys and Challenges Report: Willistown and Westtown** (this make us “current”)
- Treasurer’s Report**
- Working Group on Aging Concerns Update**
- Coordinator’s Report**
- DVFS/Concord Quarter Care Committee report**
- State of the Quarter process to be approved**
(Document retention policy if ready)
- Program – Possibly Wednesday evening, October 28?**

We agreed that the DVFS/CQ Care Committee should report once a year in the fall, and the school will report each year in January.

Schedule for October 25.

- 8:45 Sign-In**
- 9-10:15 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**
- 10:25 - 10:55 Children’s program**
- 11:00- Meeting for Worship** (need to decide whose Zoom account to use, so that Middletown folks have meeting for worship at their regular time and it includes those coming for Quarterly Meeting)
- 12 – 12:30 Break out groups for fellowship**

Children’s programming (including child care): Youth Program Planning group will work on something to do with the theme of the program. Melinda Wenner Bradley is the convener for the group.

Changing the Schedule for rotating Quarterly Meetings?

The question was raised to accommodate Willistown’s request not to always host in the summer, and so that the meetings without a children’s program are not hosting all in a row.

There was not unity on whether we should change the rotation so that Willistown does not meet in the summer. It may be that the rotation will need to change anyway without Concord Meeting taking a turn. **We agreed to bring the issue of how often we want to do a joint (with Western Quarter) Quarterly Meeting to Quarterly Meeting in October.**

Review and Updates on fellowship activities:

Lynne Piersol

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| June 27 | Everyone’s Got Talent via Zoom, joint with Western Quarter; small but fun. 8 performers and about 10 audience. We had all ages represented and are considering doing it again. We learned, thanks to consulting with Portland Meeting (ME) that people need to be invited to present – very few people just responded to the general invitation. |
| | Should we try to hold anything in person this fall (Hayride, Parents Morning Off?) It was decided not to hold these traditional events in person this fall. |

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| TBD | Another virtual activity? Western Qtr is open to working with us on another virtual event, perhaps another Everyone's Got Talent, or something else? Show and tell? Games? Storytelling? (see below) |
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We agreed to pursue the idea of an outdoor concert in a parking lot where people stay in their cars, possibly with Western Quarter, for early October (so it could be in the newsletter). Marty Boston will ask the musicians in her meeting if they might be available. A possible parking lot might be Wilmington Friends which would be more accessible if Western Quarter is involved. Willistown also has a decent sized parking lot. We liked the idea of asking for a donation from each carload that would be donated to one or more food banks.

Other ideas included a virtual family sing along, or something else outside like a movie. The idea of another "Everyone's Got Talent" was not ruled out.

Youth Program Working group:

We ended up not using the group to plan the virtual children's program for the July 19, 2020, joint quarterly meeting – the Western Quarter Youth Coordinator took responsibility since it would have been at Kennett Meeting if we had it in person. **Melinda will help pull something together for October.** She notes that middle schoolers are having the hardest time with Zoom; they are the least connected. She is thinking about how to support parents during this time. Idea – mail something to the children ahead of time.

Tuition Aid program:

The question was whether Planning Committee should recommend that we extend the Concord Quarter Tuition Aid program to the PreK year. **It was decided to maintain the current practice of offering aid to children entering Kindergarten through 12th grade only.** Lynne will make a change on the application to make it clear that aid is for grades K-12 only.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer noted that Friends Fiduciary has eliminated all investments in companies involved with fossil fuels in its Growth and Income Fund, and that it will be contacting investors about a new large-cap "Green Fund" it is in the process of establishing.

Newsletter Articles:

There will be an article on the Quarterly Meeting program in the October edition. Rich would like to have articles by a younger person and a person of color. Suggestions are welcome. Other ideas include a follow-up article on the Braver Angels workshop including some of their advices. There could also be articles on the Aging Concerns workshop happening in October, something on how retirement communities have coped with Covid-19, what meetings have done to stay connected in COVID times; and how are meetings feeling led around the issue of racial justice? The queries from PYM Racism plenary breakout groups could be included. Todd Baseden takes a lot of pictures and maybe he could share some (Birmingham).

Update on concern for archiving, document retention policy (information only, not discussed)

For the years 2016-19 Lynne has sent documents digitally to Friends Historical Library based on its guidelines. Draft document retention policy needs to be reviewed by a few folks before being presented.

Concord Quarter Working Group on Aging Concerns:

The Working Group meets August 5 and is planning a workshop with Susan Hoskins, Director of Friends Foundation on Aging, in October, online, most likely. The topic is retirement housing options for people of moderate means.

In reach:

The Coordinator continues to share information across meetings and on FaceBook, especially in relation to racial justice issues, and how to do Zoom, hybrid worship and considerations for reopening meetinghouses.

There is a concern for very small meetings and their ability to sustain themselves. The Coordinator is continuing visits virtually across the Quarter with those meetings that have a digital worship – not all do, so she is in touch with the others by phone or otherwise.

Concern for Concord Meeting: Since they are no longer able to host Quarterly meeting, we talked a bit about how to support them. **We will ask if they would like us to put a note in the newsletter with their time of worship, encouraging attendance. Debbie Murray -Sheppard will reach out to the Clerk of Concord Meeting.**

Outreach:

Coordinator continues FaceBook posting. The Braver Angels workshop drew in folks from all over – BA had it on their website too, and it was on the PYM website.

Delaware Valley Friends School Care Committee:

Next meets in September. **It was agreed that the Committee can report once a year in the fall.**

State of the Quarter report : Lynne Piersol & Debbie Murray-Sheppard
Pending.

Time and location for the next meeting. November 1 at 2pm via Zoom

We expressed our appreciation for Chris McKenney in his role as Clerk of Concord Quarterly Meeting.

We closed with a short silent worship.

Minutes by Lynne Piersol