

APPROVED with minor corrections

Baltimore Quaker Peace & Justice Committee
June 25, 2017 at Stony Run Meeting

Present: Barbara Bezdek, Bob Goren (co-clerks), Carol Lanahan, Suzanne O'Hatnick, Kathryn Munnell, Marc Oliver, Larry Reid, Phil Furnas, Rich Thayer, Sue Borchardt, Maria Brown, Jo Brown (minutes)

Meeting began with silent worship.

Minutes of June 4, 2017 meeting were approved with minor amendments.

Re the minutes

1. on the Report on Indian Affairs:

The Committee needs clarification in the minutes on the building that was reportedly sold by the Baltimore American Indian Center – the building that formerly housed the Vera Shank Day Care Center. Barbara Bezdek will contact Dellie James for same.

2. Language and Communication for Business:

A spontaneous discussion of language and communication followed, with the intent of welcoming and incorporating newcomers, and fostering transparency and light in our business and committee meetings. The Committee affirms that acronyms should be spelled out in full upon first use in all written communications, as our business guidelines indicate. There seemed to be general appreciation that acronyms do not enhance transparency, may not aid efficiency, and are particularly off-putting to newcomers.

3. There was also brief discussion about using a common format for committee minutes. Larry Reid and Rich Thayer offered to forward guidance or models to committee co-clerks.

Wicker Basket:

The wicker basket proceeds for August and September will go to Amnesty International.

Soccer Fundraiser:

Anne Kehinde (Stony Run Friends Meeting) and the Working Group for

Refugees are organizing a soccer game fundraiser, which will be held at 1:00pm on Saturday, August 26th at Friends School. The specific field location is to be announced. Volunteers are needed at 11:00am that day. Insurance costs to be covered in substantial part by \$300 from Stony Run.

Summer Meeting Schedule for the Committee:

The committee decided to meet next on August 13th at 8:30am at Homewood Friends Meeting.

The September meeting will be on September 24th, at Stony Run Meeting.

Discussion of Indivisible tools:

Suzanne O'Hatnick of Stony Run Friends raised a question as to whether the committee would like to make use of the legislative tools provided by Indivisible, in order to make our messages to our legislators more effective. She pointed out that according to Indivisible's research, as few as 14 phone calls can change a legislator's mind. The Committee decided that while such tools can be useful for individual efforts, it did not wish to do so as a body at this time. For more information, go to www.indivisibleguide.com. There is also a large local Indivisible group called Indivisible Baltimore, which can be joined online via the same website.

Interfaith efforts:

The committee briefly discussed interfaith efforts in the past, including the 2006 Peace Conference. [More detail is needed here].

Peaceable City:

The committee discussed the Peaceable City study group on gun violence and its tributaries. In 2016-2017 Peaceable City hosted a 14-week series of discussions at Homewood Friends Meeting, facilitated by Jo Brown, on the root causes of violence, using a series of TEDTalks as our starting point. Early in the summer of 2017, the group convened for a series of weekly discussions of the book This is an Uprising. Peaceable City, with the support of the Committee, plans to continue this study, capacity-building, and community-building work in the fall of 2017.

On August 26, Peaceable City will facilitate a discussion among local Baltimore peace workers at the Community Center at Heritage Run, co-hosted by Rosetta Graham, a member since 1956 of Homewood Friends Meeting and founding director of the Baltimore Family

Bereavement Center, a center for the surviving families of homicide victims, and Jo Brown, also of Homewood Friends.

Guide to Community Engagement by Meeting Members:

The Committee's working group Peaceable City, had begun to compile a guide that would list the community engagements of meeting members, so that new members could know whom to contact if they were led to engage with particular interests or activities under the general rubric of Peace and Social Justice. The effort temporarily foundered over privacy concerns. Homewood members Rachel Neill and Cathleen Hanson volunteered to undertake this. After discussion, the Committee decided to make such a list available to meeting members and attenders, but not to post it publicly. Jo Brown was asked to provide contacts for Cathy Hanson and Rachael V. Neill to the co-clerks.

Committee Oversight Guidance for Supported Organizations:

GEDCO (Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation), which manages Stadium Place Senior Housing and the CARES Food Pantry, has seen recent dismissals and other changes that are of concern to the Committee, which helps to support it. Marc Oliver, Rich Thayer, Kathryn Munnell and Maria Brown volunteered to draft a diplomatic letter to GEDCO, for the Committee to approve, regarding finances, governance, and collaboration.

Courtwatch:

Kathryn Munnell of Homewood Friends described the current work of Courtwatch, in which five people from our two meetings, working with the Public Defender's Office and other volunteers, regularly attend court to observe, in order to make sure that judges are following due process. The peaceful observers follow cases for two months before, and three months after, the court date.

Baltimore Police – DOJ Consent Decree: Kathryn also called attention to the current opportunity for Baltimoreans to comment on the composition of the Civilian Board and the Consent Decree Monitor, pertaining to the Department of Justice – Baltimore Police consent decree.

Deferred: Divest from banks funding Dakota Access Pipeline

The meeting concluded with silent worship

Recorded by Jo Brown