



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council
Saturday, April 20, 2024
Approved Minutes

Arch Street Meeting House and remote via Zoom

Attending: Tom Zemaitis (Interim Clerk), Andrew Anderson, Chuck Devers, Christie Duncan-Tessmer (General Secretary), Jeanne Elberfeld, Cecilia Filauro (Executive Assistant), Kruskal Hewitt, John Marquette (Recording Clerk), Linell McCurry (CFO), Nikki Mosgrove (Rising Clerk), Carter Nash, Salvador Orellana (Deputy General Secretary), Melissa Rycroft (Presiding Clerk), Cathy Toner

Regrets: Neil Holzman, Terry Cooke

1. Welcome & Worship

Tom Zemaitis welcomed attendees and opened with worship at 9:02 am.

2. Minutes

The minutes of March 17, 2024, were approved as presented. John Marquette agreed to serve as recording clerk for this meeting.

3. Advocacy/Lobbying Policy

Last month, Admin Council considered how to proceed with crafting a new advocacy/lobbying policy. Jeanne Elberfeld, Kruskal Hewitt, Carter Nash, and Melissa Rycroft were asked to meet in advance of the April meeting to discuss next steps. Jeanne reported they recommended three steps:

- Actively Listen. Listen actively to understand the diverse views of PYM Friends by holding Spirit-led worship sharing sessions open to all PYM Friends, either virtually and/or in person, over a period of two weeks. Council members who attend will take notes for Council's further consideration and report back on their experience of the sessions.
- Work to craft the policy. Appoint a small working group of Friends, possibly structured as a Sprint, to create a well-seasoned policy that could go to Continuing Sessions in the fall for discernment. Annual Sessions would hear an interim report this summer.
- Celebrate the collective work of Friends, recognizing the dynamic process of this policy.

Tom thanked Jeanne for the presentation. He noted that the direction and results of the worship sharing findings need to be clearly reported back to Admin. Admin Council will then appoint a small working group with members from Admin, Quaker Life Council, and other key constituencies within PYM. The working group members might come from the worship sharing participants, as well as other Friends with deep investment in the concerns about the policy. The four Friends presenting this report will be present for those listening sessions.

At the end of the process, Friends of all opinions need to feel heard and acknowledged. Voices who favor or oppose the now-suspended policy need to be represented. Communication lines need to remain open as not everyone will be able to attend a listening session. There are in fact two concerns from the body: one is about lobbying policy; another is how Admin Council makes policy. Admin Council agreed that in this next week, Jeanne, Kruskal, Carter and Melissa, plus Linell and Salvador, as available staffing, will meet to draft the charge, review the calendar, and determine the dates and locations of the worship sharing sessions. Christie offered to create a clearly written charge for this process. There is a template to aid in charge development. Recent sprints which have used the process have had the most success in their work. Admin expects that by its May18 meeting there will be a charge (subject to Admin Council's final approval) and that some or all of the worship sharing sessions will have taken place.

4. Review of the Communications Policy was held over until May.

5. Staff Support for PYM Groups

Admin had earlier reviewed the revised Consolidated Resources for PYM Groups, a section of the Governance Handbook. The resources available to the different PYM Groups (councils, committees, collaboratives, etc.) are in a single document. **Friends approved the policy as presented.**

6. Climate Witness Stewards: Zero Carbon Ad-Hoc Proposal

Friends heard an update on last month's agenda item on the Stewards' way forward in their plans for decreasing PYM's carbon footprint. Since the last Administrative Council meeting, staff has developed a scope for an RFP (request for proposal) for a consultant. The Stewards will review it by next week and turn it back to staff to finalize the RFP.

Friends approved these names to the Zero Carbon Ad-Hoc Working Group:

- Burt Dallas (Radnor Monthly Meeting)
- Bill Beetle (Westfield Monthly Meeting)
- Pat Finley (Old Haverford Monthly Meeting)

7. PYM FY 2023 Audit

The FY 2023 financial statements are posted on the website. Linell reported that it was a clean, unremarkable audit. There were few variations from the prior year, apart from an increase in the value of investments. At the meeting to receive the audit, a Friend asked our accountants for more detail on the Arch Street Meetinghouse Preservation Trust supplemental schedules; that will be provided next year. Friends noted their appreciation of the accounting firm's timely and positive response. <https://www.pym.org/our-organization/finance/>

8. Nominating Council Proposal on Quarterly Meeting Representatives

Nominating Council offered a proposal for Admin's seasoning. The current system of populating Nominating includes asking the 13 quarterly meetings to name one of their members to the Council. Few quarters have named someone. The new proposal is that the quarter clerks themselves would serve as Nominating Council representatives. The Presiding Clerk advised Admin Council to be in communication with quarter clerks before proceeding with any new policy. Friends discussed briefly our current geographic system of thirteen quarters and how that may inhibit our work as a 21st century faith community.

Friends returned the proposal to Nominating, thanking them for their work, offering our help in helping them to resolve their concern, and asking that they share their work be shared with quarter clerks. Friends have also referred this to the Governance Advisory Committee to look at this proposal, be in touch with QM clerks, and consider the structure of the nominating process and the structure of the Nominating Council.

9. Revising the Governance Handbook

The Governance Handbook is ready for regular maintenance updating. Christie said that the Handbook, originally written in 2014, has been amended in the past ten years, including recently moving responsibilities for the PYM body and councils to the front of the handbook. To address new updates, Tom noted that we need a structure, like a sprint, to do the work. He asked that a charge be drafted and brought back to Administrative Council by the May meeting.

10. Adjourn

The meeting ended with worship at 10:21 am.

Faithfully submitted,
John Marquette