

# Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Quakers in Florida, southeast Georgia & coastal South Carolina

## Summer Executive Committee Meeting

June 17, 2017 • Tampa Friends Meetinghouse

### Minutes

The meeting began at 9:00 AM, after a period of silent worship. YM Clerk Bill Carlie and outgoing YM Clerk Phoebe Andersen substituted, respectively, for EC/IBM Clerk Lisa Stewart and Assistant Clerk Nancy Corindia. Bill read the following quotation from Isaac Pennington (1667):

*"Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand."*

**Secretary's Report:** Vicki Carlie read her report, and it was accepted by EC (Attachment 1).

**Nominating Committee:** Elaine Martin reported, and her report was accepted by EC. Lisa Stewart recently moved to New York and laid down her position as Executive Committee/Interim Business Meeting Clerk. The Nominating Committee will work to find someone to fill her term. Later in this EC meeting Friends approved the following minute:

**17SEC01. SEYM Executive Committee releases Lisa Stewart from her service to SEYM as Interim Business Meeting Clerk. EC expresses its deep gratitude to Lisa Stewart for her years of service to SEYM.**

Numerous officers, trustees, and committee member vacancies will occur at the end of FY 2017-18. All present are encouraged to look to their monthly meetings to see if there are people willing to serve. Three Nominating Committee terms end after FY2018 (Kathy Hersh, Elaine Martin, and Ellie Caldwell). Ed Lesnick has offered to serve in FY2019. A naming committee appointed by EC will bring forward candidate names.

**17SEC02. SEYM Executive Committee approves Peter Schmidt and Stephanie Preston to serve as naming committee to find candidates for the three Nominating Committee vacancies which begin with FY 2018-19.**

Sandra Schwartz of Clearwater MM has agreed to be a FCNL representative.

**17SEC03. SEYM Executive Committee approves Sandra Schwartz of Clearwater Monthly Meeting as a FCNL representative.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Neil Andersen's report on behalf of Joel Cook, and his report was accepted by EC. Neil presented the "Preliminary Highlights of Fiscal Year-end Annual Report (June 1, 2016, thru May 31, 2017)" (Attachment 2). Monthly meeting apportionment contributions fell short by about 10%. A net expense of \$3,910 by Publications Committee was due to completing a production backlog. Friends should be reminded that the Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) fund needs on-going contributions.

Due to changes in SEYM officers, Friends approved the following minute:

**17SEC04. SEYM Executive Committee agrees that the SEYM Treasurer, Treasurer of Trustees, and Administrative Secretary shall be signatories on the Southeastern Yearly Meeting accounts at Bank of America.**

**To this end:**

**1. The following individuals shall be removed as signatories from these accounts: Lyn Cope, Caroline Lanker, and Ann Jerome.**

**2. The following individuals shall be added as signatories on these accounts: Joel Cook (SEYM Treasurer).**

**3. The following individuals shall remain as signatories on these accounts: Neil Andersen (Treasurer of Trustees) and Victoria Carlie (Administrative) Secretary.**

EC approved the following minute on behalf of out-going SEYM Treasurer Neil Andersen:

**17SEC05. SEYM Executive Committee expresses its profound thanks to Neil Andersen for his years of service as SEYM Treasurer, and for his mentoring of various other treasurers throughout the yearly meeting.**

**Trustees' Report:** Neil Andersen reported, and his report was accepted by EC. One half of the \$10,000 designated for the FSE fund has been transferred by the Trustees. The remaining \$5,000 will be transferred at the end of the FSE's first year of employment.

**Clerk's Report on ProNica:** Bill Carlie shared two handouts: the 4/15/17 letter from Phoebe and Bill to ProNica sent during SEYM Gathering (Attachment 3) and the Clerk's Report on his 5/13/17 visit to the ProNica stateside office (Attachment 4). There are big challenges, but everyone "wants the best thing done" for the Nicaraguan partners, the staff, etc.

Bill summarized current Pro Nica status as follows:

- The ProNica Board toured in-country before SEYM Gathering and found that the two properties have significant structural problems. The Nicaraguan government now checks the papers of all who receive from ProNica. This government's presence and the increasing administrative paperwork are discouraging ProNica participants.
- Income from student delegations, the primary revenue for staff and property expenses, has markedly declined. The Board has been spending down its endowed funds, and it has insufficient funds for staff and repairs for another year. It plans to terminate in-country work in July (though this will require still more administrative paperwork).
- Members of the Board that met with the Clerk stated that the program needs substantial restructuring, under consideration was a plan to perhaps restructure to just a stateside office and a newsletter to do fundraising for money that would go directly to the partners without overhead.
- The three options proposed by the Board to 2017 YBM were not within SEYM's authority to carry out (see YBM Minutes, pp. 3 and 9, and Minute 17YM11, p.12).
- Members of the Board that met with the Clerk stated their intent to have a "business practices review" done by an independent CPA. The date has not been set, and Peter Schmidt advised EC that such an action is beyond SEYM control.

There are several concerns regarding the future of the ProNica Board:

- Lisa Marie Alverado and Mercedes Soca agreed to become SEYM representatives to the Board during YBM. However, Josh Paolino, Vicki Mariner, and Brad Stocker have resigned from the Board. Friends approved the following minute:

**17SEC06. SEYM Executive Committee accepts the resignations of Josh Paolino, Vicki Mariner, and Brad Stocker as SEYM representatives on the ProNica Board of Directors.**

- ProNica by-laws require that SEYM appoint a majority of the Board members. The Board may be in the process of laying itself down, this will require a Board Meeting in compliance with its own by-laws. The ProNica by-laws allow the remaining Board members to appoint replacement Board members to serve the remainder of this fiscal year.
- Friends considered whether to fill the two SEYM vacancies. Non-profit boards are "broadly shielded" from liability, yet EC Friends are wary of putting two new people into this difficult situation. SEYM needs to know whether the Board wishes SEYM to name two more representatives, or whether it will do so on its own.
- The Clerk will write the Board asking for guidance re filling these vacancies. He will instruct Nominating Committee not to proceed with filing the vacancies at this time.

Phoebe Andersen proposed that SEYM create a new program to deal directly with the Nicaraguan partners, forming a new committee to determine what to do. One Friend wondered whether SEYM can get the Quaker house back from ProNica. Another used the metaphor of a "messy divorce," with the children surrounded by threats. SEYM Friends are still concerned for the Nicaraguan people, despite ProNica's need to lay itself down.

Friends approved the following minute:

**17SEC07. SEYM Executive Committee approves the formation of an ad hoc committee to explore new ways of moving forward in serving the people of Nicaragua and Central America.**

**Dunnellon "Water Is Life" House (WILH) Report:** Peter Ackerman reported, and his report was accepted by EC (see online version at <http://seymquakers.org/blog/2017/06/25/report-from-dunnellon-water-is-life-house/>). WILH began as a Sabal Trail Pipeline opposition camp in Branford, FL (Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WaterIsLifeHouse/>). Peter detailed a number of actions listed in the online report. WILH has been successful at building good relationships with local authorities. For example, Crystal River City Council was persuaded to amend its fertilizing setback ordinances in response to WILH testimony. Peter read the following urgent call from WILH:

*"Where advocacy encourages incremental change—the urgency of the 'the call' demands a segment of the population work on toppling government and social structures which are threats to the planet and are impediments to reforming the indigenous relationships between humans and nature."*

Peter also shared the brochure of William Bartram Trail along the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor (see PDF <http://floridascenichighways.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Bartram-Trail-Along-ROLHC-Map-Brochure.pdf>). WILH is planning two Bartram prayer and meditation strolls on October 1st during the 2017 St. Johns River Bartram Frolic (<http://bartram.putnam-fl.com/index.php/about-bartram/bartram-frolic>), one on the Palatka riverfront and another on his beloved Mt. Royal, where he prayed the most wonderful prayer. Friends will talk about the spiritual side of Bartram at both sites and acknowledge his love of God, His creation and his Quaker faith.

**Ft. Lauderdale MM Concern:** Phoebe Andersen shared information from Dennis Hartzell. Clerk Brian Humphrey is dealing with health concerns, and the meeting currently has only two active members. Ft. Lauderdale MM was under the care of Palm Beach MM, and Peter Schmidt will carry the concern to them. EC will refer the concern to Worship and Ministry Committee.

**Gathering Committee:** Stephanie Preston reported, and her report was accepted by EC. The committee has signed a 2018 contract with United Methodist Life Enrichment Center and made a first payment. Gathering dates are March 28th-April 1st, 2018, the theme is "Quaker Response in

Turbulent Times," and the Walton Lecturer and Workshop Facilitator will be Sa'ed Atshan. Sa'ed is a Palestinian Quaker who attended The Friends School in Ramallah. He will share a plenary session presentation at Friends General Conference Gathering in July (see <https://www.fgcquaker.org/events/you-just-have-be-human-following-leadings-spirit-toward-liberation>). His response to the Orlando Pulse murders was published by Huffington Post ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/gay-and-middle-eastern-in-post-orlando-america\\_us\\_5761c8a9e4b02081542fb575](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/gay-and-middle-eastern-in-post-orlando-america_us_5761c8a9e4b02081542fb575)).

Note: Stephanie Preston and Richard Frechette end their committee terms in 2018. Stephanie does not wish to extend her term.

**"Proposal for SEYM Youth Worker":** Stephanie Preston reported that Kody Hersh is living in Philadelphia and working with Quaker youth and young adults, leading First Day School (FDS), retreats, etc. He offers the "SEYM Youth Worker" proposal (Attachment 5) as a means for him to serve as a released Friend for SEYM and its MMs and WGs, with SEYM providing him housing and resources but not income.

Neil suggested that this might be a start-up project of the Trustees. EC agreed that the proposal should be referred to Youth Committee and Gathering Youth Program Committee for report back to FIBM/EC in October. It would then go to the Trustees and to Finance Committee, with the latter investigating the mechanics of funding "pro bono" work.

Part of the proposal is that the Youth Worker be "adopted" and housed by a monthly meeting. Gainesville Friends Jean Larson and Bonnie Zimmer reported that Gainesville MM has just budgeted for a youth worker to lead FDS, and that they might be willing to collaborate on this project. Gainesville had no children attending 18 months ago, until they did strategic outreach by "putting ourselves where families are." They now have five children from two families.

EC agreed that thanks should be expressed to Kody for advance notification of his proposal.

**Peace & Social Concerns Committee:** Elaine Martin reported on State Attorney for the 4th Circuit District (<http://www.sao4th.com/>) Melissa Nelson' resolution of the 4/7/2017 charges against five peace activists at Hemming Plaza in Jacksonville. Ms. Nelson viewed 30 videos of the police action and released a 146-page report, dropping charges on two activists, reducing felony charges for the other three to misdemeanors, and withholding adjudication of charges in exchange for community service. Ms. Nelson is strong on restorative justice, has signed a memorandum of understanding on juvenile justice, and has set up staff units to look into human rights abuses and conviction integrity in her circuit.

**Earthcare Committee:** Bill Carlie reported, presenting the "Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection: Faith Statement on Care for the Earth" (Attachment 6). Earthcare Committee requests comments from all SEYM monthly meetings and worship groups.

**Field Secretary for Earthcare:** Beverly Ward shared portions of her written report, and her report was accepted by EC (Attachment 7). She is visiting at least one meeting a month, often in coordination with AVP training sessions, and she has revisited several meetings. She is now a member at large of Quaker Earthcare Witness Steering Committee and is on QEW's United Nations Working Group (UNWG). She is eager for SEYM's FSE to become a model for other yearly meetings. As a new project, Beverly is investigating a QEW mini-grant to fund Brad Stoker's idea of having young Friends create a Quaker Earthcare pamphlet using Ezra Merleaux's photography. She is also working on a YouTube channel.

Submitted by Mike Shell, EC Recording Clerk  
7/21/2017

Attachment 1: Secretary's Report – Summer Executive Committee Meeting – 6/17/2017

Attachment 2: Preliminary Highlights of Fiscal Year-end Annual Report (June 1, 2016, thru May 31, 2017)

Attachment 3: 4/15/17 letter from Phoebe and Bill to ProNica

Attachment 4: Clerk's Report – ProNica Visit

Attachment 5: Proposal for a Southeastern Yearly Meeting Youth Work Position

Attachment 6: Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection  
Faith Statement on Care for the Earth

Attachment 7: Report to Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) on Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Activities  
1 through 31 Fifth 2017

**The following Friends were present for all or part of the meeting:**

EC members present were:

Bill Carlie, YM Clerk, EC Clerk Stand-in, Orlando MM  
Phoebe Andersen, Publications Clerk, Assistant Clerk Stand-in, Tallahassee MM  
Mike Shell, EC Recording Clerk, Jacksonville MM  
Neil Andersen, Treasurer Stand-in, Trustees, Tallahassee MM  
Peter Schmidt, Finance Clerk, St. Petersburg MM  
Cecelia Yocum, Peace & Social Concerns Co-clerk, Tampa MM  
Elaine Martin, Peace & Social Concerns Co-clerk, Nominating Committee, Jacksonville MM  
Stephanie Preston, Gathering Co-Clerk, FLGBTQC Rep., Orlando MM  
Vicki Carlie, SEYM Administrative Secretary, Orlando MM (ex-officio)

Others present were:

Jan Dahm, YM Co-Recording Clerk, Tampa MM  
Lisa Erazmus, YM Co-Recording Clerk, Tampa MM  
Jean Larson, Trustees, Gainesville MM  
Beverly Ward, Field Secretary for Earthcare, Nominating Committee, Tampa  
Dianne Langan, SEYM Bookkeeper, St. Petersburg MM  
Nancy Triscritti, FSE Anchor Committee, Tampa MM  
Bonnie Zimmer, FSE Anchor & Earthcare Committees, Gainesville MM  
Shawna Doran, Finance Committee, Gainesville MM  
Peter Ackerman, Palm Beach MM

## Attachment 1

### **SEYM Secretary's Report • Summer Executive Committee Meeting • 6/17/17**

As I sit down to write this, it seems like there's not much to report from the office; it's been a relatively quiet year. This summer I plan to go through all the paper files accumulated over the years, keeping or scanning what's important, shredding what's not.

But I also plan to be more proactive, in the coming year, in gathering reporting news about what Friends are doing in SEYM and in our Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups. I would welcome your help, feedback & ideas!

- What's working in your Meeting that you think other Meetings might like to know about?
- Did you sponsor or host an event, inviting your wider community?
- Are you planning an event that SEYM Friends might like to attend?
- Have you found ways to carry forward environmental or social justice witness?

I can write your story; just call me up or send me your information.

Many thanks to Friends who sent in photos and videos from the Gathering! I'd also love to receive photos of your group, your Meetinghouse, or your event.

---Vicki Carlie

**PRELIMINARY**

**PRELIMINARY**

**PRELIMINARY**

**Southeastern Yearly Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends  
Treasurer Report at 2017 Summer Executive Committee**

**Preliminary Highlights of Fiscal Year-end Annual Report (June 1, 2016, thru May 31, 2017)**  
**Amounts are rounded to the nearest ten dollars (\$10).**

**SEYM Total Cash Flow (not including Trustees)**

The overall cash flow of the Yearly Meeting (excluding the separately-reported Trustees' accounts) resulted in a net income of \$1750 excluding unrealized capital gains on Publications Program investments.

**SEYM General Fund for Administration - Cash Flow and Budget Performance**

At the end of the fiscal year the General Fund for Administration (having a balanced budget of \$69,490 approved at 2016 Yearly Meeting) had a net expense (deficit) of \$8,540. This resulted from total income that was 93% of budget against total expenses that were 106% of budget (including over-budget items approved for Staff Payroll and Office Equipment).

**Contributions & Budget-Support Apportionments Received**

In response to the Apportionments request for support of the approved Annual Budget, General Fund contributions received from the Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups during the fiscal year totaled \$54,630, or 90% of the \$60,880 budgeted request.

Of the nineteen (19) Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups in the Apportionments request, fifteen (15) contributed support, including three that exceeded and six that fully met their requested amount. In addition, a very welcome contribution was received from an affiliated Worship Group that is not part of the Apportionments request.

The unrestricted individual contributions toward the Budget totaled \$2,490, exceeding the \$2,000 budgeted amount.

Restricted contributions totaling \$14,420 were received for four Programs outside the Budget.

**Results for Individual Programs**

The following three annual programs are planned to have zero net income at fiscal year-end; any deficit (net expense) is paid by the General Fund and any surplus (net income) will be transferred to other areas in accordance with existing Yearly Meeting policy:

- The Half Yearly Meeting had a net income of \$520, to be transferred to the General Fund.
- The Michener Lecture had a net income of \$50, to be invested in the Michener Lecture Endowment Fund under the care of the Trustees.
- The Yearly Meeting Annual Gathering and Walton Lecture had a net income of \$3,260, to be invested in the Walton Lecture Endowment Fund under the care of the Trustees.

The Programs for Youth account had a net income of \$2,030 and fiscal year-end net assets of \$7,670 reserved for future programs.

The Publications Program account had a net expense of \$3,910 (excluding unrealized capital gains of \$810), resulting from continuing efforts to reduce a production back-log and to convert pamphlets to e-reader format. At fiscal year end the program net assets were \$6,480, including its investment fund.

The SEYM Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Program established in 2015 had a net income of \$7,350 this fiscal year, resulting from \$13,930 of donations and \$5,000 from Trustees less all expenses incurred since the FSE started in October 2016. Fiscal year-end net assets were \$27,990.

**Net Worth**

The combined Net Worth of the Yearly Meeting and its Trustees decreased by \$2,570 during the fiscal year, excluding \$25,720 of unrealized capital gains, being \$540,630 at the end of May 2017.

Neil H. Andersen, SEYM Treasurer-of-Record

June 17, 2017

**PRELIMINARY**

**PRELIMINARY**

**PRELIMINARY**





## Clerk's Report • ProNica visit

I visited with Friends at the ProNica stateside office on May 13, 2017, to deliver the clerk's letter and attached Minute as approved at SEYM Annual Sessions (copy attached). I took the opportunity of this occasion to listen as Friends shared their knowledge and concerns about the current situation for Pronica as an organization and the challenges from their perspective involved in recent interactions with SEYM. I learned a great deal over the course of several hours. Things I found include:

- A great deal of passion and commitment toward doing the best, most just, and generous things possible toward our partners and employees in Nicaragua. This sense comes forward from everyone I have spoken with or listened to on the issue within ProNica and without.
- The ProNica board toured the program and facilities as a group in Nicaragua prior to meeting as the board in the weeks prior to SEYM annual sessions, as appropriate under their bylaws.
- Income to ProNica from student delegation tours has declined substantially as demand has been heavily impacted by the presence of Zika Virus and Dengue Fever in the areas toured. The salary of the in-country coordinator is no longer substantially offset by the income from delegations. These costs are now and have recently been substantially funded by the remaining endowment.
- The two properties in Nicaragua have structural problems and are in need of significant repair.
- A Nicaraguan government with significant regulatory presence now exists. This has substantially increased reporting requirements, tax and fee collection, and adds to the administrative burden of daily operations.
- The Board concluded that the funds remaining in the endowment account are insufficient to repair the facilities and meet obligations to staff for a further year of operations. They have determined to terminate the in-country coordinator upon completion of such filings as needed to close operations with the Nicaraguan government and to sell or transfer the properties. Funds to be distributed per their articles and bylaws.
- Friends report to me that they intend to submit their records for a "business practices review" by an external CPA as they complete this business.

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- In regard to working with SEYM, Friends at the ProNica office have felt under constant threat of a rumored hostile takeover and lawsuit. They feel wrongly accused of criminal activities, malfeasance, and ill intent. I stated that these rumors and assertions are not consistent with the Sense of the Meeting at YM sessions. The Sense of the Meeting at YM was most accurately stated in the clerk's letter and attached Minute which were approved at YM.

Clerk has received three resignations of SEYM appointed Friends to serve on the ProNica board. I find the reasoning behind these requests for release to be sincere and each citing different reasons. I recommend that we release Josh Paolino, Vicki Mariner, and Brad Stocker from service to SEYM as board members of ProNica. Brad Stocker had resigned prior to YM and was not in the Nominating Committee report, but he requests a Minute be recorded to release him from his prior service.



As a relatively small yearly meeting, made up of relatively small monthly meetings, the ability to offer effective youth and young adult programming at the yearly meeting level is particularly important. Many of our children and young people don't have a large age cohort, if any, in their monthly meetings. In recent years, more young people from SEYM have been participating in the FGC Gathering of Friends, but that experience can be financially and/or logistically inaccessible for many families.

The idea of creating a paid youth work position has been raised before at different times in the yearly meeting's history, but hasn't coalesced into a clear plan-- though for the past two years, SEYM has contracted youth workers to help cover adult facilitation and supervision needs for the SEYM Gathering youth programs.

## II. What would a paid youth worker do?

Based on my own experience and interests, I've developed this list of tasks, projects, and areas of focus that could be undertaken by an SEYM youth worker. It includes *outreach*, to help meetings make themselves known to and warmly welcome young people and families, *direct services*, like youth program planning and facilitation, and *training/consultation*, to support monthly meetings in developing and maintaining their own robust outreach and religious education programs.

A Southeastern Yearly Meeting youth, young adult, and religious education coordinator, working closely with SEYM committees, could:

- Develop a program of outreach at the yearly meeting level with a particular focus on youth, youth adults, and their families
- Train and support monthly meetings in outreach to youth, young adults, and their families
- Provide religious education training, resource sharing, and teacher support to monthly meetings
- Plan and facilitate 1-2 retreats per year for young adults in SEYM
- Plan and facilitate 2-3 retreats per year for high schoolers in SEYM
- Help coordinate and facilitate programming for youth and young adults at SEYM Gathering, Half Yearly Meeting, and other YM events
- Recruit and train youth program volunteers
- Develop religious education curricula and lesson plans, as needed
- Support child safety screening and training processes
- Develop a set of workshops on a range of religious education and youth work topics that could be led for monthly meetings by request
- Connect SEYM meetings and young people with resources and opportunities available through other Quaker bodies (i.e. FGC, Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, Pendle Hill retreats and workshops, Quaker colleges, etc)



In the last section, "Discerning a sustainable model," I suggest a model for SEYM based in part on the YFIR program, in which the financial burden of a youth program could be limited and distributed between SEYM and a sponsoring monthly meeting.

## 2. Child safety

Last year, I volunteered to lead a residential program for teens at the SEYM Gathering (i.e. supervised full-time by adult youth workers, rather than having scheduled program time and parents/sponsors responsible for teens the rest of the time). I believe that residential programs for high schoolers, which are a standard practice in most yearly meetings and at FGC Gathering, provide for a deeper level of connection and community-building than daytime-only programs, as well as allowing young people whose parents might not attend gatherings to come on their own. The yearly meeting Youth Committee was not in unity to have a residential program at SEYM this past year because of safety concerns.

It is my belief and experience that, when well-designed and competently led, residential programs actually increase the safety of youth events, because they involve round the clock supervision by a team of trained adults whose primary focus is on youth support and supervision (rather than the burden falling primarily on parents, who may be trying to juggle other responsibilities, and sometimes preventing them from participating fully in other aspects of the yearly meeting's gatherings). It also means that there are clearly articulated and consistent expectations for all participants (like everyone having the same lights out time, level of supervision, etc).

I believe we are better off collecting best practices from other Quaker communities and their youth programs, learning from our own past, and developing really well-run, thoughtfully-structured overnight programs, than we are eschewing potentially rich opportunities out of fear.

## 3. Insurance

Connected to the child safety concern, I have heard some confusion and trepidation about whether SEYM's insurance would cover an overnight program, or what restrictions it might place on us to do so. This certainly bears more investigation. I think it's important to understand the yearly meeting's current insurance situation-- but I also hope that, if SEYM has a leading that is not supported by the current company or policy, we will advocate for changes, and/or look for another insurance provider who will support us in pursuing our leadings.

IV. Discerning a sustainable model

As I've been reflecting on how SEYM might support the creation of a youth worker position, I've found myself thinking about the New York YM YFIR program, which I worked with closely at various points before it was laid down.<sup>2</sup>

I imagine a monthly meeting providing housing-- perhaps on meeting property, space permitting, or in the home of a meeting member-- and a community of Friends excited about supporting Quaker youth work. The meeting would receive the benefit of direct religious education and outreach support (the person in this position could provide consistent, on-the-ground religious education and youth programming support for the sponsoring meeting, in addition to work for the yearly meeting).

A modest budget for youth worker stipend, program supplies, travel expenses, and some professional development could be provided by SEYM, perhaps supported by special fundraising. The funds currently being used to bring two contracted youth workers to the SEYM Gathering would likely no longer be needed for that purpose, and could be used to begin funding a new position. Gifts to SEYM of a vehicle, small property for housing, or money for an endowment could significantly reduce how much the position might cost in the future-- and I believe the position would create enough of a visible impact that Friends would be eager to support it.

V. Next steps

I could say a lot more about the importance of youth ministries and religious education for nurturing spiritually vital communities, or our responsibility to the young people in our meetings-- but I probably don't have to. SEYM is already, and has been for as long as I can remember, a community in which young people are respected, valued, and cared for. A genuine desire to support youth as spiritual explorers and treasured community members is present in so much of what we do.

I am excited about the possibility of coming home to help create a more robust and dynamic youth program-- which I believe, in turn, would feed a more vital SEYM, with a stronger and more hopeful future as a community. I'm eager to be in conversation with SEYM Friends about these ideas, with the hope that in 2-3 years, we might be ready to

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<sup>2</sup> My understanding is that NYYM laid down the YFIR program not for financial reasons, but because they were offering positions only as one-year internships, in a rural area without public transit access, and couldn't find applicants.

try out some version of this proposal. I would welcome feedback, support, suggestions, mentoring, and prayers.

As first steps, I hope that the SEYM Youth Committee will sit in discernment with this proposal, that they will consult with Finance Committee, and that a representative of the yearly meeting might be supported in visiting a yearly meeting that has paid a youth worker to bring back observations and learnings, so that we can jointly have a broader perspective on what might be possible.

Simultaneously, I am submitting the proposal to the clerk of Orlando Monthly Meeting, to consider whether they might be led to support the position as the sponsoring monthly meeting.

## Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection Faith statement on Care for the Earth

SEYM Earthcare Committee • 4/15/17

It is our experience and testimony that the Light, Life, Love, and Wisdom of God calls us to preserve and protect the Holy creation of which we are part. It is contrary to the Spirit of God to waste or exploit nature on human greed or vanity. We are called to be good stewards of the earth, to live simply and sustainably, with care and reverence for all creation, preserving earth's biodiversity and abundance for future generations.

Therefore, we call on all our members of Congress, members of our state Legislature, state Governors, and local governments to uphold and enact laws, regulations, and policies that protect our natural environment from pollution, habitat loss, and climate change.

We ask you to uphold the integrity of our environmental agencies and protect public lands. The environment belongs to all of us; it is the role of government to preserve it for future generations and defend it against exploitation by private economic interests.

Urgent Action is needed if we are to avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change. All reputable scientists agree that Climate Change is real, and is caused by increased carbon emissions mostly from burning of fossil fuels. This threatens all life on Earth. Our glaciers are melting, our seas are rising, and our ecosystems are suffering disruption from a warming climate, seasonal weather changes, and more pests and diseases. Climate change is already threatening our economy, impacting our food supply, and causing flooding of coastal communities.

We ask our government to support society's transition to clean energy sources, and redirect subsidies from fossil fuel industries to support displaced workers and communities impacted by the transition to clean energy.

Clean energy is the energy of the future. Countries and communities around the world are proving that alternative energy and sustainable practices are not only viable, but can be a boon to economies. Clean and sustainable sources of energy are now readily available and comparable or cheaper in cost than fossil fuels. Solar and wind power create more jobs than fossil fuel industries.

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*"It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?"*

---William Penn, 1693

In faith and unity,



## **Report to Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) on Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Activities 1 through 31 Fifth 2017**

Prepared for the FSE Anchor Committee (FSE-AC) and Earthcare Committee  
by Beverly Ward  
06/16/2017

### **Overview**

This report updates the activities through Fifth Month 2017. Monthly Meeting visited are included. Other outreach and communication has included “blogs” and other pieces for the SEYM website, social media, telephone and email contact. There was a visit to Sarasota Monthly Meeting that coincided with an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Mini-Basic Workshop. AVP has really had a resurgence in Florida, particularly in communities. Other activities have included working with the wider Quaker World, interfaith groups, and other environmental organizations, particularly with the Quaker Earthcare Witness United Nations Working Group. I continue to be humbled by the many, many offerings from Friends and beyond to make this way plain.

### **Communication with the Anchoring Committee**

Communication with the Anchoring Committee has included email, telephone, and individual contacts with several members of the committee at the annual Gathering. With the work on the Gainesville AVP workshop, I have been fortunate to have Bonnie Zimmer’s support and guidance. In addition, Bonnie Zimmer provided invaluable assistance to the Tampa Monthly Meeting Offering for the Art of Fearless Project. Other Friends continue to provide assistance in scheduling Monthly Meeting visits, information sharing, and manifested expressions of holding this work in the Light.

### **Developing a Schedule for Meeting with Monthly Meetings (MMs), Worship Groups (WGs), and Others**

As clerk of the Tampa Meeting’s Peace and Social Concerns committee, I helped to co-convene an Art in Fearlessness show on 13 Fifth Month 2017. We had more than 10 participants. I am in preparing a written report with photographs from the show.

### ***Tallahassee Monthly Meeting, Ninth Month 2017, Late September***

### ***Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, To Be Scheduled***

### **Interactions or Collaborations between and among other SEYM committees**

- The Ministry on Racism: continue to communicate with the committee, including sharing items of interest regarding Earthcare and social justice. This includes social media posts and items shared with the co-clerks, though not as often as Wendy Clarissa Geiger might like;
- Earthcare: again, I continue to have contact with committee through social media and other contacts with the co-clerks. I have more frequent contact with Brad Stocker as the two of us are quite involved with QEW;
- FCC: continue to work with the Board. Russell Meyer and I cross paths on a number of local and statewide initiatives;
- Peace and Social Concerns: continue to work with the committee;

- ProNica: no report to date. As a member of the YM Nominating Committee have worked to fill vacant seats on the board;
- Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW): working with Jack Braden on the United Nations Working Group (UNWG) on the International Decade for People of African Descent. (More details below.);
- Quaker United Nations Office: working with Warren Hoskins to build links. Warren is an invaluable resource on Earthcare information.
- Right Sharing of World Resources: working with Nilufer Wilkins to build links, including QEW UNWG;
- Youth Committee: Still working with the youth representatives. Have proposed an idea to do a “pocket guide” on Earthcare sharing some of my experiences from Pendle Hill, QEW, and FGC through a minigrant. I want to collaborate with Ezra Merleaux and other youths to develop the guide, using some of Ezra’s photographs.

### ***The Wider Quaker World, Interfaith Groups, Other Environmental Organizations***

In the wider Quaker World, interfaith groups, and other environmental organizations, I have listed existing memberships, partnerships, or collaborations that may be part of an outreach effort. These include, but are not limited to:

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Tampa Bay:
  - Co-facilitated an AVP Basic community workshop 2-4 Sixth Month 2017 in St. Petersburg for the St. Petersburg Women’s Collective.
  - A Gainesville workshop is scheduled 24 Sixth Month 2017. Bonnie Zimmer is our local contact. Willie Hagar, Elaine Martin, Dawn Addy, and I will facilitate;
- The Bridge of Tampa: Planning is underway for a playback theatre Bystander Training in conjunction with the Living Mirror Playback Theatre troupe. (Cecilia Yocum and I are two of the four co-facilitators and members of the troupe). Additional workshops are in the planning phase;
- Clark Atlanta University, Department of Political Science: Dr. Kurt Young, Lena Young Green, and I continue to work on social justice issues, particularly in regard to transportation projects;
- The Fellowship of Friends of African Descent: plans are underway to connect with members during the Friends General Conference Gathering;
- Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network (FL-ICAN): I continue to work to populate the online platform, Qiqochat, <http://seymquakers.qiqochat.com/> as another communications and information-sharing resource;
- Friends Committee on National Legislation, Energy and Environment: continue email and other contacts with several FCNL staff;
- Friends General Conference: Received a scholarship from FGC as a first-time attender and travel assistance from the Bayard Rustin fund, and last but not least, from SEYM. I’ll conduct a workshop on 6 Seventh Month at the QEW Center on “Climate Justice and Friends”. Other activities will include working with Cece Yocum on Moral Injury, the QEW UN Working Group, the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent, and the workshop, Tracking Down Ecological Guidance led by Keith Helmuth and Bruce Brichard;
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): Face-to-face and email contact with members of FPT. Working to link FPT to QEW UN Working Group, see below;
- Friends United Meeting: Some contact was made with during the QEW Steering Committee Meeting in Atlanta. I also will do more to reach out to Kody Hersh, SEYM representative to FUM. Kody and I have shared information on pipelines;

- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): Working to link FWCC to QEW UN Working Group and anticipate building on this during the FGC Gathering
- The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (ICAR): Working with ICAR through the Florida Council of Churches;
- Living Mirror Playback Theatre, Tampa: continue to work on developing Bystander Training as mentioned above. This also could be a follow up to the Gainesville AVP workshop. More venues for Bystander Training are being developed;
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Environmental Justice Issues in Transportation and the Women's Issues in Transportation Committees: continue to participate as "Friend" of these committees;
- Organize NOW/F.I.R.E., Climate Justice Committee: Continue to assist the local committee in planning climate justice survey and have built a link with the Orlando office. The Tampa office will be using my training materials for future workshops when I'm not available;
- The Pachamama Alliance: meet with several local members of the Alliance on 28 Third Month. Continue to have contact with members through the FL-ICAN network;
- People Against D.O.T. Discrimination (P.A.D.D.), Tampa: continue to work with group on identifying potentially adverse impacts and finding ways to avoid, mitigate, or minimize the same. P.A.D.D. members are still waiting to hear about the status of the application to EPA through the Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association for small grant funding to train community members for outreach, education and environmental data collection;
- QEW United Nations Working Group (UNWG) member – International Decade for People of African Descent: The launch of the 2017 activities is imminent. I will be attending. My role in regard to presentations, etc., is mutable;
- Sierra Club, Tampa Bay: Remain in contact via email, snailmail, etc. Am a member of the local Sierra Club Speakers' Bureau;
- Society for Applied Anthropology, Risk and Disasters Topical Interest Group (TIG): Linking TIG to QEW UN Working Group;
- Sunshine Citizens, Tampa: part of the outreach effort with P.A.D.D.;
- Sunshine State Interfaith Power and Light: working with this group through FL-CAN;
- University of South Florida, Institute on Black Life (IBL), Advisory Committee: Continue work the Institute. Presented on, "Climate Justice and Faith-Based Communities" planned for 17 Fifth Month at First United Church, Tampa.
- University of South Florida, Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS): Continued links to the College including adding Dr. Dorsey to the QEW UN Working Group list.

## **Reporting**

Events continue to overwhelm me regarding reporting. I am hoping that Friends find my other contacts useful. I am making efforts to get this under control. Any suggestions, prayer, are welcome.

## **Social Media**

Another blog on my activities during Fifth Month is forth coming. It will b available through the SEYM website and the FSE webpage, <http://seymquakers.org/faith-in-action/field-secretary-for-earthcare/>. Please help me hold Vicki Carlie in the Light.

## **Qiqochat**

The Qiqochat subcircle for SEYM, <http://seymquakers.qiqochat.com/>. In addition to a communication platform, this site also can be a repository of documents, e.g., white papers, presentations, etc. I continue to work on populating the circle.

## **Other Issues**

I have not been able to let go of the narration to the workshop information shared at Gathering and make it available online. This is the basis for the paper on vulnerable communities. Once completed the food sovereignty and water papers can move forward.

## **Summary**

Friends, I do not have the words to express how this work nourishes me. While I am being nourished, it is not about me. Are Friends getting what is needed? Where can I be more effective? What would you like to see from the FSE? Your thoughts, ideas, and guidance always are appreciated. Thank you for this opportunity.

Love and Peace, b

**Timeline**

<b>Activity/Period</b>	<b>6th Month 2017</b>				<b>7th Month 2017</b>				<b>8th Month 2017</b>			
<b>Develop Meeting Schedule</b>												
<b>Visitations</b>			*									
<b>Social Media</b>												
<b>Wider Quaker World and Other Outreach</b>												
<b>SEYM Climate Change Risks Video &amp; Paper</b>							*					
<b>Qiqochat</b>												
<b>Anchoring Committee Contacts</b>		*		*		*		*		*		*
AVP Basic Mini, 24 Sixth 2017, Gainesville (tentative)									*			
FGC Gathering					*							
QEW UN Working Group convening						*						

\* Milestones

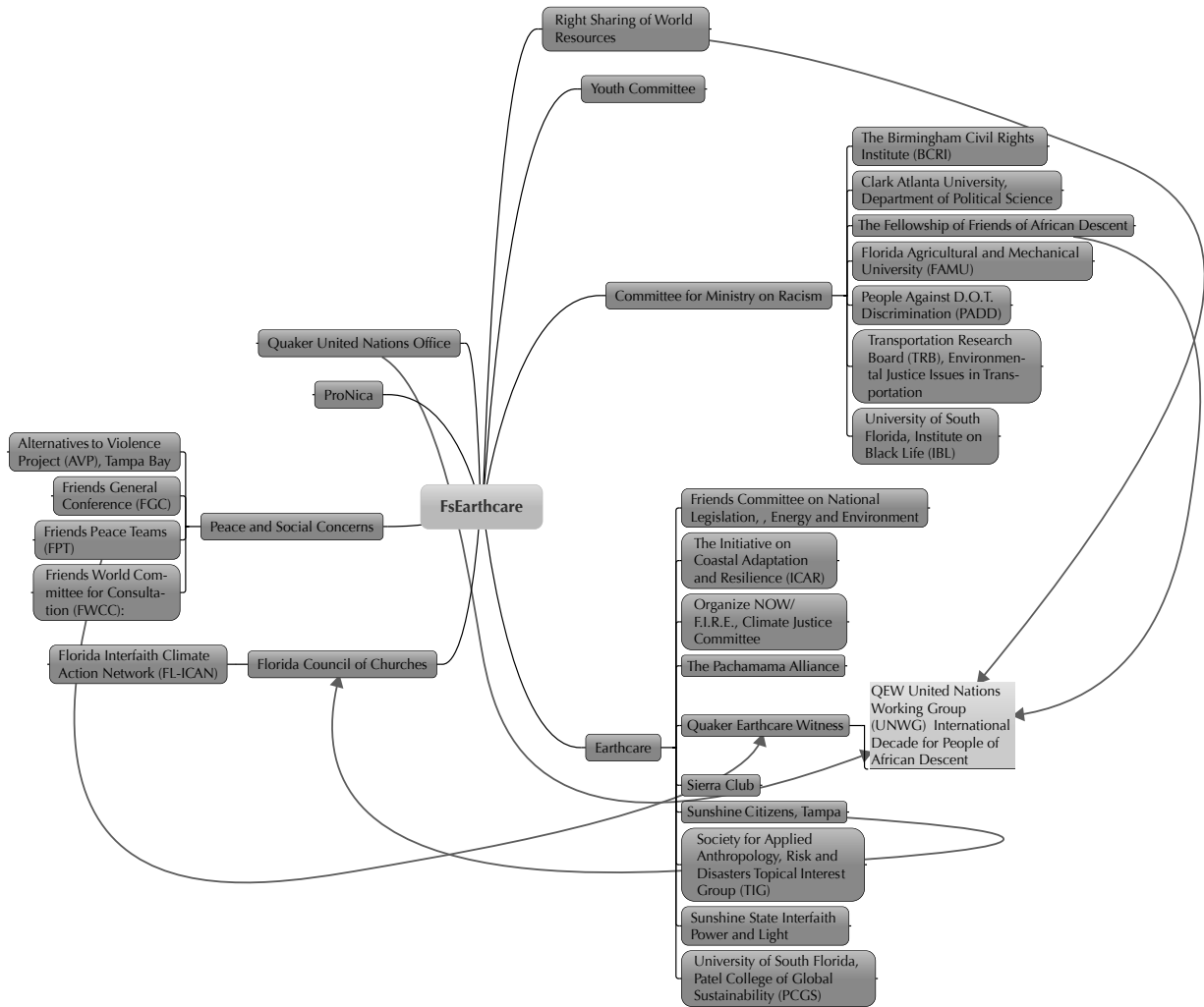


Figure 1. FSE Mindmap Connectivity