

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
March 4, 2018

Friends gathered in worship with an attention to business on March 4, 2018. During opening worship, the clerk read an excerpt from Brian Drayton's On Living with a Concern for Gospel Ministry:

We have no time but this present time to bear witness to the power of the light to re-create the human heart, and thus transform our doing, our seeing, and our speaking. There is much tenderness and good will among us, but have we been baptized with fire, as well as the Holy Spirit?

Present: Susan Zeichner, Callid Keefe-Perry, Lynn Taber, Beckey Phipps, Nancy Shippen, Will Taber, Bev Williams, Wally Williams, Kathleen Wooten, Helen Bassett, Linda Agerbak, Melody Brazo, Holly White, Cathryn Oliva-Simmons, Betsy Kantt, Phillip Veatch (recorder), Bruce Neumann (clerk).

Helping Fund

Helping Fund recommendations were brought by Betsy Kantt for the Administration and Stewardship Committee. See attached list. In addition to our budgeted \$1200, we also sometimes receive additional donations for this fund from individuals. Betsy read a letter from one such anonymous donor. Meeting approved the list. We were reminded that the Helping Fund is given to individuals and organizations doing work outside of the Meeting while the Spiritual Gifts fund, under the care of the Gifts and Leadings Committee, is intended to further the work of individuals within our meeting.

Rachel Carey Harper Fund

Beckey Phipps for the Ministry and Worship Committee reported that the committee has discerned that the Rachel Carey Harper donation of \$2000 should be given to the Metrowest Worker Center in Framingham, MA. Metrowest is a small organization that provides support and legal help to undocumented immigrants. See <http://www.mwc-casa.org> to learn more about them. The clerks will send a letter to Metrowest and also a letter to Rachel Carey Harper telling her of our discernment.

NEYM Human Rights Minute

We continued our consideration of the New England Yearly Meeting Minute on Human Rights. Whenever Meeting is considering large issues like this, we often need to start with the questions: 'Who do we partner with?' and 'How do we get started?'. There are many Friends at Fresh Pond who are already working on issues of immigration and racism with the support of the meeting. This is an ongoing part of the work of the Meeting. We continue to ask what more we are called to do as a Meeting. We were reminded that we should not worry about the ultimate success of what we are doing but make sure that we are active where we are called to be. Bev Williams and Nancy Shippen will explore the possibility of a fifth First Day activity in April to further our discernment on what more we are called to do as a meeting.

Announcements

Bruce Neumann announced that his name will come to New England Yearly Meeting Sessions in August as the next presiding clerk of NEYM. This position begins with a year of “shadowing” the current clerk to learn more about the role. If that appointment is approved, he will ask to be released from committee work at Fresh Pond for the three years of his service. Meeting said woo-hoo!

Additional Documents from Business Meeting

Letter to Metrowest Worker Center

Metrowest Worker Center.

Please accept this check with our deep gratitude for the work you do, and your commitment to underserved and vulnerable populations in the Framingham area.

We received this money from Rachel Carey Harper of Barnstable Meeting early last year, with the request to use it to help “push back the wave of intolerance and isolation” and to “embrace right, ethical, compassionate living.”

While our discernment has taken some time, we have come to clarity that we would most like to use this money to support your work, which fits both Rachel’s criteria, and our own - of supporting organizations where we feel a connection with Fresh Pond Meeting, and where an amount such as this can make a real difference.

On behalf of Fresh pond Meeting,
Bruce Neumann & Phil Veatch, co-clerks

Letter to Rachel Carey Harper:

March 17, 2018

Rachel,

We wanted to let you know that we have discerned how we wanted to use your donation to, as you put it “push back the wave of intolerance and isolation” and to “embrace right, ethical, compassionate living.” We have decided to send it all to the Metrowest Worker Center in Framingham, Massachusetts.

When your letter and donation first arrived, we were in the midst of a months-long effort to understand white privilege and our role(s) in white supremacy. We had deferred discernment, wondering whether some “thing” that money would help, would evolve out of that work. While we cannot claim to be done with that work, we did come back to considering the donation and realized that the things we might do to further our work (such as bystander training) we can support ourselves, and that we wanted to put your money to work for others. Several of our members know Diego Low of Metrowest Worker Center, as well as the QVS fellow who is working there, so we feel a connection and an awareness of the importance of that work, which seems even more important during a period of rising anti-immigrant rhetoric and action.

The time we spent considering how your generous donation should be spent was itself a gift to our meeting. Thank you for this process that you initiated as well as for the donation itself.

Bruce Neumann
Phillip Veatch
Co-clerks, Fresh Pond Meeting

Details of Our Helping Fund Donations

There is a total of \$1400 available to distribute. Fresh Pond Monthly meeting budgeted \$1200 for this fund. An anonymous donor gave an additional \$200 for this fund. Brad read a note he received with that \$200 gift.

Dear Meeting,

For some years we have been donating some extra funds to the Helping Fund and sometimes for Spiritual Seed Money. We appreciate the discernment of the Meeting in distributing these gifts. It has always been our hope that this gesture would prompt others to invest in the Meeting and our wider community through the Meeting.

We hope that the seed money is a direct investment on our spiritual capital. First time attendance at Yearly Meeting, conferences at Woolman Hill, or Powell House, enrollment in other Friends Learning opportunities are just some ideas. This is a small amount but often the big funders ask applicants to show that they have discernment and some financial support from their Meetings.

Many thanks for taking a bit of time to understand this gift and to consider adding as you are able.

Your anonymous donor.

The committee reviewed submissions for the Helping Fund. Submissions were requested from members/attenders of meeting. The guidelines considered: \$600 must be dedicated to Quaker organizations while the remainder could go to either Quaker or non-Quaker organizations; direct involvement of a member/attender in the organization; selection of organizations where a relatively small gift could have the greatest impact.

Quaker organizations:

Material Aid and Advocacy	\$200
QVS	\$300
Friends Peace Teams	\$200

Non Quaker organizations:

Elizabeth Stone	\$190
English at Large	\$180
Biodiversity for a Livable Climate	\$75
LexRAP	\$75
Somerville Math Fund	\$180

About these organizations:

Material Aid and Advocacy (MAAP)—Erica Voolich supports this organization. Formerly known as “the Clothing Room”, this program is housed in the basement of Friends Meeting at Cambridge. Established in 1944, MAAP helps to alleviate people’s immediate basic suffering by providing referred recipients with free material aid including clothing, household goods, survival supplies, and hygienic items. MAAP assists recipients in meeting their broader needs by making available a Resource Guides that include all the information necessary to access

shelters, food pantries, community meals, employment assistance and more. Annually, MAAP serves over 2,000 individuals and families. In September 2017 the AFSC severed ties with MAAP. MAAP is on its way to becoming a 501C3.

QVS—several members of meeting are involved in this organization including Pat Moyer and Bruce Neumann. QVS is a year-long Fellowship program for young adults (21-30) who live communally, work full time at social service and social change agencies, and explore themes of spiritual and personal growth with local Quakers.

Friends Peace Teams—Nancy Shippen is involved in this organization. Friends Peace Teams is a Spirit-led organization working around the world to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict to create programs for peacebuilding, healing and reconciliation. FPT's Initiatives build on extensive Quaker experience combining practical and spiritual aspects of conflict resolution.

Elizabeth Stone House—Karin Downs and Sarah Bansen have been supporting the Stone House for many years through the 'Wilderness Heals' hike and other activities. It is a shelter and programs for families experiencing domestic violence, homelessness and mental illness.

English at Large—Bev Williams is involved in this organization. Bev has served as a co-leader of a conversation group in Arlington for the past 6 years. They supply free tutoring and English classes to 21 areas around Boston. They also offer career workshops and volunteer trainings.

Biodiversity of a Livable Climate—Kathleen McLeod is involved in this Cambridge based organization. Emphasizes the good news about restoring ecosystems to reverse global warming. They focus on 4 main areas: maximizing a healthy urban tree canopy, creating urban agriculture, generating local renewable energy, and promoting sustainable, healthy transportation.

LexRAP—Pat Moyer and Bruce Neumann are involved in this organization. Based in Lexington, LexRAP assists refugees and asylum seekers with housing, job search, language skills, socialization, tutoring, clothing, food and more.

Somerville Math Fund—Erica Voolich runs this organization. The Math Fund's mission is to celebrate and encourage math achievement in Somerville. They award college scholarships and teacher grants. They sponsor family math nights, Pi Day celebrations, and a high school engineering challenge.