

Minutes for College Park Quarterly Meeting

Spring 2021

Following a period of worship, College Park Quarterly Meeting Clerk, Barbara Babin of Redwood Forest Meeting, welcomed us to the 245th gathering of this quarterly meeting, with the theme “Of Life and Breath and Love: Making the connection between care of the Earth, peace and justice.” The Presiding Clerk introduced those at the clerk’s table: herself; Assistant Clerk, Jan Turner from Humboldt Meeting; and Recording Clerk, Heather Levien.

The Clerk spoke about the meeting’s theme. So much is going on in the news now about our emerging from the pandemic and our needing to think about what will be different and how we will use technology. For the last year it has been so critical to start to realize the realities about climate change and racial disparities and to challenge privilege and the ways that society is working. We need to embody being a Friend of Truth and explore what that means this weekend. We need to be truthful about interrelated issues and how all meetings are called into integrity. She left us with three queries to guide us in our individual decisions and corporate decisions. In what ways does the decision support our work to become an anti-racist community and to work for the climate and for us as ancestors.

Jan Turner, Assistant Clerk, had us go through roll call, turning off all of our videos and then turning them on again as our meeting name was called.

We had visitors:

Hayley Hathaway, Santa Fe Friends

Beverly Ward, Tampa Meeting

Lisa Hubbell, First Mennonite Church, San Francisco

Marcy Downing

Hayley Hathaway and Beverly Ward, from Quaker Earthcare Witness, along with Shelley Tanenbaum, who moderated their discussion, spoke to us through a set queries.

Shelley and Hayley are the staff members of Quaker Earthcare Witness, Shelley being the Executive Director and Hayley in charge of Communications. Beverly Ward is the Field Secretary for Earthcare for Southeastern Yearly Meeting and she’s a longtime Friend and next year will be co-clerk of QEW for their yearly meeting.

During the panel, the speakers addressed their personal leadings and the connections they see between traditional Quakerism, climate issues and other important issues like the need to address racism that many Quakers are working on now. Friends who would like to hear more from Shelley, Beverly, and Hayley, could visit QuakerSpeak:

The Clerk thanked the panelists and reminded us to return at 11 for worship sharing.

The Children's group will be meeting at Codornices Park in Berkeley 2-4 p.m. on May 23.

Plenary 2:

Clerk Barbara Babin welcomed us back after some worship, noting that we would have brief reports from the other two corporations under our care, Friends Association for Services to the Elderly (FASE) and College Park Friends Educational Association (CPFEA) tomorrow, reporting after this exceptional year.

Ben Lomond Quaker Center Annual Report

Henry Yang, Santa Monica Monthly Meeting, co-clerk of the board for Ben Lomond Quaker Center, gave the report (attached in archived minutes). Henry talked about both the many challenges faced and the successes that the Co-Directors – Susan Wilson and Bob Fisher - staff and the board have faced during the past year. As a residential conference center, Quaker Center has needed to close its doors almost entirely during the past year for rentals to both Quaker and non-Quaker groups, dramatically reducing those sources of income.

Friends and others have been remarkably generous with their donations, though, and Quaker Center has also received grants and insurance payments, all of which have served to keep them from the financial disaster that seemed to loom at the beginning of the pandemic. The property was also damaged but not as much as it could have been, in last fall's CZU fires. Quite a lot of the water pipes have needed to be replaced after they melted, but none of the main buildings were burned.

As a result of the challenging conditions of the last year, Quaker Center has been experimenting with online programming, which has been fairly successful, and they are considering how to deploy hybrid programming in the future. Quaker Center asks for our continued financial and other support, as it will take more time for them to return to anything like a normal condition. Personal retreats are available now, and some in-person work camps will begin later this summer and there are tentative plans for programs later this year.

The work days will be posted soon on the Quaker Center website and will be June 4-6, June 8-11, and August 3-8.

Henry's report will be posted with the minutes as attachments.

Nominating Committee:

Liz Baker of Sacramento Meeting, Nominating Committee Clerk, presented the committee's proposed slate for the coming year (attached in the archived minutes). The names were held over until Sunday afternoon's plenary, with any comments on these names to be given to a member of the Nominating Committee. The slate will also be posted with the minutes.

Jan Turner announced the interest groups for this afternoon.

Various Quaker Concepts of God – Bill Donovan, Monterey
Braiding Sweetgrass – PacYM Unity with Nature
Quakerism and Mindfulness Practice – Don McCormick, Grass Valley

Saturday night, we had intergenerational games, with Friends ranging in age from their 20's to their 70's.

Sunday morning at 8:30 am, we had come as you are Bible study, and then we spent the rest of the morning attending Meeting for Worship with our own Meeting or attending another Meeting. The Clerk encouraged us to look at *Western Friend's* website to find possibilities for meetings to visit.

Plenary 3

Clerk Barbara Babin welcomed us back to the Sunday portion of quarterly meeting by inviting us to settle into worship.

Ray Rischpater, Palo Alto Meeting and Clerk of the M&O Committee, welcomed us to a discussion of the State of the Meeting reports. Two members read some excerpts from the state of the meeting reports, focusing, for example, on how meetings have used their space during the pandemic and work on the issues of racism and earthcare in the last year, and the spiritual condition of various Meetings. The State of Meeting reports will be available on the Quarterly Meeting website in the documents section, as will the excerpts collected by Ministry and Oversight.

Ministry and Oversight Committee divided participants into groups to work with a particular Meeting's state of the meeting report, responding to queries:

- 1 How is the movement of Spirit in this meeting like or unlike my own meeting?
2. In what ways do you see this meeting demonstrating Quaker faith and practice?

3. What is a message that you would like to give this meeting?

The Clerk wondered how the news of what we've done gets to friends in the Monthly Meetings after she sends material to clerks and representatives and hopes that some excerpt from this session gets to everyone in the meetings with the love and joy we have experienced here. One Friend suggested that we might read excerpts of the State of the Meeting reports at Business Meetings.

Plenary 4

The Clerk reminded us that we conduct our Business Meeting in the spirit of worship and reintroduced herself and the Assistant and Recording Clerks and asked participants to hold the clerks in the Light.

Report from Nominating

The Clerk of Nominating Committee, Liz Baker, who needed to leave the meeting, asked that the Ministry and Oversight portion of the slate be removed from consideration since there were concerns expressed about it, and asked that Nominating Committee be allowed to provide the incoming Clerk with names for interim appointments. Nominating Committee will be working on continuing appointments to be presented at the Fall quarterly meeting. They ask us for our continuing support.

Friends Association for Services to the Elderly

We heard about Friends House from Elizabeth Boardman and Mico Sorrel. Elizabeth reminded us of the changes that were reported to us in January to have a larger church-based corporation, Covia, take over Friends House. The community has been well satisfied with the decision.

In the Winter Quarter, FASE had suggested a possible clause in the merger agreement with Covia that the Quarter would be a representative for a Friends House member should conflict arise with Covia. The Clerk and Ministry and Oversight as well as the FASE Board determined that this clause should not be included in the merger agreement.

Finally, Elizabeth encouraged members of quarterly to continue to support Friends House. Contributions are tax deductible and will be added to the Friends House Fund; please send checks addressed to Friends House. If you are interested in living at Friends House, you are welcome to schedule a visit; there are vacant units available.

This was the last report from FASE, but the Friends House worship group remains under the care of Redwood Forest and thereby under the care of the Quarter.

College Park Friends Educational Association

We had an update from the College Park Friends Educational Association (CPFEA) from Sandra Schwartz, clerk of the board, with assistance from Marty Coleman-Hunt, Interim Executive Director (attached in archived minutes). They have been strongly supported by donations and insurance payments, and they have paid down their debts. They have already remodeled the meeting house and some residences. They will be redeveloping the farm and will create a secondary egress and water infrastructure.

Sandra talked about planned programming, including a program on fire management that includes members of the local Nisenan tribe, with an eye toward establishing a new sort of relationship with the Nisenan.

Nominating Committee

We approved all of the new nominating slate except for the M&O nominations. Nominating Committee will make interim recommendations to the Incoming Clerk to last until we receive new nominations in the fall.

Ray Rischpater referred us to the Ministry and Oversight report in the documents. After we talked about changing the name of Ministry and Oversight at Winter Quarter, it became clear to M&O that the name change has some deep meanings for us, so we have been sent queries in our meetings to discuss these issues in more depth before the Fall quarter.

Registrar

Eric Sabelman of Palo Alto Meeting, of the Registration Committee, made the report (attached in archived minutes). Liz Baker and Marcia Roberts are also on the committee, and in person, they would be checking people off as we arrive, but they have less to do on Zoom. We had 102 people either pre-registered or who attended via Zoom. Chico and Strawberry Creek tied for meeting with the highest participation. Generally, we have some people who pre-register and don't attend. Eric will find out why they didn't come.

Treasurer

Tom Yamaguchi, Berkeley Meeting, Treasurer, gave us a report (attached in archived minutes).

We had \$3,128 in donations for the winter quarter but expenses were low, so we had a net gain which has led to a healthy bank balance of almost \$26,000 with some set aside for the scholarship fund.

Barbara noted that Finance has been operating without a clerk for the last year, and that has made things difficult, but we have one starting now. We will need a reserve to hold rentals starting when we go back to in person meetings and setting rates.

A Friend suggested that we should express our appreciation to Tom, and many signs of appreciation were shown.

Minutes

Heather Levien, Recording Clerk, read the minutes of the morning and afternoon plenaries, which we approved with minor corrections.

Clerk Barbara thanked us for her three years as clerk and for those who have supported her and those who will continue to serve the Quarter.

Friends expressed appreciation to Barbara for her clerking.