

Minutes for College Park Quarterly Meeting

Fall 2020

We gathered on Saturday morning, October 17, for worship, meeting again virtually during this period when we cannot meet in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. College Park Quarterly Meeting Clerk, Barbara Babin of Redwood Forest Meeting, welcomed us, and encouraged us to scroll around and look at who is here with us at the 243rd meeting of the quarter. With the theme, "Walking Together in the Light," we have come together to take "time to join together in the Presence to tap into our deep spiritual roots as we discern what witness and action the Divine is calling us into." She emphasized that we are among the lucky and that we want something different, and perhaps this is the time we can walk through a portal together, even though we are all anxious. We can hold ourselves accountable to be our best selves. We might have been at Sierra Friends Center in another year, a place that has experienced fire, and we will hear an update about them and our other places that are dear to us.

Barbara introduced Shelly Covert, tribal spokesperson from the Nevada Rancheria, the Nisenan community who were the original inhabitants of the land around Sierra Friends Center. Shelly described her background screen, which is from a picture book based on her grandmother, developing Nisenan as a written language, though it was originally a spoken language. The book just arrived yesterday and will be delivered to all fourth graders in the district. The books will help to prevent the Nisenan language from going extinct.

Shelly used to be a singer in a band, and singing is where her heart is. Now she has a lot more responsibility, because she represents her tribe and her family, and she feels that she needs to walk with integrity and morals. She wishes that there more of that in the world, and she loved Barbara's opening about being soft with one another. She feels that everything is fabricated now. She thinks of how her family lived in alignment with Spirit and the earth, and it's hard work. It's truly her belief that we're all equals, and hard for her to see this intention now. She wishes she could instill this in people's hearts now. We need more of this in the world now.

Shelly talked about the beliefs behind the sacred song she shared with us which tells that each person is recognized and seen by the spirits when they return to the holy mountain from which they came. The tribe is working to gain Federal recognition.

Barbara acknowledged the work that Shelly and the people at Woolman have been doing to create relationship. She was reminded of something Mica had us do in last week's Quaker

Center workshop and asked us to sink down in the moment and appreciate the land and the people who have been here before us, and to understand that it will be here in the future and we will be the ancestors for people who come after us.

Before she left us, Shelly sent us a message in the chat which read:

Thank you for having me this morning. I wanted to encourage you to each consider adopting a land acknowledgement in your geographic area to bring attention to whose Native lands on which you are living, loving and being. It's crucial to the survival of these Cultures. I have to go but wanted to share that idea. The Tribes need friends and support. Also, for those local Friends, we did find the names of the Nissan town where Woolman is and it is Yulica (sounds like you-lee-chaw). Have a wonderful day. Thank you again.

Barbara introduced the members of the Clerk's table and the members of the Ministry and Oversight Committee who did a lot of work to prepare for this weekend.

Our Assistant Clerk, Sarah Tyrrell, led the roll call.

We had a visitor:

Jane Blount, Clerk, Southern California Quarterly Meeting

Announcements will available in the *Western Friend* discussion forum, rather than being read in plenary.

Clerk Barbara Babin described how, at the Spring Quarterly meeting, we had nominated one person to the Naming Committee as an alternate who accepted that nomination, Alma Moon of Strawberry Creek. This left the Naming Committee with a single member, and after Spring Quarter Barbara asked Dinah Bachrach of Redwood Forest and Cindy Trueblood of Strawberry Creek Meeting, who had just completed their terms on the Naming Committee to continue their work. Dorothy Henderson of Grass Valley Meeting also agreed to serve as the convenor. The clerk would like to ask that these three potential members of the Naming Committee be approved for terms ending in May 2021. We approved these three Friends to serve for the remainder of their one year terms.

In addition, the Clerk asks that we adopt a procedure for naming the Naming Committee whereby the Clerk will bring three names of Friends willing to serve to the first plenary of spring quarter. Other Friends may offer additional names to be added to the list of potential

committee members. Final approval of the members of the Naming Committee will be laid over until the last plenary of spring quarter, when there has been time for discernment and to contact newly named potential members. We will hold this decision over until tomorrow's plenary.

Naming Committee:

The Naming Committee brings to this Quarter the names of Mary Miche of Lake County Worship Group to serve on Nominating Committee for a three year term beginning in Fall 2020 and Liz Baker of Sacramento to continue serving as Clerk of the committee for a one year term beginning Fall 2020. These names will be held over until Sunday. Doug Milhous will be leaving the Nominating Committee in Fall 2020.

Nominating Committee:

Clerk Liz Baker of Sacramento Meeting brought the name of Jan Turner of Humboldt Meeting to serve as the Assistant Clerk of Quarterly Meeting for a one year term beginning in Fall 2020. She also brought the name of Mimi Edgar of Santa Cruz Meeting for the Teen Committee for a one year term with a three year hope. We will hold these names over until Plenary 2 on Sunday.

College Park Friends Educational Association

Each quarter we hear from one organization under the quarter's care. For Fall quarter we hear from CPFEA.

Sandra Schwartz (SF Meeting), Clerk of the College Park Friends Educational Association Board and Marty Coleman-Hunt, Interim Executive Director, presented the report (attached in the archived minutes). She talked about what a difficult year it has been and how they have been constantly responding to crisis, they still don't have potable water on campus since the fire. Sandra is struck by how resilient they are. She's heard from some about a lack in communication from CPFEA. They had hoped to have a shortened camp program during the summer but needed to cancel due to COVID-19 concerns.

In spring they met with their lenders and their lenders were generous; their debt is \$1.3 M. They received a PPP loan and they have used camp staff to do maintenance on campus. They have followed guidance to convert the PPP loan to a grant. They haven't received program income, of course, but donations have been generous.

Late in summer, they started looking at selling the property to a friendly buyer who would lease it back for programs. The fire changed everything, since about half of the structures were burned and Madrone Hall, home of Sierra Streams, burned down. Dying and dead trees now need to be cut down right away and erosion control needs to be undertaken before the winter rains. CPFEA has their hands full, and they are waiting for assistance from FEMA for cleaning up the burned building sites. Doug Smith joined the Finance Committee in April, and two more new board members are joining now, and the board is seeking new committee members now. They do have good insurance, and they are awaiting a final bid, and CPFEA will use it to invest in infrastructure.

Sierra Friends Center has projects available to use volunteers, though they can accommodate only 12 people at a time each weekend due to COVID-19. We are called now to slow down and discern what we are called on to do with the land. They will have an interest group on Sunday where they will answer any questions. They showed a short film about the fire damage and will show it again later this afternoon. Barbara thanked Sandra and Marty for their very thorough report.

A Friend who worked at Woolman for a number of years spoke, wondering if the ground has anything to say, and what would John Woolman do? Quakers have a unique history in the colonization of the Americas – compared to others, we made our role look fair and just, though we were colonizers too. Could we now perhaps be part of healing this error?

The clerk emphasized that we support and influence boards of organizations we care for, but that we don't control them. The document with our responsibilities is on the website at collegeparkmeeting.org. We will find a way to get the report out so everyone has a chance to read it.

Ray Rischpater, M&O Clerk, described the worship sharing logistics.

Recording Clerk, Heather Levien, shared the draft of the minutes, which we approved, with minor corrections.

We concluded our plenary by returning to our quiet worship.

Plenary 2

We began with opening worship. Clerk Barbara Babin reviewed the agenda for this closing plenary. The Clerk or Assistant Clerk will send out Quick Notes with links to materials. The minutes will be posted on the College Park Meeting website with the attachments in a separate file.

Friends Committee on Legislation for California

Kevan Insko, FCLCA's Co-Director, made the report (attached in archived minutes) which she will post on their action center and which details some of the legislative measures that FCLCA has successfully sponsored this past year as well as some that will still need more advocacy. They were able to lobby on 75 bills and five major initiatives. The Governor has just signed into law the California Racial Justice Act, which allows for someone to appeal a conviction or sentence on the basis of bias. Newsom also signed AB 1876, which allows those who file taxes with Individual Taxpayer ID numbers, largely undocumented immigrant workers, to take the California Earned Income Tax Credit and the Young Child Tax Credit; this will help more than 600,000 low income people and 250,000 children. FCLCA worked in partnership with other groups on both of these pieces of legislation. The report talks about other new laws that FCLCA played a role in helping to pass: reducing bias in jury selection, and ensuring that people have job protection when they need to take medical or family leave, for example.

The past year has also seen some losses, such as the bill that would have lowered the costs of communications and commissary items for the incarcerated, which passed the Legislature but the Governor vetoed. Another version may be worked out next year. Other legislation would have required California to phase out single-use plastics fell just a little short of passing the Assembly. More work on climate change legislation remains to be done.

Kevan talked about how FCLCA has had financial struggles during the past year and may continue to do so through next year without federal aid. They ask us for end of the year donations hope that meetings that can make contributions larger than usual through the end of the year.

Finally, FCLCA's board's recommendations for the upcoming election along with brief rationales for their positions are available on their website.

Kevan thanked us all for our participation and encouraged us to contact her with any questions.

Naming Committee

The Clerk reminded us of her proposal for a new method to collect names for the Naming Committee and asked the Assistant Clerk, Sarah Tyrrell, to clerk the discussion. A friend spoke in support of our experimenting with this method, based on our difficulties with our past practice. The new practice is in use at the Yearly Meeting now. Naming Committees are important. Another Friend wondered whether this was too much of a burden for the Clerk and perhaps it should be for M&O instead. Another Friend wondered how the names would be narrowed down if extra names are brought from the floor.

Barbara says that the likelihood of another viable name coming from the floor might be slim or fewer names could be brought, and it's not a burden for this clerk. She'd like to try an experiment this time. Another Friend asked who will discern if we have more than three names. Barbara notes that this is an issue in our current process too, but we can spell it out. It was suggested that the names brought forward be from the Clerk and the Clerk of M&O, and Friends suggested that they agreed with this.

Sarah read the proposal again. A Friend reminded us that the point of having the Naming Committee is to avoid being incestuous. If we were factionalized, this could be a great problem; as it is, it doesn't seem to be a problem, but it could be. Every process has to start some place. The system with the Naming Committee doesn't have an effective seasoning process in it. This would be an effective way to insert some seasoning. The Clerk and Clerk of M&O could consider all of the names and any comments that come up in the discernment period, and bring the final names to the final plenary.

Barbara asked Sarah to see whether people are ready to approve it, or we can bring it back.

We approved the revised proposal regarding the new method of collecting names for the Naming Committee as follows:

- At the spring session of CPQM, the clerk, in conjunction with the clerk of Ministry and Oversight Committee, will bring forward the names of 3 Friends who are willing to serve on Naming Committee;
- Those names will be read at the initial plenary session and an opportunity will be provided for the body to offer additional names;
- Following the confirmation of willingness to serve and a period of discernment undertaken by the clerk and the Ministry and Oversight Committee, 3-4 names will be brought forward for approval.

Marie Miche was approved as a member of Nominating Committee through 2023, and Liz Baker as Clerk of Nominating through 2021. The Naming Committee will continue to work to find one or two more members for this committee.

We minuted our gratitude to Doug Milhous for his years of service to the Nominating Committee and our caring concern for his health.

Nominating Committee

Jan Turner was approved as Assistant Clerk of Quarterly Meeting for a one year term through October 2021, and Mimi Edgar was approved as a member of the Teen Committee for a one year term with a three year hope.

Ministry and Oversight.

Ray Rischpater of Palo Alto Friends Meeting, Clerk of the Ministry and Oversight Committee, gave us the report (attached in archived minutes). Ray described how M&O has been assisting meetings in the quarter over the last few months to work out how to connect with their meeting communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some meetings have found unexpected benefits in meeting online, drawing in people they hadn't seen in some time and from long distances, but there continue to be concerns about what is lacking in a Zoom meeting for worship. M&O has heard a call for a continued discussion of best practices and will facilitate such discussions.

Ministry and Oversight has also continued to work with meetings around the ongoing trend of fewer people participating in Meetings for Worship and performing service to meetings. Meetings have needed to re-think what functions of a meeting are essential, and, in some cases, have needed to consider whether it is time to lay a meeting down.

Ray noted that while primary responsibility for the corporations under the Quarter's care lie with their respective boards, M&O has been actively assisting the CPFEA board in their discernment process about Sierra Friends Center and have attended some of their board meetings. A number of M&O members have also participated in recent threshing sessions with the Ben Lomond Quaker Center board as they work to discern a way forward. M&O asks members of the quarter to support the corporations under our care with your prayers, ideas and service.

Ministry and Oversight encourages us all to engage with each other lovingly in these difficult times. Ray encouraged people to e-mail him with any questions: kf6gpe@gmail.com.

The Clerk asked that we please contact her or M&O with concerns or questions.

Finance Committee and Treasurer

Gordon Starr of Grass Valley Meeting, Convenor of the Finance Committee, gave us a report (attached in archived minutes).

The Finance Committee, the Treasurer, the Clerk, and the Treasurer of Grass Valley Friends Meeting met to discuss options for Quarterly Meeting to pay registration fees and donations online, using a platform other than PayPal. A system called Thithe.Ly has been recommended and approved for our use by the Treasurer and Finance Committee.

The teen group has been interested in having gatherings other than those at our Quarterly Meetings. Clerk Barbara Babin asked this group about possible insurance liability for such events and how to handle the finances of such events. Barbara will contact our insurance company about a possible rider to cover more than teens meeting at our quarterly gatherings. Financial support could be gathered through donations from the quarter to a youth fund.

The group also agreed that our quarter should pay somewhat more for our wonderful Zoom coordinator, Andrea Harmon.

Several clerks met with the Teen Committee clerk to talk about how the teens could meet outside the quarterly meeting structure, and they are working on this and will report to the plenary.

One Friend reports that as a past Clerk of Finance, he still has authority to sign checks, though he should not, and he is still the contact for the insurance company. Another Friend asked whether CPQM would prefer online donations to checks. Gordon mentioned that a number of checks are always made out wrong and need to be re-done, and we always get a large proportion of the money after an event. A Friend asked about the cost of donating online and Gordon clarified that the quarter pays the fee, but the program will give the donor the option of paying the fee. One Friend recalled that some years ago there was a suspension of activities that occurred between quarterly meetings that included meetings by teens and families with

teens, because of issues that occurred at that time. Alyssa Nelson noted that she is available to consult.

Registrars' Report

We had the Registrars' Report (attached in archived minutes) from co-Registrar, Eric Sabelman. He thanked Liz Baker and Marcia Roberts for their work on the team and Andrea Harmon for greeting everyone.

At this Fall Quarter, we had 111 people pre-registered through the website, plus onsite and guest registrations for a total of 124 people by early Sunday afternoon before the interest groups. We had 61 people at some point on Friday, and 81 people attended some event on Saturday. No teens are attending this session, apparently in part because they are overloaded with Zoom meetings for school. There are no attenders yet from Delta, Fresno, Mendocino, Napa, Redding and Visalia.

The number of people who have registered is lower than it was for spring quarter. However, a number of those people never attended any of the sessions.

The Clerk thanked the Registration team for a smooth process and Andrea for her cheerful welcomes. She also reminded us to look for the evaluation.

FASE Board Update (Friends Association of Services for the Elderly, Friends House)

Mico Sorrell, co-clerk of the FASE Board, made a brief report on the status of Friends House in Santa Rose, since their annual report normally comes to us during Winter Quarter. She is bringing us an update following the recent fires that forced all residents to evacuate.

Mico said that hers is an easier report than Sierra Friends Center or Ben Lomond, but it's still challenging. There have been lots of changes in medical care regulations and they have closed their skilled nursing facility, which has been more difficult than expected due to COVID-19, but this eased up when the other option was to take people from hospital. They have needed more capacity in assisted living and now they will have 17 beds, which is probably more than they need.

There were multiple fires in the region that coalesced into the Glass Fire on Sept 28 and many residents left independently and some went by bus to the Residents Inn in Sacramento for 8

days. Regulatory agencies weren't involved this time in approving their return without the skilled nursing facility, but all of the refrigerators had lost power and the staff needed to clear them. Friends House has been COVID free in a county where 70% of senior care facilities have had outbreaks. They feel the need to maintain rigorous health standards-but they do things: weekly car caravan to keep the cars going and spirits up, and putting up a complex word and seeing how many shorter words people can derive from it.

It's been hard to market open units, so six are open now, and they hope some of us will consider the possibility. It's also been hard not to be able to worship together, and they've joined together with RFFM, but they ask for our prayers.

Teen Program

As the teen program had been canceled, there was no report.

Children's Program

Barbara Christowitz, Redwood Forest, Clerk of the Children's Program, gave a description of what the children did this weekend. They had two sessions, one with three girls; and one with one.

Mark Runyan read them the Noah's Ark story, and they did a song and dance, "Grace in the Wind." Mark worked at some environmental education with them, and then they made a recipe: mashed banana with peanut butter.

Today there was one child and five adults. On Zoom it works so much better one to one. Barbara suggested that we should have breakout rooms with each child, so that they don't lose interest.

We reviewed the minutes and approved them with minor corrections and a plan for the Recording Clerk to meet with a few people and check on some details.

Our clerk closed the 243rd session, and we moved into closing worship.