

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfW wAtB)
9th Month, 6th Day, 2020
(09/06/2020)
Meeting Minutes - Approved

Note: The MfW wAtB was conducted using Zoom.

Present: Martha B. (clerk), Ellen M. (recording clerk), Carl B. (Zoom host), Wes J., Nan E., Jean C., Mary B., Pat S., Peter M., Jack H., Martha L., Ria H., Ruth S., Sheila M., Cairn K., Barb T., Karen C., Kim B., Margaret C., Ted R., Will C., Lisa H., Dot W., Jon H., Jeanne W., Jack L., Phil C., Susan D., Kim F., Lee L., Nancy Jo S., Marcia O.

9:00 am Opening: We began with centering silent worship. The 9th Month Queries from Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice (revised 2001) were displayed on the screen. There was a comment that the queries were appropriate and timeless. The clerk read the list of people present out aloud. The agenda was displayed on the screen and everyone was welcomed.

Agenda Items:

1. 8th Month MfW wAtB Meeting Minutes Review & Approve:

- a. The meeting minutes were approved from the previous meeting that was held on 08/02/2020. See the attached.

2. AFM Homeschooling Report:

- a. On behalf of the AFM Children's Religious Education Committee, Kimberly B. provided a report from the ad-hoc Homeschooling Committee. The committee is currently serving 8 families, providing oversight for the educational experiences of 14 students in two Maryland counties (i.e., 8 in Anne Arundel (AA) and 6 in Prince George's (PG)). Those currently enrolled span grades 4 through 12 with two (2) students in 4th grade, two (2) in 5th, two (2) in 8th, one (1) in 9th, one (1) in 10th, five (5) in 11th, and one (1) in 12th.
- b. Since the pandemic, the committee has received an increase of enrollment inquiries and have added one family. See the attached for the full report.
- c. Kimberly provided additional information about the homeschooling program and said that the State of Maryland has an approved list of homeschooling programs where the AFM program is listed. Often people interested in homeschooling resources and programs will contact Kimberly and her co-administrator, Lis L. Although no student has ever been turned down, there have been times when the administrators were at capacity and could not support additional families. The administrator's role is unpaid and a volunteer position.
- d. The AFM program started out when members of AFM began to homeschool their children and, by word of mouth, others were interested in joining the AFM homeschooling program. After a time, it was determined that the group would register with the State of Maryland and operate more broadly. The AFM program is considered a Quaker homeschooling opportunity. A statement of religious affiliation is not required for this program and is open to all religions. Prior to the pandemic and the Chesterton Academy occupying the AFM meeting house, the AFM Homeschooling program would enjoy time at the meeting house, the grounds and the nature trail.
- e. Friends expressed gratitude to Kimberly for administering this option that is offered to the community.

3. Change / Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC):

- a. On behalf of the Change Group and P&SC, Phil C. requested Meeting's approval for AFM to sign a resolution in support of creating Health Equity Resource Communities and ensuring funding for affordable healthcare facilities in these under-served communities. P&SC and Change Group felt this action is in keeping with our Declaration as an Anti-racist Faith community. The Meeting approved the request after an extensive and thorough discussion. There are two attachments for this agenda item: (a) the recommendation from P&SC and the Change group, and (b) the Maryland Citizen's Health Initiative (MCHI) Resolution.
 - i. Background:
 1. Vinny DeMarco (Homewood Friends) has been working on an initiative to increase health equity in communities around the state through his non-profit, The Maryland Citizen's Health Initiative (MCHI). AFM learned of this initiative through Quaker Voice of Maryland and was approached, along with other faith communities, for our support.
 2. The bill will be introduced by African-American legislators and would attempt to establish medical facilities in communities that lack affordable healthcare facilities and cannot afford care at the emergency room. These areas and communities are referred to as "healthcare deserts".
 3. The same program was piloted between 2012 and 2016 when it was sunsetted. That prior initiative resulted in demonstrated reduction in mental health issues, including binge drinking and other medical concern, as well as other positive effects. The study, results and data can be found on the Healthcare for All website: <http://healthcareforall.com/get-involved/equitycommunities/>.
 4. The proposed bill will provide that each community decides what healthcare services will best serve their own community.
 5. The proposed bill includes raising the alcohol tax by one cent (\$0.01, estimated to raise \$15 million per year) and funneling the collected funds towards establishing affordable healthcare facilities in under-served communities.
 - ii. If AFM were to sign the resolution, we would be expressing support for raising the alcohol tax by one cent (\$0.01) and using the money to establish affordable healthcare facilities in underprivileged communities.
- b. Questions & Discussion:
 - i. A Friend expressed concern that AFM would be jeopardizing and falling back on a promise made in its bylaws as a not-for-profit organization under the 501(c)3 status. This Friend pointed out that the AFM Articles of Incorporation states that no substantial part of its activities will be attempting to influence legislation and that it will not take partisan actions.
 - ii. Several Friends offered legal perspectives on whether AFM would be violating the "substantial" threshold identified in the 501(c)3 language. One Friend noted that no money will be spent from AFM to influence the legislation with the signing of the resolution, the action is intended to support under-served communities and is in alignment with our Anti-racist Declaration. Another Friend noted that the "substantial" question was discussed in depth at a recent meeting in another 501(c)3 organization and that the term has a legal meaning well beyond signing a resolution and believed we would not be crossing lines with regard to our status. The clerk of Trustees expressed agreement that signing the resolution would be within the bounds of the 501(c)3 status.

- iii. Other Friends suggested that the simple existence of more community support for healthcare access in underprivileged communities justifies our support for this bill, that it is consistent with our values and our 501(c)3 status.
 - iv. In response to a question whether this discernment could be laid over until next month, we learned that MCHI plans to publicize the signed petition in early October. If we do not find unity this month, AFM will not be listed as a supporter.
- c. Discernment:
- i. Due to the robust and active discussion, the clerk suggested several times that Friends take a moment of silence and listen to Spirit before continuing. Friends were asked to dig deep into Spirit and listen for Truth. Out of the silence, Friends spoke to hearing a clear and important call for our Meeting to support the resolution. Several wanted to be sure that those who had offered other perspectives were appreciated and valued. It was noted that one Friend who had expressed strong concern was no longer present; another Friend attempted to contact the person while we were gathered.
 - ii. The clerk acknowledged her sense that the Meeting was in unity to support the initiative and Friends approved. We were reminded that Friends can stand aside when so led.
- d. It was noted that the issue of 501(c)3 status has surface in the past and needs to be clarified. A Friend suggested that we might hold a special meeting to discuss the topic further, to come to a full understanding about interpretations, and resolve concerns going forward.

4. Quaker Market:

- a. On behalf of the Quaker Market Committee, Cairn K. informed Friends that the annual Quaker Holiday Market has been cancelled this year due to pandemic. It was evident that the Market could not be provided safely and prevent exposure to the virus. The committee is establishing other ways to provide a modified Market experience and meet the Quaker Market goals. Some options include curbside pickup and pre-ordering of olive oil, tapenade, and olive oil soap. In recognition of increased need among Palestinians during COVID-19, a free-will-offering option to “Friends of Tent of Nations—North America” will be available at the time of pick up. More information will be distributed on the Announce list. In response to a question, clarification was provided that the inventory of the products that are sold at Quaker Market are not bought through AFM. In addition, one of the causes supported by Quaker Market, “Voices for a Second Chance”, will be collecting gently-used men’s clothing for re-entering citizens and drop-off will be available on the meeting house front porch.

5. Path Forward (PF) Committee:

- a. On behalf of the Path Forward Committee, Karen C. provided a report on how well the four (4) pilot outdoor, in-person MfWs were attended, appreciated and were successful in that the expectations were respected and adhered to.
- b. During the MfW wAtB in July, Meeting established the Path Forward (PF) committee and in August approved the committee to pilot four outdoor, in-person MfW events.
 - i. The four piloted outdoor, in-person MfWs were successful, lovely, and attenders were delighted to be worshipping together even in the rain and sun wearing masks. Attendees were not expressing any urgency to get indoors.
 - ii. Hearing messages was an issue that will not likely be resolved due to the need for social distancing and the wearing of masks while the sounds of nature filled the air. Even though messages were not full audible for everyone, the overall feedback from those in attendance was that they did not want any technology and that the experience was delightful. They were grateful to have attended and definitely wanted to continue to meet.

- iii. A Friend expressed to the Path Forward committee that the announcement and messaging about the option to meet outdoors and in-person was less than encouraging and that the committee was asked to be more encouraging in future invitations. The message announcing the meetings need to be more encouraging,
- c. Proposals:
- i. The Path Forward group recommended two proposals for the Meeting to consider:
 1. **Adopt the outdoor, in-person MfW** (no longer pilot) **available at 8 am on 2nd and 4th Sundays; at 11 am on 1st and 3rd Sundays.** This would continue on an on-going basis with the expectations of social distancing and the wearing of masks. The limit at any one worship would continue to be fifteen (15) people and pre-registration would be required.
Based on the pilots, the Path Forward committee recommended:
 - a. Chairs can be repositioned by individuals so long as six feet (6-ft) distance is maintained.
 - b. There is no longer a need to wash down the chairs after use (based on science).
 - c. Changing the expectation related to out-of-state travel to align with the State of Maryland's guidelines (stay home if you have traveled to an area with a positivity rate is greater than 10%). Currently there are approximately twelve (12) states with high positivity rates, including Virginia.
 - d. If demand for In-person Worship is high, consider a mid-week worship for those who might want that or make other arrangements if the alternating in-person MfW on 1st Days (Sundays) are not enough.
 - e. Comments:
 - i. A Friend mentioned that the proposed schedule for in-person MfW will create a conflict with attendance at committee meetings and she offered some alternative options, including possibly allowing committee meetings on the porch or inside space the meeting house. Karen responded that the PF committee did consider various scheduling options and is aware that conflicts exist regardless of how the schedule alternates. Until indoor worship is possible, the PF committee hopes that AFM's committees will be able to work out acceptable rescheduling. In addition, Meeting House and Land (MH&L) committee is looking into improving the internet, extensions, and the WiFi strength, so that Friends might have the option of connecting while in their vehicles in the parking lot, if time constraints prohibit travel between in-person MfW and a Zoom-based committee meeting.
 - f. The clerk asked for Friends if they approve moving from pilot to regular outdoor, in-person MfW as described by the PF committee. Meeting approved.
 2. **Pilot small** (i.e., no more than fifteen (15) attenders at a time) **group outdoor, in-person AFM meetings** (such as committee meetings, Spiritual Friends Group and other groups internal to AFM (i.e., not for others or rentals). Expectations for this are the same as those set for regular outdoor, in-person MFW worship. Only one event allowed per day. The convener is the responsible person to oversee that all expectations, including pre-registration, no more than 15 people, masks, social distancing, etc. are met.

- a. Comments: Not all committee members will feel comfortable with the in-person option. Committees will need to be accommodating to all members and may need to provide Zoom/conference call options instead of or in addition to in-person meetings, so that groups can be as inclusive as possible.
 - b. The clerk tested if the Meeting approves of the proposal for piloting small, outdoor, in-person groups at the meeting house and the Meeting approved.
 - d. Karen C., provided information as to what the PF committee will be working on going forward, including exploring the option of inside use of the meeting house, providing more listening sessions, and launching a new quick Path Forward survey. Friends were encouraged to send additional thoughts, suggestions, recommendations, and more using email sent to the clerk email address (clerk@annapolisfriends.org) or to Karen (kcunyngham@verizon.net) if you have any additional thoughts.
6. The clerk noted that not all of the agenda was discussed at this meeting, but that we needed to close the meeting because MfW was fast approaching.

7. Silent Reports:

a. Nominations Committee

- i. The Nominations Committee report provides an update about the committee's schedule and that they recently held their kick-off meeting. They will be reaching out to individuals in the upcoming months to learn more about their interest in becoming more involved with the AFM community. See the attached.

- b. Quaker Voice of Maryland (QVM) input request for legislative priorities. See the attached. This week, QVM kicks off its annual survey of Maryland Quakers, asking us to identify our top priority issues for legislative action by Maryland's General Assembly in 2021. This survey can be completed by individual Friends, committees, or entire Meetings. **The due date for responses is 10/4/20.** QVM members, then, will compile the results and will recommend specific bills to fulfill those priorities.

- c. Stewardship & Finance provided a report to clarify funds, online donations and committee budget preparation. See the attached. This will also be shared on the AFM-Announce email address.

Closing: AFM MfW wAtB was concluded with a moment of centering silence. The clerk expressed gratitude for all participants in the meeting. The recording clerk will send the draft meeting minutes to the Announce List, so that Friends can review the draft minutes and provide feedback. At the beginning of the next MfW wAtB, these draft minutes will be brought up for discussion, changes and approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M., Recording Clerk
recording-clerk@annapolisfriends.org

ATTACHMENTS:

- Meeting Minutes (approved) from 8th month MfW wAtB
- AFM Homeschooling Status Report 9-2020
- Change Group/P&SC Health Resources Recommendation
- Health-Equity-Resource-Communities-Resolution-1
- Nominating Report 09.06.2020

- Quaker Voice of Maryland Input Request flyer
- Stewardship & Finance Report 09.06.2020

AFM Children's Religious Education Committee
Home Schooling Status Report, September 2020
Kimberly Benson

The Annapolis Friends Meeting ad hoc Homeschooling Committee is currently serving 8 families, providing oversight for the educational experiences of 14 students in two Maryland counties: 8 in Anne Arundel (AA) and 6 in Prince George's (PG). Two students are enrolled in 4th grade, 2 in 5th, 2 in 8th, 1 in 9th, 1 in 10th, 5 in 11th, and 1 in 12th.

I administer the program along with Lis Lawlor, the mother of one of our students, who previously worked for the Calvert School homeschool umbrella, conducting academic reviews for local families. Lis and I have seen an increase in the number of inquiries since the onset of the coronavirus restrictions, but so far we have only added 1 new family to the program. Two other families have enrolled additional children, one of which was previously working with us but had matriculated to Key School for high school.

In recent years, three students have graduated from our program. Two of these are enrolled in Washington College. The third started a degree program at University of Maryland Global Campus, after completing 2 years of dual enrollment credit at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC).

Another student is completing 12th grade while enrolled at University of Maryland College Park, and another is starting AACC as an 11th grader. The State of Maryland requires all students to register through their county's department of education until the age of 18, regardless of their enrollment status in high school or college, so we continue to serve students who have matriculated into higher education.

Lis and I will continue to field inquiries and are open to some expansion. Administrative capacity is our limiting factor because the program is free and volunteer run. We are finding new ways to adapt, work, and stay connected. Even home schooling has changed during COVID. It is no longer advisable to hold monthly informal coffee meetings or share extracurricular opportunities. But, our current families are all experienced home schoolers, who can function fairly autonomously. All of us are willing to offer advice and guidance to those who are just starting on this academic approach, even if our program ultimately doesn't prove to be a good fit. Collectively, we have a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to share.

Change Group and Peace & Social Concerns Committee recommendation:

Will Annapolis Friends Meeting join other Meetings and churches to [endorse the Resolution](#) to join a broad coalition to support creation of Health Equity Resource Communities funded by a one cent per dollar alcohol sales tax increase? AFM's Change Group and Peace & Social Concerns Committee recommend that we do so.

Health Equity Resource Communities will be locations in the state with poor health outcomes that compete for grants, tax incentives, and health care provider loan repayment assistance to increase access to culturally competent care and ultimately reduce racial, ethnic, and geographic health inequities. The Communities will be modeled after the successful 2012-2016 Health Enterprise Zones Program which increased access to health resources, improved residents' health, reduced hospital admissions, and created cost savings.

Funding for the Communities, as well as programs to address substance use and mental health disorders, will come from a one cent per dollar increase in the state alcohol beverage sales tax in 2021. In addition to generating much needed funds, the tax itself also is expected to save lives and lower health care costs by reducing underage drinking, binge drinking, driving under the influence, and sexually transmitted infections, just like what happened after we successfully advocated for the last alcohol sales tax increase in 2011.

An authorized representative of your organization can sign the Resolution to join the coalition and support this critical initiative to support health equity. You can find more information about this initiative and sign the Resolution electronically on the [petition website](#).

Nominating Committee forwards the following as info for MfB 09.06.2020:

Nominating Committee kicked-off the work leading toward the CY21 Slate for Meeting review and approval scheduled for MfB 12/6/20. Nominating Committee Liaison Assignments have been ascertained, and the Nominating Committee members listed following will be contacting each indicated committee (Clerk/s first, and committee members to follow) to engage in a discussion of:

- The state of the committee (as described as the committee charge described on the AFM website <https://annapolisfriends.org/about/committees/>);
- This as kick-off to attaining the goal of committee leadership and composition in 2021.
- Any comments/questions will be welcomed, of course.

The Nominating Committee is mindful of how AFM committee activity and commitment is crucial to the heart of the functioning of the business of meeting. We pledge, enabled by the selfless giving of all members/and attenders committing to the business of meeting, that when this Slate is finally approved, it will represent the best that we all are devoting to the health and spiritual well-being of Annapolis Friends Meeting in the coming year. Thank you all.

Liaisons:

[WesJ] Meeting Officers

[PattyR] Childrens' Religious Education

[SusanD] Library

[WesJ] Meetinghouse and Land

[AnnR] Ministry & Worship

[BarbT] Nominating

[PattyR] Outreach

[SusanD] Pastoral Care

[BarbT] Peace & Social Concerns

[SusanD] Quaker Market

[AnnR] Stewardship & Finance

[AnnR] Trustees



Input for 2021 General Assembly

Requested by October 4th, 2020

Quaker Voice of Maryland is an organization that seeks to help Quakers in Maryland have an effective voice in statewide policy decisions.

As part of this leading we are currently requesting input from Meetings, Committees, and Friends across Maryland to help guide our policy focuses for the 2021 General Assembly.

www.quakervoicecmd.org | quakervoicecmd@gmail.com

- **Who can share input**

We welcome input submitted by Monthly Meetings, Committees, other Quaker affiliated groups, and Friends individually from across Maryland.

During these challenging times for coming together we understand if it is easier to submit feedback as an individual or a committee in lieu of bringing this discernment process to a Meeting for Business at your Monthly Meeting.

- **How to share input**

We are gathering input using an online form. The input form can be accessed on our website and submitted online: www.quakervoicecmd.org

The form can also be printed, completed by hand, and mailed to a working group member. If you are interested in this option, contact us by email for further instructions.

All input needs to be submitted by October 4th.

- **How to learn about our work**

We encourage you to first check out our website to learn more about our group and the work that we have accomplished since starting a little over a year ago. Use our email to reach out if you have further questions.

Stewardship & Finance Committee
Report for 09.06.2020

ID Funds Oversight Committees Reviews of Funds Policies. S&F requests that all ID Funds oversight committees provide feedback to the recommended ID Funds revision suggestions that have been forwarded by S&F some time ago. So far only one committee has done so, and that committee clerk has communicated that the fund description is satisfactory as is with no need for any change believed necessary. We appreciate that feedback, and that at least allows for the annotation of the "reviewed as of date" to reflect a 2020 date. Without this action we have some review dates that go back as far as ten or fifteen years, with some not annotated at all.

Donations to AFM. S&F also advises the removal of the "Donate Button" on the website as having been prematurely enabled without proper vetting by MfB. We intend to do so at S&F Committee meetings to come with the goal a recommendation to MfB for ultimate MfB approval. All F/friends are encouraged to forward any comments which we will consider in our deliberations. Please be aware that there were four donations received while the button was active, but these are in a state of limbo until we can figure out how to administer and process this generosity. We will return to MfB with updates as they occur. As of now, we continue to encourage all gifts to meeting be handled via cash, check, or automated payments via electronic funds transfers, please ensuring that the source donor's name is clearly attached to the donation. If this is not done, then there is no attribution and the donation becomes anonymous.

AFM 2021 Committee Budgets Preparation. All committees are urged to discuss at committee mtgs this month the 2021 Committee Budget and forward initial estimates to S&F by the end of September for inclusion in the 2021 first draft to be presented at the 10/4/20 MfB. S&F will provide a current 2020 Treasurer's Report for reference at these September committee meetings.