

Clerk

The Clerk's basic function is to "clear" the business of the Meeting. This is done by seeing to it that all pertinent business and concerns are presented clearly and in good order to the Monthly Meeting for its deliberate consideration, united action and appropriate execution.

Qualifications

The Clerk is a member of the Meeting who has the confidence of its members and who, in turn, has a respect and warm regard for its individual members and attenders. It is important that the Clerk be spiritually sensitive so that, in a Business Meeting, as in a Meeting for Worship at which business is not conducted, corporate guidance may be found through the leading of the Spirit. It is helpful for the Clerk to have a knowledge of Faith and Practice, and of other Quaker literature. The Clerk should be able to comprehend readily, evaluate rightly, and state clearly and concisely any item of business or concern that comes to the Meeting. He or she should be able to listen receptively to what is said and to gather the sense of the Meeting at the proper time. No doubt few Friends can measure up to the qualifications of an ideal Clerk, but the role is an excellent one for developing leadership, and Friends should choose persons who have the potential to learn and grow.

Responsibilities

The Clerk attends the Meeting for Worship and keeps close to the work of committees, of which he or she should be considered an ex officio member. In order to be aware of the condition of the Meeting, the Clerk serves as an active ex officio member of either the Care of the Meeting Committee or Worship and Ministry. Each year the Clerk and Alternate Clerk will work out between them on which of these two committees they will respectively serve.

The Clerk presides at all Business Meetings. An Alternate Clerk is appointed to preside when the Clerk is unable to attend. The Clerk prepares the agenda prior to the meeting. Committee Clerks and others are encouraged to provide, ahead of time, any reports, concerns, proposals and other information needed for the agenda. The Clerk's care in preparing the agenda, and his or her judgment of the relative urgency and importance of matters, can help greatly to facilitate the Meeting's business. The Clerk reports on correspondence and other requests from outside the Meeting. Interested attenders, as well as members should be encouraged to participate in the Meeting's business. There may be occasions, however, when members alone should make a particular decision, such as those involving the Meeting in legal or financial responsibility.

The Clerk sets the pace of the Business Meeting so that its business may be accomplished without undue delay or hurry. The Clerk should facilitate a full expression of the views of the Meeting and assure that a few do not dominate. In the role of Clerk, a member does not express personal opinions. If there is a view on a matter which has not been presented, and needs to be, the Clerk asks the Meeting for permission to present it. If the Clerk is led to state a strong opinion on a controversial matter, the Alternate Clerk or another appropriate person is asked to preside and take the sense of the Meeting during deliberations on the matter.

Strawberry Creek Board

The Clerk serves as Clerk of the Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting Corporation Board and shall perform all duties required by the Bylaws of the Corporation. Required regular Board Meetings are held annually during Strawberry Creek's May Meeting for Business, and decisions are arrived at by the Board under the guidance of Spirit.

As actions are taken, it is the Clerk's duty to see that assignments are clear, and to notify promptly in writing the responsible persons and committees. Friends should accept only responsibilities that they are willing and able to perform, and carry these out with dispatch and care.

(excerpted from Pacific Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 1987)
September, 2006

Revised