

**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Administrative Council**  
**Saturday, June 15, 2024**  
**Approved Minutes**

*Arch Street Meeting House and remote via Zoom*

Attending: Kruskal Hewitt (Interim Clerk), Andrew Anderson, Jean-Marie Prestwich-Barch (Quaker Life Council Clerk), Terry Cooke, Chuck Devers, Christie Duncan-Tessmer (General Secretary), Jeanne Elberfeld, Cecilia Filauro (Administrative Assistant), Neil Holzman, John Marquette (Recording Clerk), Linell McCurry (CFO), Nikki Mosgrove (Rising Clerk), Carter Nash, Salvador Orellana (Deputy General Secretary), Melissa Rycroft (Presiding Clerk), Cathy Toner, Tom Zemaitis (Interim Treasurer)

1. Welcome & Worship

Kruskal Hewitt welcomed attendees and opened with worship at 9:01 am.

2. Approval of minutes

**The minutes of May 18, 2024, were approved as presented.** John Marquette agreed to serve as recording clerk for the meeting.

3. Development Committee report

The General Secretary introduced Merri Brown (Director of Development) and Robert Vosburgh, West Chester Monthly Meeting, who presented the report.

Bob expressed his thanks for the opportunity to present. The committee's volunteers are dedicated Friends and fundraising professionals charged with offering advice, wisdom, creativity, and professional experience to support the work of PYM's Development Department. The committee meets monthly except in July and August. It reviews a monthly dashboard of current finances and ongoing or proposed development projects and initiatives happening at PYM. The committee works to support the efforts of PYM's institutional development, following the yearly meeting's strategic direction, with the focus on "connecting."

Friends warmly thanked Bob and the committee and accepted the report with gratitude.

4. Governance Advisory Committee

Neil Holzman reported. In April, Admin Council had referred to Governance a proposal for Nominating Council, where quarterly meeting clerks would serve on the Nominating Council or appoint another member of the quarter in their stead. The committee was in unity that this was too strong an approach when written as a requirement. Recommended instead: Nominating Council might say it would consider it a blessing if quarterly meeting clerks would either join Nominating Council or attend as is practical.

Governance offered other ideas. The quarterly meetings already gather their leadership for a meeting three times a year and PYM nominating needs could be on the agenda. Another suggestion was that members of the councils, particularly Nominating but also Admin Council and QLC, split up the task to attend quarterly meetings to network and nurture the value of service to PYM, and to learn what names might be possible. A list of dates for the quarterly meetings' meetings was shared.

In other work, the committee is seasoning further conversation on term limits and revisions to the PYM Governance Handbook. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

5. Listening & Lobbying Sprint report

Jeanne Elberfeld reported for the Sprint, which met for the first time on Friday, June 14, and reviewed its charge as Friends considered the work of the yearly meeting.

The discussion was structured with three queries, focused on one at a time:

- What are the needs of PYM Friends whose ministry is grounded in advocacy activism?
- What are the needs of the PYM community for advocacy and activism?
- What is our responsibility to maintain PYM's resources and nonprofit status?

The discussion found much common ground, especially a deep love for and sense of the capacity and power within Quakerism. It is a path that needs to be vital and relevant. Points of disagreement and concern will require more research and information. The sprint will meet regularly to work through the process of education, understanding and discernment. The goal is to have a draft for Admin Council and QLC to review and refer to Continuing Sessions in November. In discussion, Friends agreed that review means the councils will receive the report and may have questions and comments for the sprint, but councils will not edit or change the report. Friends accepted the sprint update with gratitude.

6. Finance Committee recommendation on Proposed FY 2025 Budget

Finance reviewed the Proposed Budget on June 6 and recommends it to Admin Council for release to Annual Sessions. Linell McCurry noted that the staff salaries and benefits lines had been firmed up since Admin saw a draft budget last month. There will be an opportunity for discussion with the Treasurer and time for questions at the Sessions business meeting scheduled for June 25 by Zoom. **Friends approved the release of the Proposed FY 2025 Budget to Annual Sessions for approval.**

7. Finance Committee Recommendation on Use of the Strategic Reserve Fund

Treasurer Tom Zemaitis presented a proposed policy for use of PYM'S Strategic Reserve fund. Directed by a 2022 bequest, Finance Committee and Administrative Council created the Strategic Reserve Fund to serve as a fund to support activity related to our strategic directions. The Strategic Reserve Fund is similar to PYM restricted program funds spent under budget under the care of the General Secretary, excepting that Strategic Reserve

principal is expected to be spent. The Strategic Reserve is not a granting fund and cannot be applied to.

Finance recommends that the General Secretary may draw on the Strategic Reserve to support projects that 1) address the destinations of the strategic plan, 2) are the initiatives of a council or staff, and 3) are cumulatively less than \$50,000 in a year. The use of these funds will be reported to the Finance Committee.

The General Secretary will bring to Finance Committee for approval proposed uses that are 1) expected to exceed \$50,000 cumulatively in a year, or 2) are initiatives of a council or staff and related to the strategic directions but *not* a current destination, or 3) are related to the destinations but are a project of a PYM governance or community group rather than a council or staff.

**Friends approved the policy as proposed.**

8. Communications Policy

Christie presented the policy draft revised from last month. The policy applies to all communications of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting operations, including those managed by staff, by its governance groups such as councils and committees, and by community groups such as collaboratives and youth programs. It applies to all digital, print, and social media communications. It covers communications and work within the yearly meeting only; it does not pertain to monthly or quarterly meetings.

The draft does not contain language on political speech or anything related to lobbying. Any future addition depends on the work of the current sprint, see Minute 5. Also, the draft does not contain policy or practice for pre-approving social media posts. In terms of authority going forward, Christie noted that staff can make minor changes to update the policy; other changes must be made by the clerks' group.

**Friends approved the policy as revised with gratitude for the work put into its development.**

9. Adjourn

The meeting ended with worship at 10:23 am.

Faithfully submitted,  
John Marquette