

General Secretary Search Committee

Charge:

With Divine assistance the committee will support the process of seeking unity on identifying the next General Secretary by shepherding the search process and bringing finalists forward for decision.

Background:

In July 2025 the current General Secretary's service will be complete. The Administrative Council holds authority for the process of seeking the successor and is sharing that authority with Quaker Life Council and Nominating Council. Together they will set up the committee charged with managing the search process.

Composition of the Committee:

The Committee will include 6-9 people. Together, the people serving on the committee will have the experiences, perspectives, and the skills to support their responsibility for identifying qualified candidates. These include:

- **Non-profit administration** – the requirements and responsibilities for running a small to mid-size non-profit organization.
- **Non-profit governance** – the roles and responsibilities of a governance structure in relation to the organization and to the chief executive officer.
- **Quaker process** – the ways in which Friends worship, listen, discern and move forward.
- **Monthly and quarterly meetings** – the needs of Quaker meetings for healthy functioning and being in relationship with one another.
- **Governance members** – at least one member of the committee will be a member of Quaker Life or Administrative Council. The treasurer is ex officio.
- **Larger Quaker landscape** – the range of Quaker organizations and yearly meetings with which PYM is in constant relationship.
- **Diversity**
 - **Age** – Because we want to see a Quaker community that includes Friends of all ages, we'll see age diversity on the committee: half the committee will be under 65. At least two members will be under 35.
 - **Race** – Because of our commitments to belonging and to addressing racism we'll see racial diversity on the committee: at least a third of the committee will be BIPOC Friends.
 - **Experience** – Because we want to nurture leadership and because Friends in the yearly meeting have a wide range of experience with Quakerism, at least one Friend who is newer to Quakerism or to service in a high-impact governance group will be included.
- Committee members will be spiritually grounded Friends who are familiar with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. They do not need to be members.
- Nominations for membership on the committee will be solicited from the councils and from the body.
- The clerk will be appointed by the Joint Council. The committee may appoint an assistant clerk, recording clerk, or any other role.

- A staff member will not provide logistical support for the work of the committee. Initial meeting logistics can be set up by staff but ongoing work will need to be supported by the committee and the search firm.

Accountability:

The charge for the Search Committee and its members will be approved by jointly by the councils.

The Clerks Group will be responsible for bringing nominations for the committee membership to the Joint Council.

The committee will report in person (or by zoom) to the Joint Council quarterly. At each significant stage in the search the committee will report in writing to the Joint Council. The committee will always be available for responding to the questions or needs of the councils, through the clerks of the councils.

The committee will be held accountable on an on-going basis by the Clerks Group which will ensure that it maintains momentum and the work is completed. In the event the committee requires assistance, whether the need is perceived by the committee itself or by others, the Clerks Group is responsible for providing the assistance.

The committee will report in writing to the PYM body on a quarterly basis.

Responsibilities (what the committee will do):

1. Hold the meetings and the work of the committee in the manner of Friends, grounded in Spirit.
2. Identify a search firm that has experience working with Quakers and Quaker organizations. The search firm will support the logistics of the search and will assist the committee in meeting its responsibilities.
3. Collaborate with the PYM Finance office regarding resources and contracts.
4. Develop a timeline for the search including candidate identification, and consultations and communications with governance, staff and the body.
5. With input from the Personnel Committee, review the job description of the General Secretary. Recommend changes to the Joint Council for approval.
6. Identify a potential interim General Secretary to serve on a short term basis if needed. This will allow maximum flexibility in the timeline.
7. Identify a committee member who will be in regular two-way contact with staff, including:
 - a. Organize an initial hearing by the committee from staff on their needs and hopes regarding the General Secretary.
 - b. Organize a mid-point meeting with the committee and the staff.
 - c. Report to the staff on a quarterly basis at a minimum.
 - d. Receive and report back to the committee questions, thoughts and concerns from staff throughout the process.
8. Ensure the General Secretary position is posted and well publicized.
9. Carefully review all application materials.
10. Conduct interviews.
11. Members attend at least 80% of the meetings; come to meetings having read all advance material.

12. Recommend two to three finalist candidates to Joint Council and arrange for interviews of the candidates by councils and by staff.
13. Maintain confidentiality.

Outcomes:

1. The job description will be updated as needed.
2. Two to three finalist candidates will be identified.
3. PYM Friends and staff will be informed of the process all along the way.

Next Steps:

1. The Joint Council will bring a single finalist candidate forward for consideration of approval by the yearly meeting in session.
2. A Transition Plan will be set up by the councils and leadership staff to facilitate the incoming General Secretary's orientation and success.