

**Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
for Worship on the Occasion of Business
December 14, 2023 minutes**

Approved January 14, 2024

The meeting opened with worship at 12:30 pm. Beth Wrightson clerked. Elizabeth Moses Strain served as acting alternate clerk. Twenty-two Friends were present via Zoom.

Erik Wilson shared the Facilities Committee's reflections on the Advices and Queries on Vocation and Stewardship. Friends returned to worship to consider these further.

The Clerk reviewed the agenda which had been posted on groups.io on December 9, 2023.

The minutes of the December Meeting for Business were approved with no corrections.

The Clerk read the prompt: *"We are reminded to consider how our work and decisions today support SCMM in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community."*

Correspondence and Clerk's Business:

We received a letter from Western Friend thanking us for our \$200 donation.

The October minutes said the report from the Revisioning Committee would be seasoned for a month. The report was, in fact, a report to the Care of Meeting Committee, and therefore not subject to approval by the community.

Care of the Meeting Committee requests that we meet for a called meeting, January 7th, 2024, to decide whether to appoint an ad hoc committee to consider Strawberry Creek's rental location. It was noted that the first Sunday of the month is usually reserved for a monthly potluck. Friends will be advised when this gets resolved.

Old Business

The slate of Nominating Committee members was approved. Charlie Blanchard will clerk the committee. Other members are Rhea Farley, Lee Douglas, Jeanne Diller, Paul Jolly, and Elizabeth Moses Strain.

The 2024 budget, circulated on groups.io December 9th, was approved with appreciation for the work of the Finance Committee.

On behalf of the Care of the Meeting Committee, Andrea English reported on a pleasant conversation with Clifford Ham. He described harmony within his family, and his appreciation of New England architecture. He would like to remain in touch with his friends here. His

transfer to New Bedford Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting, was approved, with love. The clerk will forward the transfer of membership documents to that Meeting.

New Business

Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee circulated, via groups.io on December 7th, a minute endorsing San Francisco Friends Meeting's minute regarding abolition of nuclear weapons. The committee will craft a more cohesive minute to present at our January, 2024 meeting for business.

Tom Rothschild brought a minute from Brooklyn Meeting regarding the conflict in Gaza for our consideration. Given his sense of urgency, which many people shared, the minute had not been seasoned by the Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee. The following minute was crafted during business meeting based on the text from Brooklyn Meeting, and was subsequently approved without seasoning.

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; and this is our testimony to the whole world.

From the Quaker peace testimony, as announced in 1660

As members of Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting (Quakers) in Berkeley, California, and in keeping with our historic peace testimony, we are horrified by the killing on all sides in Israel, Gaza, the West Bank, and the larger Middle East. We support a lasting ceasefire, together with peaceful action by the United States and other world powers, to bring about lasting peace, justice and freedom.

The clerk will send the minute to Pacific YM's Peace and Social Order Committee. The Peace, [Earthcare](#), and Social Witness Committee will contemplate how to circulate it further. Friends are encouraged to send it to their members of congress and local newspapers. It was noted that our usual practice is to consider matters [only](#) after they have been seasoned by a committee.

Reports

Power, Privilege and Race Subcommittee (Susan Burr) shared a report on the second year of the use of the antiracism prompt and query. Several Friends have appreciated the practice, and found the prompt and query helpful toward keeping racial justice concerns ever present in Meeting spaces and also finding the reflection time useful in building capacity for corporate and personal growth. However, not all feedback was positive. Concerns that were raised include:

1. Questioning why we only address racial justice and don't include asking how our work has furthered Peace, Earthcare, and other testimonies.
2. Not liking the quality of being a rote exercise;
3. Sensing the query as an affrontive negative rather than a healing force;

4. Experiencing uncertainty about what an “actively antiracist faith community” would look like; and
5. Feeling the practice is too much for some and too little for others.

The subcommittee is planning a discussion session, after worship on January 21, to explore next steps.

Care of the Meeting Committee (Kathy Barnhart) reported that the committee is going to form an ad hoc group of 2-3 people who will help the First Day Children’s Committee formulate a plan. Please let Care of the Meeting Committee know if you are interested.

Ragni Larsen Orta (current Pacific YM representative), Outgoing Representative, Ragni Larsen-Orta, and Julia Bazar, Incoming Representative, met by Zoom on December 8, 2023. This is Ragni’s report to the Meeting on the transition.

We worked around a few issues in applying the Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting job description to this year’s process and concur that the job description needs to be updated. (It was last updated in October 2015.)

The following understandings meet with our unity, and we believe that they were approved by the body in conjunction with the slate, so no action is needed.

1. We are in unity that Julia will become Representative from Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting to Pacific Yearly Meeting on the New Year. Ragni served for one year as Representative, not two as suggested by the job description. However, when Julia was approved as Observer she understood she would be moving into the Representative role in 2024, and this works well for Ragni. (*Note to Nominating Committee: Julia is open to serving in the new role for two years. Ragni recommends structurally synchronizing the PazYM transition with the committee changeover because a similar blip happened last year.*)
2. Ragni will confirm the appropriate Pacific Yearly Meeting contact name for the transfer and provide it to Julia by the end of December. Julia will follow up. (SCMM job description indicates that the PazYM contact person to receive the incoming Representative information is the Statistical Clerk, but this predates the presence of the paid administrative staff person at Pacific Yearly Meeting to whom Ragni reported last year’s changeover.)
3. We had a discussion of current matters. Julia is “willing and eager” to serve as Representative to Pacific Yearly Meeting, and Ragni is grateful to be able to focus more directly on her lifelong Equality Leading and her continuing role on Unity with Nature Committee of Pacific Yearly Meeting.

The Clerk read the query “*How did our work and our decisions today support us in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community?*” Several friends responded.

Announcements

- Next Meeting for Business will be January 14th , 2024, at 12:30 p.m. on Zoom.
- Worship and Ministry (Ralph Murphy) The Closed Captioning option on Zoom is now available. Both surgical and (K)N-95 masks are now acceptable [for in-person](#) worship at B-tech..
- Events Committee (Elizabeth Moses Strain) Next First Day (December 17) Holiday Potluck and gift exchange - please bring two wrapped gifts if you can. Re-gifting is fine. If you would like to come but transportation is an issue, get in touch with members of the committee (Phillipa Barron, Elizabeth, Laura Miller.) If you know you can't come, but would like to participate, inform the committee of that as well.
- Betsy Morris - encouraged Friends to look on FCL-CA website (www.fclca.org) and add their names to the action alert mailing list.
- Called Meeting for Business January 7th at 12:30 pm on the Meeting Zoom to discuss the site issue.

Meeting closed with worship at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Beth Wrightson, Clerk

Elizabeth Moses Strain, acting Alternate Clerk

Paul Jolly, Recording Clerk.