

Minutes of the Illinois Yearly Meeting (ILYM)
141th Annual Sessions
Sixth Month 24-28, 2015, Clear Creek Meetinghouse near McNabb, Illinois

MINUTES OF THE FIRST SESSION, Wednesday, Sixth Month 24, 2015

Minute 1 The 2015 ILYM Annual Sessions opened with waiting worship.

Minute 2 Presiding Clerk David Shiner welcomed everyone present to the Annual Sessions.

Minute 3 The Clerk recognized the following visitors from outside ILYM: Vanessa Julye of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, representing Friends General Conference, and Marijke van Roojen from Olympia Monthly Meeting (Washington), and welcomed first time attenders from ILYM meetings: Johnny Gillespie (Oak Park) and Lisa Bassett (Evanston).

Minute 4 Reading Clerk Caryn Kuhn read an excerpt of the epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Minute 5 The clerk informed Friends about Advance Documents and other documents available for review.

Minute 6 The Presiding Clerk is being assisted by a Clerk's Committee comprised of Janice Domanik, Wil Brant, Gwen Weaver, and Tom Fairbank.

Minute 7 The Epistle Committee for this year's sessions will consist of Caryn Kuhn, Reading Clerk, Joan Pine, and Bruce Kanarek.

Minute 8 The clerk presented a description of the Exercises Committee and asked for Friends to consider serving on this committee. Please speak with the clerk if interested in serving.

Minute 9 Joan Pine, Clerk of Ministry and Advancement Committee, explained the role of the Committee of Care and encouraged Friends to bring any issues to members of the committee as necessary. Members of the committee can be identified by a smiley face on their name tags.

Minute 10 Erin Taylor presented the Nominating Committee Report. The committee minutes it gratitude to Friends who are serving, will be serving, or are finishing serving on committees and appointments. Later in the week the committee will be proposing to merge the Administrative Coordinator Oversight Committee into the Personnel Committee and to merge the Peace Tax Fund Oversight Committee into the Peace Resources Committee. Joan Pine is resigning from the Ministry & Advancement Committee; the committee minutes its appreciation to Joan for her work. As Cathy Garra prepares to undertake her new role as the Assistant Clerk, she has requested that her term on Ministry & Advancement end in 2016, rather than in 2017 as originally scheduled. Elaine Mayer-Lee has resigned from the Religious Education Committee. Erin gave the first reading of the Nominating Committee report which will be submitted for approval later in the week. Report accepted.

Minute 11 Peter Lasersohn presented the report for the Faith and Practice Committee. Most of the committee's attention this year was devoted to developing new text on stewardship, and revising the existing texts now entitled 'Care in Times of Crisis: Accident, Illness, Death, and Bereavement', 'Recognizing Spiritual Gifts and Leadings', 'Communities of Friends', and 'The Monthly Meeting'. All texts are available on the yearly meeting website. The committee hopes to complete the entire project by 2018. Report accepted.

Minute 12 Peter Lasersohn highlighted changes made to the "The Community of Friends," which is being presented for indefinite approval. The text was approved for an indefinite period.

Minute 13 Members of the Faith and Practice Committee read "Care in Times of Crisis," which is being presented for a three-year provisional approval. Friends presented various suggestions for text revision, which were recorded by the clerk of the committee. The committee will take these suggestions under advisement and report back during these sessions. The committee report was accepted.

Minute 14 Session ended with waiting worship.

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SESSION, Thursday, Sixth Month 25, 2015

Minute 15 The second session opened with waiting worship.

Minute 16 The Clerk recognized the following visitor from outside ILYM: Brant Rosen from AFSC, and welcomed first time attender from ILYM meetings: Ann Riggs (57th Street).

Minute 17 Reading Clerk Caryn Kuhn read the epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting.

Minute 18 Ted Kuhn presented the Treasurer's Report on behalf of himself and Co-Treasurer Judy Erickson. Ted distributed an updated version of the financial report. The yearly meeting will end up with around a \$6,000 surplus for this fiscal year. \$20,000 was budgeted for individual contributions. Just under \$25,000 has been received so far. Contributions from meetings are currently a little lower than expectations, however additional contributions from meetings should be received before the end of the fiscal year. Report accepted.

Minute 19 Judy Jager presented the Finance Committee report. Judy on behalf of the committee expressed gratitude for the donors who have help the yearly meeting to meet and exceed the Annual Fund goal of \$20,000. A sub-committee has begun to create a visual presentation to show the overhead expenses of operating the yearly meeting campus from 2010 to 2015. Additional needs on the horizon might include funding for a campus caretaker and a children's coordinator. Also being worked on is developing a budgeting process for Annual Sessions. Report accepted.

Minute 20 Judy Jager made the first presentation of the budget for fiscal year 2016. The proposed budget is not substantially different from last year's. Expectations for donations from monthly meetings will be equal to or less than this year. A 1% increase for salaries is included in the proposed

budget. The 2016 budget will be presented for approval at Saturday session. Concerns and questions about the proposed budget can be brought to Finance Committee members.

Minute 21 David Finke presented the Development Committee report. Committee members have not been able to make as many in person visits as hoped. This past year was the first year for having an Annual Fund. The appeal letter that went out last fall received a generous response. The committee will renew its appeal for Friends *individually* to join with their monthly meetings and worship groups in financially undergirding the totality of the work of the yearly meeting. The committee thanks monthly meetings for their consistent and generous *corporate* support to the yearly meeting. All monthly meetings and worship groups have positively responded to providing contact information of their members and/or attenders for four mailings from yearly meeting per year. The committee is continuing to work with the Finance Committee to develop policy and procedural guidelines for protecting the confidentiality of donor records. Report accepted.

Minute 22 Joan Pine presented the report for the Ministry and Advancement Committee. Joan repeated the committee's recommendations presented at the Spring Continuing Committee in reference to a letter received last fall regarding the meaningful inclusion of children and their parents in the life of the yearly meeting. The committee has appointed a subcommittee of Janice Domanik, Bridget Rorem, and Cathy Garra to review and recommend revisions for updating the Policy on Sexual Abuse and Misconduct that had been accepted in principle by the committee in 2005, but which was never presented for approval by the Yearly Meeting. The position description for the Field Secretary in the Personnel Handbook has been edited. As a form of traveling ministry, members of the committee maintain contact with and visit individual monthly meetings. Report accepted. The Yearly Meeting expressed gratitude for Joan's service on the committee.

Minute 23 Field Secretary Judy Wolicki presented her annual report. Judy reflected on last evening's presentation and this morning's worship in relation to our experience of being spiritually connected—our seeking, searching, and hoping. Judy stated that one of her goals in the past year was to connect individuals to individuals and meetings to meetings. As was the case last year, there are cards on the display table that may be use for personal or group notes to Friends who are not in attendance at Annual Sessions this year. These notes will be mailed out at the end of Annual Sessions. Meetings visited and programs facilitated are listed in the submitted report. Report accepted.

Minute 24 The clerk recognized visitors from outside ILYM who arrived since the start of this session: Tom Roberts of Western Yearly Meeting, Wanda Coffin Baker of Western Yearly Meeting, and Doug Baker.

Minute 25 The representative report for Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC) was presented by Colleen Reardon. FLGBTQC meets twice a year and has increased its focus on race, class, religious diversity, disability, accessibility, and inclusion. They are continuing discernment on support of the Quaker Statement on Climate Change and long-range planning issues related to future Midwinter Gatherings.

Minute 26 Bridget Rorem reported for the representatives to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Corporation. Bridget presented an overview of this year's corporation meeting. Bridget encouraged Friends to become familiar with afsc.org and the resources it provides. Brant Rosen, the AFSC Midwest Regional Director, introduced himself.

Minute 27 Members of the Faith and Practice Committee read “Recognizing Spiritual Gifts and Leadings” for a three-year provisional approval. The Committee received various comments, including comments regarding clarification of the text in relation to the structure of endorsements and recording ministry. The committee will be available to meet with Friends to discuss additional concerns during Annual Sessions.

Minute 28 Peter Lasersohn read “Stewardship” for a two-year provisional approval. The text was approved for a two-year provisional period. The committee will discern concerns raised about a few word options and will report back to the Yearly Meeting regarding this discernment.

Minute 29 The clerk read a travel minute presented on behalf of Brant Rosen by AFSC.

Minute 31 Session ended with waiting worship.

MINUTES OF THE THIRD SESSION, Friday, Sixth Month 26, 2015

Minute 32 The third session opened with waiting worship.

Minute 33 The clerk recognized the following visitors from outside ILYM: Marcelle Martin and Terry Hauger from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and Stephen Donahoe from FCNL, and welcomed first time attender from ILYM meetings: Dan Stevens (57th Street).

Minute 34 Reading Clerk Caryn Kuhn read an expert from the epistle from Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Minute 35 The clerk read the traveling minute on behalf of Vanessa Julye by FGC, and read the note received on traveling minute that Janice Domanik carried to Britain Yearly Meeting from their clerk.

Minute 36 The Exercises Committee for this year will be composed of Marie White, Johnny Gillespie, and Adrian Nelson.

Minute 37 Jan Mullen presented the Peace Resources Committee Report and distributed an updated written report. The committee is meeting monthly in person and by teleconference. Committee work has included committee member participation in the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT). The committee is presenting a workshop on ending torture and is offering to provide programming to monthly meetings on the topic. The committee has initiated a dialog with the Saint Louis Meeting regarding the issue of police brutality and racial profiling and is working on a minute related to this issue to bring to the Yearly Meeting. The committee has established a working group to explore and pass on information on how Friends in ILYM may help to protect and support sexual minorities in East African countries, and has established another working group focused on exploring how ILYM monthly meetings are encountering the struggle for justice of sexual minorities locally and around the world. The committee has also developed several initiatives including making the PRC page on the IYLM website more user-friendly, developing a PRC Facebook page, and making connections with monthly meeting peace and social justice committees. Report accepted.

Minute 38 Neil Mesner presented the Stewards report. The expanding of the number of Stewards to five has been helpful. Work done has included renovating the Clear Creek House smoke alarm system, selling and removing the outdoor wood burning furnace at Clear Creek House, and painting the north porch of the meetinghouse. The old barn is slowly deteriorating and something must be done with that building soon. At site preparation, mosquito abatement was required, and during Annual Session, graveling the parking lot driveway was done due to muddy conditions. Report accepted.

Minute 39 Chris Goode presented the Site Envisioning Committee report. It has been a “relatively” quiet year for the Site Envisioning Committee. A scope of work and supplemental drawings were developed for the eventual campground bath house renovation. The renovations are structured as a menu of options that could allow for some or all of the projects to be done in phases as money becomes available. The overall cost for all of the work to be done could be as much as \$75,000. The committee continues to work with the Property Use Committee on establishing a formal caretaker arrangement for the ILYM campus, with the goal of bringing a proposal to the Yearly Meeting next year. The committee intends to begin to explore possibilities for the use of more sustainable energy sources for the ILYM campus. Additionally, the committee is investigating the removal of the foundation and walkways at the demolished portion of the long shed, and updating cost estimates for renovating the Clear Creek House garage for ground level accessible bedrooms and bathrooms. Report accepted.

Minute 40 Noel Pavlovic reported for the Environmental Concerns Committee. The committee’s submitted report notes the work the committee has done. The committee will be working on control of the expansion of tansy on the campus. Other items include what to do about the long shed area and creating an osage orange hedge row on the west end of the campus. Report accepted.

Minute 41 The clerk asked Friends to review the Maintenance and Planning Committee report submitted by the committee’s clerk Meredith George, who is occupied working with the Friends Under Nineteen program. The report contains the various things that have been accomplished by the committee. The next Fall Workday will be on Saturday, October 3, 2015, initially gathering at 9:00 a.m. at the Clear Creek House. Report accepted.

Minute 42 Dale Gardner presented the report for the representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Only one of the ILYM representatives was able to attend the FCNL Annual Meeting this year, who with other Friends made visits to the offices of Senators and some Representatives of the ILYM region. Due to schedule complications, meetings with legislators could not be arranged during spring recess. The representatives hope that a contact person can be identified for each monthly meeting. Stephen Donahoe, FCNL staff, presented highlights of FCNL’s work on current issues in Washington, D.C. and FCNL’s programs.

Minute 43 Nancy Duncan presented the report for of the representatives to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). All three representatives were able to attend the recent Section of the Americas meeting in Mexico City. FWCC will hold section meetings every two years, and International Representative Meetings every four to five. The next Representative Meeting will be held in Peru in January 2016. A new vision for FWCC will focus on traveling in the ministry, with two spiritually-gifted Friends from different traditions traveling together. FWCC used to send Friends to yearly meeting Annual Sessions other than their own, but now traveling Friends will also visit monthly meetings and other regional gatherings.

Minute 44 Peter Lasersohn, speaking for the Committee on Faith and Practice, presented an update on revisions of the sections of Faith and Practice that the committee had presented during the sessions of the past two days. The committee made small revisions to the sections on “Meeting Meetings” and “Stewardship.” Peter presented these revisions. These sections were approved with the understanding that minor changes brought up during the previous presentation could be made at the discretion of the committee.

Regarding the section on “Recognizing Spiritual Gifts and Leadings,” the committee has taken into consideration the responses from Friends that were received during sessions and has met with Friends outside of sessions. The committee is withdrawing its request for approval of the section on “Recognizing Spiritual Gifts and Leadings” for a three-year provisional period. The committee will work on revising this section in the upcoming year.

The committee made revisions to the section on “Care in Times of Crisis.” Peter presented these revisions, which included changing its name to “Preparing for and Responding to Illness, Death, and Bereavement,” and received a few minor amendments. This revised section, now titled “Preparing for and Responding to Illness, Death, and Bereavement,” is presented for approval for a three-year provisional period. The section on “Preparing for and Responding to Illness, Death, and Bereavement” is approved for a three-year provisional period.

Minute 45 The date for the 2016 Annual Sessions will be June 22-26. In respect to previous minutes regarding the date for Annual Sessions, the date had been moved to start on the third Wednesday in June in relation to the end of the school year and the Friends General Conference Gathering. Due to Chicago Public Schools ending later and the FGC Gathering starting later, this year’s sessions had been scheduled for the fourth Wednesday during last year’s annual session with a note that the date would be reviewed this year. This date has been reviewed by the clerk’s committee and will be continued to be reviewed. A questionnaire will soon be distributed to Friends regarding some of the specifics of scheduling the date of Annual Sessions. It is hoped that a report on this can be presented at October 2015 Continuing Committee and a proposal can be made at 2016 Annual Sessions.

Minute 46 The clerk announced the members of the Ad Hoc Records Retention Committee will be Nancy Wallace and Wil Brant (ex officio). They will be reporting at Fall Continuing Committee.

Minute 47 Sean West presented the Publications and Distribution Committee report. The committee is catching up on the backlog of unpublished Plummer lectures. The new format for *Among Friends* is continuing to take shape, and feedback on the changes is encouraged. The yearly meeting website is overdue for an update, so it will be re-evaluated and possibly re-designed. Comments and suggestions about what is working and what can be improved are encouraged. The committee expresses its gratitude for the work that David Finke has done during his many years of service on the committee. Report accepted.

Minute 48 Session ended with waiting worship.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SESSION, Saturday, Sixth Month 27, 2015

Minute 49 The fourth session opened with waiting worship.

Minute 50 The clerk welcomed tonight's speakers, Staughton and Alice Lynd, who are well-remembered as members of 57th Street Meeting.

Minute 51 Reading Clerk Caryn Kuhn read the epistle from The New Association of Friends (Indiana).

Minute 52 Erin Taylor presented recommendations from the Nominating Committee to merge the Administrative Coordinator Oversight Committee into the Personnel Committee and to merge the Peace Tax Fund Oversight Committee into the Peace Resources Committee.

Minute 53 Merging the Administrative Coordinator Oversight Committee into the Personnel Committee was approved.

Minute 54 Terminating the Peace Tax Fund Oversight Committee and placing the fund under the care of the Peace Resources Committee, with full awareness of the confidential and tender nature of this fund, was approved.

Minute 55 Erin Taylor presented the second reading of the Nominating Committee recommendations for ILYM officers and committee members. Erin provided additions to and subtractions from the previously read report, which are incorporated in an updated report. The nominations with revisions were approved.

Minute 56 Noel Pavlovic reported for the Naming Committee, recommending Caryn Kuhn as clerk of the Nominating Committee and Angie Thinnes for a three-year term. Approved.

Minute 57 Judy Jager and Ted Kuhn gave the second presentation of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2016. Approved.

Minute 58 Chris Goode presented the Youth Oversight Committee report. The numbers of teens attending events have fluctuated, as is common with the ebb and flow of membership/attendance at meetings. Budgeting, communications, and outreach are areas for reflection and assessment. Accepted.

Minute 59 Nancy Holliday presented a report as the representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness. QEW organizes a general conference once a year and the Steering Committee meets in the spring and fall. QEW publishes a bi-monthly newsletter (BeFriending Creation) and pamphlets on a variety of earthcare topics such as population, energy, food, money, and peace. The QEW Sustainability, Faith and Action Working Group has focused most recently on fossil fuel reduction (in particular, divestment from fossil fuel companies) and has drafted, for all Friends, a list of four request related to fossil fuel reduction. The list is included in the submitted report.

Minute 60 Janice Domanik presented a report as the representative to Friends General Conference. FGC provides a variety of services to monthly and yearly meetings. A detailed list is included in the representative's report. This year's Summer Gathering will be held in North Carolina. Vanessa Julye,

FGC staff, provided information about a conference of Friends of Color which will be held on November 6-8, 2015 in Clarkston, Michigan, the White Privilege Conference held April 14-16, 2016 in Philadelphia, and the FGC Annual Gathering in St. Joseph, Minnesota held July 3-9, 2016.

Minute 61 Janice Domanik read a letter from Friends General Conference in response to “the loss at Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston of faithful leaders and servants of God’s love.” The letter expressed hopes regarding overcoming hate and working toward a better society for the realization of the beloved community. After the letter was read, the Yearly Meeting observed an extended period of silence and expressed unity with the thoughts, feelings, and concerns expressed in the letter.

Minute 62 Jan Mullen presented a report as representative to the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, noting that June is Torture Awareness Month and June 26 is the international day in support of victims of torture. The organization thanks those who supported the congressional progress in reporting and eliminating torture.

Minute 63 Mark Robinson presented a report on behalf of Chicago Friends School. The school is growing with a set of committed parents. They are hiring their first head of school.

Minute 64 Ashlee Miller-Berry presented the Ad Hoc Property Use Committee report. The committee reviewed a list of caretaker tasks performed by Dick Ashdown that was prepared by Chris Goode based on an interview with Dick. Committee members agreed that this summary could form the basis of a job description for the function of what is being called “caretaker,” while acknowledging that it could be a part-time hire, a contractor, or a management firm that would accomplish the work. Mike Dennis, of ILYM’s Personnel Committee, offered to write up a draft job description which will be reviewed by the committee. The committee recommends that ILYM stewards be the body of oversight for this position. The committee asks for the Yearly Meeting’s wishes with regard to continuing the ad hoc Property Use Committee. The committee has not accomplished all that it intended by this Annual Sessions. The primary items to be accomplished are getting a draft of the job description created, seasoned, and presented to the Fall 2015 Continuing Committee Meeting and developing a proposal for increasing the fees for site use. If the Yearly Meeting wishes, the committee will continue to move forward. Report accepted. Extending the Ad Hoc Property Use Committee until Annual Sessions 2016 was approved.

Minute 65 This minute is to move forward the sense of the Yearly Meeting as documented in Minute 57 from the 2013 Annual Sessions. Recognizing that the yearly meeting has now completed construction of the meetinghouse bathroom and that Minute 57 authorized the undertaking of the campground bathhouse renovations once funds have been procured, the Yearly Meeting further authorizes the undertaking of the construction of accessible bedrooms and bathrooms in Clear Creek House once funds have been procured. Approved.

Minute 66 The 2015 Fall Continuing Committee will be on Saturday, October 10, 2015 hosted by Clear Creek Meeting at the ILYM meetinghouse.

Minute 67 Noel Pavlovic provided an amendment to the Environmental Concerns Committee report. The committee records its recognition of the release of Francis’s papal encyclical “*Laudato Si: On the Care of Our Common Home*,” calling all people to embrace the moral and spiritual implications

of human impacts on the earth. The committee is heartened by the attention and weight Francis' statement is bringing to concerns we have long held. The committee welcomes his invitation to all humanity for a dialogue on the care of our common home. The committee report amendment was accepted. Additional action related to this amendment will be seasoned by the Environmental Concerns Committee and reported to Fall Continuing Committee.

Minute 68 The session ended with waiting worship.

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SESSION, Sunday, Sixth Month 28, 2015

Minute 69 The fifth session opened with waiting worship.

Minute 70 Friends heard epistles from the 5-7 year olds, 8-10 year olds, 11-13 year olds, high schoolers, and Adult Young Friends.

Minute 71 The Yearly Meeting appreciates the work and dedication of the adults who helped lead the children's and youth programs this year.

Minute 72 On behalf of the Epistle Committee, Caryn Kuhn and Joan Pine read this year's ILYM epistle, which will be sent to other yearly meetings. Approved.

Minute 73 Adrian Nelson, member of the Exercises Committee, read this year's Exercises. Accepted.

Minute 74 The 141th Annual Sessions of Illinois Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends closed with grateful waiting worship. Next year's gathering will be at the meetinghouse near McNabb on Sixth Month 22-26, 2016.