

CALLED BUSINESS MEETING TO DECIDE 2026-27 PRESIDING CLERK FOR COLLEGE PARK QUARTERLY MEETING

Saturday, August 22, 9:30 am to 12:00 noon on Zoom

The called Meeting for Business opened at 9 :30 am with a period of worship. There were 58 participants present.

Clerk Eric Sabelman welcomed everyone to CPQM's first called meeting, to complete business that we couldn't finish at Spring Quarter, 2026. He expressed his pleasure in seeing so many people here, and that we would be, to some extent, discerning whether and how to manage changes in our traditions. Eric then shared the agenda.

Eric called for approval of the nominations of Stephen Myers to continue as assistant clerk and for Barbara Babin as co-recording clerk, nominations having been brought at Spring Quarter. __

**Minute 26.08.01 CPQM approved Stephen Myers to continue as
Assistant Clerk and approved Barbara Babin as co-recording clerk.**

- Thom McCue, Clerk of the Ministry and Spiritual Care Committee, reviewed the history of where we are now and explained the purpose of today's called meeting, which is to select a clerk for the coming year. He reviewed the background starting with the fact Alma Moon was nominated to the role of presiding clerk at Spring Quarter, 2026, but unity was not found at that time. He gave highlights of the two threshing sessions, held August 10 and August 16, stating that 40 of 47 Friends on August 10 spoke in approval of Alma's nomination and that it seemed there was unity in that session in approving her nomination. Thom then read CPQM's job description for Presiding Clerk, and shared some advices from Pacific Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice pertinent to the process of nominations. He reminded us to be open to Spirit, and to be kind and respectful to one another.

After a period of silence, clerk Eric Sabelman opened the discernment process.

First we heard from Mary Miché, clerk of Nominating Committee, who reminded us that early Friends had no membership process and that membership by itself is not what demonstrates commitment. Younger generations move a lot and need to work, which keeps them busy. They may not have the time to be involved in Monthly Meeting in the same way as older friends. They do participate in Quarterly and Yearly Meeting. Objections to a nomination may be about things that are not in the job description, such as how much participation should be required in terms of Monthly Meeting participation. Changes in requirements must be agreed upon by the whole body. Many older Friends are not understanding the issues that are faced by younger Friends and we need to consider how to let go of our rigidity and to listen.

Clerk Eric Sabelman offered a draft minute asking for approval of Alma Moon as Presiding Clerk and then called for a test of unity to see whether Meeting was ready to approve this nomination. There was considerable endorsement with a few persons raising their hands to speak.

Eric then recognized a those who wished to speak:

It was suggested that reasons for the membership exception might be included in the minute. The minute was adapted to include a sentence summarizing the reasons.

We were asked to take a moment to hold the voices that have been speaking strongly with caution about what we are about to do and recognize that they acted out of their sense of integrity. Acknowledge that this has taken courage. Is there any other truth that they have to share with us?

A Friend called for us to think about what we are doing, why we are doing it, and recognizing the intergenerational challenges that we have.

Eric noted that as for those who have expressed concerns about experience, new situations will arise for any clerk and any new clerk will need support. Support can be that of an Elder and also logistical and administrative support. The planning group provides logistical and administrative support and there is a job description for that group on the CPQM website. As far as an Elder, that is and always has been an option for the clerk to choose.

It was noted that we are facing up to an uncomfortable situation. We don't ask people to become members, but leave it up to people to apply on their own. We could encourage people to apply for membership who are active and faithfully attend meeting.

Some feel that through the threshing sessions we have undertaken something risky and bold. Faith and Practice's description of the role of the nominating committee expresses the concept of being bold. By taking a path that is new to us, we are recognizing a new way of moving into uncertainty.

Eric then called for approval of the minute as revised. The following minute was approved.

Minute 26.08.02 CPQM approves the nominee, Alma Moon, to be Presiding Clerk for a term starting at the conclusion of this called meeting and ending at the conclusion of the Spring Quarter 2027 (with a hope to renew). CPQM approves waiving the Monthly Meeting membership qualification on a one-time basis. We are making this exception due to the many years of Alma's participation in Quarterly and Yearly meetings and the numerous responsibilities she has held in those organizations.

Eric recognized that, though there will be a lot of work in handing off the clerkship, we look forward to that.

He invited us to reflect on what we have done today and what we may have learned. Faith and Practice is full of tools that will help us, even if not perfect. There are also tools that will help us with the outside world.

- Clerk, Eric Sabelman, then invited us to use our remaining time in an examination of bias, exclusion, distrust and barriers to communication within the Quarter. In a worship sharing format, we considered...Do we have bias and exclusion, failure to communicate, and practices that bar people from participating in our processes?

The following notes may be used to seed a deeper conversation, perhaps at the Fall Quarterly Meeting.

- Young Friends have a harder time with Zoom, and when we approved a Business Meeting on Zoom, I was not yet aware of that issue.
- What does it mean to be inclusive in light of the Zoom situation? We have been working through a procedural thing and there is also a reaching out thing. I tend to have a meal with people in my own generation. I see the same thing with the younger folks, and it would feel awkward to insert myself into their group. As a community we need to be sure we are literally and figuratively inviting people to the table.
- About 20 years ago on the YM Ministry committee, I agreed to serve a second term, but at the next reading my name was suddenly no longer on the nominating report. Neither I nor anyone else on the committee was informed that this was happening, but given the timing no one said anything. As a result of that experience I have agreed to serve on Nominating Committee when asked. There are now only 5 members of the PacYM Nominating Committee, and I'm concerned that we do not value our Nominating Committee and its work and process.
- Ben Lomond Family Work Camp is an example of many ages working together on tasks and also having conversations and meals together. It's a way of being an inclusive community with wonderful bonding.
- A conversation about inclusion and equity needs to include a conversation about power and the way that power flows. Tradition has its own power, and change to the status quo takes effort and energy which comes from the marginalized stance at the beginning. Coming in as newer, not using the expected words or vocabulary can result in being misheard. It can feel painful, and feel like exclusion, and can be exhausting. It's an effort to show up. Making the space more welcoming, a form of listening, would not put a burden on the new people to speak in the perfect, expected way.
- I feel moved by the process followed here today and the vocal ministry that I have heard. Inclusion and welcoming is a practice, an individual practice that we all do everyday. I am a former member of CPQM Nominating Committee, and 14-15 yrs ago received the advice that in terms of filling positions, you cannot put new wine in old wineskins.

Campers coming through BLQC summer camps are now adults; recognize the work camp as an example of community; am now on the JYM committee working with the teens who have a lot of wisdom in their following Quaker process, inclusion, and participation. I believe Spirit is speaking and guiding us and we are going to be OK as we go forward.

- Thanking everyone who has gone to vulnerable places today and in the threshing process. Would like to share two things 1) being in Quaker groups who line everyone by age and then counting off can yield mixed age small groups; 2) Nominating Committee has other positions for a first reading that could be shared today or sent out later.
- Experiences from the clerk: 1) In terms of a line up, another way is to go by your age not in calendar age, but in Quaker years. 2) Picking a theme for Quarterly Meeting is now a part of the clerk's role and can be fun. Many options are available as to how to organize around a theme, the clerk picks something and we can see how they work.
- At IMYM we began to include Senior Young Friends in intergenerational worship-sharing, which is the most meaningful part of YM for many people, and formed mixed-age relationships that lasted. Senior Young Friends also led a threshing session each year and had priority for speaking.
- Carl Sigmund has made a Quaker Speak video on inclusion of people with disabilities. <https://quakerspeak.com/video/my-life-with-cerebral-palsy-finding-equality-in-a-faith-community/>
- A Friend expressed appreciation of the space for open ideas. We have equitable space in Meeting for Worship, where speaking as led, anyone can share a message that is coming to them. I don't feel that space outside of Meeting for Worship. At a Meeting for Business we can only speak about a specific topic at a specific time, there is so much structure that it feels oppressive and becomes about who do you know—a relational network, and perpetuates privilege. Therefore names that we don't know don't come forward for nominations. I hope we can have more ways for openness of ideas and people.
- Thanks to those organizing these sessions. Barry Crossno of FGC has published about the barriers we are discussing. <https://westernfriend.org/magazine/on-legacy/faith-change-and-courage-abridged/> There is also work by a Friend in the Northwest as to how we can support young Friends. How can we use our resources to support young Friends and to share their ministry with us? We don't know what we don't know. We could hear from them as to the barriers and needs and how we might support them.
- Identifying barriers is a good idea. Puzzled about having an online business meeting for Spring and it took place on a day I was otherwise committed. Was the concern about the nomination expressed at the online meeting or only in person? We seem to be trying to save time, but need to be making adequate preparations. Zoom meetings have limitations. We need to find ways of building trust.
- We need to find ways of making sure that information and decisions are made available to those who were not present or may have forgotten. We are now in an experimental period of holding online business meetings. How will we evaluate that?

- Nominating committee is continually talking with people to find out who is interested in serving. Nominations come at the online meeting as a first reading and then approval is sought during the in-person session. There are many open positions, if you are interested, please let them know.
- The experiment that we are doing is scheduled to run another year and was approved a year ago in the Fall. The majority of routine business is done prior to the in-person sessions. The Implementation Committee has been laid down; others are keeping records. If you would like to serve on an ad-hoc Evaluation Committee, please come forward. The next business session is scheduled September 26, about 3 weeks prior to the in-person session at Ben Lomond.
- Ad-hoc committees are usually under the Presiding Clerk or Ministry and Spiritual care and there are currently no members of an evaluation committee. We have a new Presiding Clerk who may not be able to attend to this committee while taking up the position. Volunteers can email CPQMclerk@gmail.com and you will be directed to the right person. Or you can call Mary Miché, clerk of Nominating Committee at **510-845-8147. It will be worked out between Nominating and Ministry and Spiritual Care.
- An ad-hoc committee to reorganize the work of the treasurer of the Yearly Meeting has been organized. If you have advice to share on finances of non-profits contact **Tom Farley <farley@spont.com> or 650-274-7746 , David East <eastrus@gmail.com>, or Sarah Rose House-Lightner <assistanttotheclerk@pacificyearlymeeting.org>
- Please include emails and phone numbers when making these sorts of announcements so that people who don't already have those contacts will have a way to reach out. If they can be sent to the recording clerk, they will be included in the minutes that will be circulated to Monthly Meetings**.

***Note: For reasons of privacy, the minutes that are archived on the CPQM website will only include role-based email addresses, not personal emails or telephone numbers.*

Closing Worship

Eric closed the session, thanking the participants and asking for contact information for Mary Miché and Tom Farley to be put in the chat. Registrar Sarah Tyrrell asked for people who had not previously attended Quarterly Meetings to put their contact information in the chat.

Thanks were expressed for Eric's clerking and for extending his term. Many expressive emojis floated across our screens.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Babin, co-recording clerk