

**Jacksonville Monthly Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship for Business: Minutes**  
April 21, 2013 (Amended May 19, 2013)  
Elaine Martin, Clerk

**Attendees:** Elaine Martin, Doug Halpin, Brooke Stephens, Connie Guenther, Erika Guenther, Addie Guenther, Al Geiger, Ken Hall, Bonnie Hall, Mike Shell

**1. Worship**

**2. Reading**

Impasse is excruciatingly painful for us. Yet we must not overlook its importance in reaching unity. The pain of impasse is not only the pain of finding no way forward, it is the pain of having exhausted our human resources. We have done the best we could in terms of information and insight, sometimes in terms of seeking acceptable compromises. Yet nothing is working. We can make nothing happen. It becomes clear that the solution is—in more than one sense—beyond us.

The word “excruciating” is not irrelevant in traditional symbolism. The Latin root refers to the torment of crucifixion. Among early Friends, the Cross referred primarily to the pains into which we are led by trying to have our own ways, and to the pain filled process of relinquishing our wills. Impasses is excruciating because it is the cross to our own plans, agendas, solutions. It is the hard, bare place where we wait on some new thing we have not imagined, over which we have no control.

Authentic impasse may last for months or years. While nothing is happening on the surface, it may be a time when people are being brought inwardly to confront the true source of their motivations and to seek for their cleansing. It may be a time for healing broken relationships within the meeting, for renewing bonds of love and peace that have become eroded. Where it is not simply a time for a hardening of adversarial positions, impasse can be extremely fruitful in the life of the meeting, in spite of the pain—or perhaps because of it, because of the way it breaks us open and focuses our attention on work that needs to be done.

When the inner work of the Spirit has truly been accomplished, the time will be right for some centered soul to carry the meeting to the place where the members can recognize that issues are not what they thought they were. Sometimes the impasse is the consequence of two groups of people addressing very different dimensions of the problem, neither group seeing the question whole.

—[\*Listening Spirituality, Volume 2\*](#), Patricia Loring

Discussion – Various Friends commented.

- This reading recalls the Buddhist concept of *bodhichitta* (Sanskrit for “noble or awakened heart”), the understanding that opening to pain rather than resisting or pushing it away can make available great space for healing.
- “Impasse” recalls a mountain pass which is blocked.
- It speaks to how our habit of rushing to make decisions and move forward may mean not answering the right question, rather than taking the time to find the true question.

- It speaks to a way of learning patience.

### 3. Minutes of March 10, 2013 – Approved.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report – Presented by the clerk on behalf of the treasurer ([Attachment 1](#))

- Draft 2013 Budget – The three alternative proposals are based on the following:
  - The first assumes our contributions as an average of 2011 (\$2,188) and 2012 (\$2,908) and no change in SEYM assessment. The total expenditures are \$2,695 and leave Meeting with a balance of -\$95.
  - The second assumes our contributions stay the same between 2012 and 2013 and we increase SEYM assessment by \$200. This total is \$2,685 and leave \$5.
  - The third assumes our contributions stay the same between 2012 and 2013 and we increase SEYM assessment to the actual request of \$2,518.
- SEYM Apportionment – The SEYM apportionment for fiscal year 2013 (6/1/2013-5/31/2014) have changed because projected expenses are flat, but projected income (donations) is down. JAX Meeting's total apportionment of \$2,518 is based on 10 members and 22 recorded attenders (apportioned at ½ the amount of members).
- Discussion – Friends considered budget and apportionment from several angles.
  - Putting the figures in perspective:
    - Meeting expenditures in all three proposals total \$1,495 for the year, or roughly \$125/month (\$3/month for attenders and \$6/month for members).
    - Full SEYM apportionment of \$2,518 would be about \$210/month (\$5 for attenders and \$10 for members).
  - Friends need to nurture a continuing sense of community with Meeting as a whole. Some approaches were discussed, including adding regular “simple snack” coffee hour after worship, and optional First Day programs/discussions following this social time.
  - Friends also noted a lack of Meeting public presence in Jacksonville and a declining awareness of Quakers on the part of society in general. This contrasts with the 1980s and 90s, when various religious and social action groups invited speakers from Meeting.
  - The clerk recalled a standard letter to Meeting members and attenders which simply advised them how much expense the Meeting incurs for each one of them. It was this letter which moved her to return to regular attendance and support of Meeting.
    - The sense of the Meeting was that we should send out such letters again.
- Minuted (2013.5): Bonnie Hall will include in the newsletter a simple statement of projected Meeting expenses/apportionment from the perspective of an individual member or attender.

#### 5. Meeting Location – As reported in the 3/10/13 minutes, Meeting continues to belief that basic concerns regarding the use of Brooke Stephen's home can be overcome.

- Bonnie confirmed that the ramp built by Doug Halpern is perfect for wheelchair access.
- Long-term planning for a permanent building will remain on the agenda for future meetings.
- The change of address and a map to Brooke's home will be posted on the website and published in the newsletter. We will continue to use the same phone number.

#### 6. Interfaith Council – Mike reported that IFC had neglected to add him to their email distribution list, so he missed the latest meeting on Friday, March 22, at the Clara White culinary luncheon at St John Episcopal Church. He will attend the next meeting when it is announced and give an update to Friends.

## 7. Yearly Meeting Gathering, March 27-31 – Report by the clerk.

- SEYM Earthcare Committee Minute on Climate Change (Attachment 2) – The committee (Barbara Letsch, clerk; Mary Jo Klinge and others), requests input and discernment from monthly meetings and individual Friends. Various Friends commented.
  - The public debate for years has been misfocused on two questions: Is it really happening? Who is to blame, humankind or nature? Friends could help redirect attention to two more crucial questions: How do we mitigate whatever changes we can? How do we take care of the lives (human and otherwise) put in danger by these changes?
  - We need to consider climate change from the perspective of how it affects us personally. How do we tend the Light in the midst of these changes?
  - The costs and dangers of the Keystone XL pipeline project are greater than its supporters acknowledge. John X. Lenihan has more information. The current Exxon pipeline oil leaks in Mayflower, Arkansas, are an example of the risks.
  - Bonnie and Mike agreed to investigate the Earthcare minute further and report back to Meeting.
- SEYM Secretary, Vicky Carley – The new secretary will begin her post on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 2014 Michener Lecturer – Deborah Fisch has been chosen.
- 2014 Walton Lecturer – Brendt Bill has been chosen.
- 2014 SEYM Gathering – The theme will be (Quakers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”
- Quaker perspectives on lobbying – SEYM representatives to FCNL have provided pamphlets on this subject. JAX Meeting may schedule learning sessions around these pamphlets.
- *Being a Quaker: A Guide for Newcomers* ([http://www.quakerbooks.org/being\\_a\\_quaker.php](http://www.quakerbooks.org/being_a_quaker.php)), by Geoffrey Durham (2011) – Elaine donated a copy to the Meeting.

Submitted by Mike Shell  
4/27/2013

Attachment 1

| Jacksonville Friends Meeting - 2013 |                         |               |            |            |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------|------------|--|
| Date                                | Description             | Contributions | Payment    | Balance    |  |
| 1/1/2013                            | Balance brought forward |               |            | \$2,255.97 |  |
| 2/5/2013                            |                         | \$490.00      |            | \$2,745.97 |  |
| 2/10/2013                           | Brooke Stephens         |               | \$60.00    | \$2,685.97 |  |
| 2/26/2013                           | Auto-Owners Insurance   |               | \$135.32   | \$2,550.65 |  |
| 2/26/2013                           | SEYM                    |               | \$600.00   | \$1,950.65 |  |
| 2/26/2013                           |                         | \$65.00       |            | \$2,015.65 |  |
| 3/3/2013                            | Brooke Stephens         |               | \$100.00   | \$1,915.65 |  |
| 3/21/2013                           |                         | \$263.00      |            | \$2,178.65 |  |
| 3/25/2013                           | Douglas O'Brien         |               | \$38.52    | \$2,140.13 |  |
| 4/5/2013                            |                         | \$65.00       |            | \$2,205.13 |  |
| 4/15/2013                           | Brooke Stephens         |               | \$80.00    | \$2,125.13 |  |
| YTD                                 |                         | \$883.00      | \$1,013.84 |            |  |

| Budget - 2013  |                              |      |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|--|------------------------------|------|------|------------------|------|--|----------------|--|--------------------|
| Income   |                              |      |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  | 2011                         | 2188 |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  | 2012                         | 2908 |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  | Total                        | 5096 |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  | Divided by 2                 | 2548 |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  |                              |      | 2600 |                  | 2900 |  |                |  | 2900               |
| Expenses   |                              |      |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |
|  | SEYM                         | 1200 |      |                  | 1400 |  |                |  | 2518               |
|  | Meeting space rent           | 940  |      |                  | 940  |  |                |  | 940                |
|  | Insurance                    | 140  |      |                  | 140  |  |                |  | 140                |
|  | Friends Journal Listing      | 45   |      |                  | 45   |  |                |  | 45                 |
|  | SEYM-Attendance Support      | 0    |      |                  | 0    |  |                |  | 0                  |
|  | FCPJ                         | 100  |      |                  | 100  |  |                |  | 100                |
|  | Friends Journal Subscription | 150  |      |                  | 150  |  |                |  | 150                |
|  | Interfaith Council of Jax    | 100  |      |                  | 100  |  |                |  | 100                |
|  | Quaker Life Listing          | 20   |      |                  | 20   |  |                |  | 20                 |
|  | Total                        | 2695 |      |                  | 2895 |  |                |  | 4013               |
|  |                              |      | 2695 |                  | 2895 |  |                |  | 4013               |
| Expenses versus Income   |                              |      |      | -95 <sup>1</sup> |      |  | 5 <sup>2</sup> |  | -1113 <sup>3</sup> |
| <sup>1</sup> The \$-95 column assumes our contributions as an average of 2011 and 2012 and no change in SEYM assessment.<br><sup>2</sup> The \$5 column assumes our contributions stay the same between 2012 and 2013 and we increase SEYM assessment by \$200.<br><sup>3</sup> The \$-1113 column assumes our contributions stay the same between 2012 and 2013 and we increase SEYM assessment to the actual request |                              |      |      |                  |      |  |                |  |                    |

## Attachment 2

Southeastern Yearly Meeting  
Of the Religious Society of Friends  
Minute on Climate Change - March 2013

We, the Friends of Southeastern Yearly Meeting, bring this minute forward at a time when the first phase of climate efforts are drawing to a close. Questions about the reality of climate change become irrelevant as we face catastrophic fires, drought, crop failures, ocean acidification and dead zones, and mass extinctions. As painful as they are, these realities that scientists predicted would occur with the unprecedented emissions and rise of CO2 are before us.

We as a religious community are called to respond now. We recognize that many of us feel confusion and despair, and fear that humankind may not be equal to the task ahead. Many of us have used denial to protect us from what we see or fear is coming. We understand with compassion that this denial has been our attempt to protect ourselves from feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

We need to remind ourselves that hope can be found in our Quaker faith and practices, in the unfailing presence of the Light, of our testimonies that guide us and clarify behaviors asked of us. We value the process of determining leadings to give us the joy and determination to carry on. We find in our history that many Friends have found the resolve to bring attention and intention to the work they faced, as we can.

We face immense questions. What price the preservation of private property? What is wealth and how does money represent wealth? We know from our efforts to live simply that wealth is found in love, in faith, in family and community. It is found in the beauty of clean air, fresh water, or a quiet walk in the woods to see wildflowers. That, we know as Friends, is wealth.

Friends are already prepared to undertake this work through our meeting communities, and small groups who can work together as we are led. We are grateful for those Friends who have carried this concern for years and now pledge to join them in our collective work.

We commit ourselves as a community to the following -

1. We resolve to see clearly the slow moving emergency of climate disruption, to educate ourselves and to seek to see the work that is ours as individuals and as communities.

2. We commit as monthly meetings to discern our particular work and undertake it, especially working locally with other groups who share our commitment.

3 We commit to provide emotional, practical and spiritual support to those who work to care for the Earth.

4. We commit to seeking the Light to guide us in our work, to bringing the wisdom of our knowledge and the deep wisdom of our hearts to this work.

5. We commit ourselves to the well being of future generations whose lives will be so profoundly affected by what we do now.

Barbara Letsch, Clerk  
The Earthcare Committee of  
Southeastern Yearly Meeting