**NCFF Spring Business Session Minutes**

March 9, 2024

10am-12pm

Friends gathered for the Spring Business meeting at Deep River Meeting in High Point, NC.

**Welcome and Centering Worship**

Clerk Richard Wilcox opened the gathering with a personal story about the impact of pacificism on him as a child. He encouraged all present to evaluate their feelings about nonviolence and its lack of presence in the world.

**Minutes**

The minutes of November 18, 2023 were not considered for approval and will need affirmation at the next business meeting. The minutes were to be approved after fellowship members had time to consider them, but were forgotten.

**Directory**

David Smith and Kate Seel are preparing a directory for the fellowship and the gathering discussed what should be included**. Approved**: **Each of the thirteen member meetings will be included in the directory; however, individual members of any meeting can choose whether to opt-in or out of the directory. Each meeting will select one person who will be available as a contact point for that meeting. The directory information will include Name; Email address; Street address (optional); Phone number; and Name of affiliated meeting. In addition, the directory will list the names of all in leadership positions at each meeting.**

**Report about Friends World Conference for Consultation (FWCC)**

Bill Eagles submitted a written report regarding FWCC (<https://www.ncfriends.org/fwcc-report-spring-2024/>), highlighting the upcoming World Plenary Meeting, August 5-12 in South Africa and plans to commemorate the 400 birthday of Quaker co-founder, George Fox, throughout 2024.

**Askings Report**

Every meeting submitted their askings for the year 2023 (<https://www.ncfriends.org/askings-report-spring-2024/> - the first time this has occurred!).

**Finance Report**

No new expenses have been incurred since the November 2023 gathering. The ending balance as of February 29, 2024 was $157,183.73. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/income-expense-report-2023/>)

**Grant Request Approved for Somerton Meeting**

Somerton submitted a request asking the fellowship to cover the cost of one well needed to provide water to the meetinghouse. **Approved: Somerton will receive from the Church Extension fund $19,016 for well installation.**

**Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation (FCNCL) Report**

As the NCFF representative was unable to be present for the gathering, clerk Richard agreed to email the report of the committee to the fellowship in the upcoming weeks.

**Alternatives to Violence Report**

Kathy Adams reported that a former participant of AVP foiled at robbery near Guilford College by tackling the robber and securing him until the police arrived. His response was a direct result of the training he received at AVP. The next AVP training is scheduled for April 5th – 7th in Jamestown, NC.

**The Gaza Conflict**

Richard led a spirited discussion of the Israeli/Hamas conflict. A minute, created by Virginia Beach Friends meeting was read and friends discussed if we wanted to endorse the minute, draft a new one or adopt the minute with amendments.

Friend Max Carter, in addressing the status of Ramallah Friends School in light of the conflict noted that 70% of the deaths in Gaza were women and children. A lively discussion ensued about the historic responsibility of Friends to uphold the Light during times of war and advocate for peace. Questions considered included whether the destruction of the next generation of Gaza children should be considered genocide or ethnic cleansing; whether the fellowship should endorse the Virginia Beach letter verbatim or with edits that acknowledged the United States’ voluntary participation in the breaking of international laws and United Nations resolutions.

**Approved: Clerk Richard will reach out to Virginia Beach to request permission to replicate the original letter with edits; the new draft of the letter will note that our minute was “inspired” by Virginia Beach; member meetings of the fellowship are encouraged to publish and distribute the letter to its members; and the new minute will include the following sentence in the last paragraph: “We urge our United States government to advocate for the support of United Nations resolutions and to uphold established international laws.”**

In consideration of the need to publicize our objection as a fellowship to the war, Friends **Approved the amount of $5,000 to publish the letter in print newspapers (e.g. Greensboro News and Record, Virginia Pilot, Raleigh News and Observer and the Charlotte Observer) and digitally online.**

The NCFF letter can be read here: <https://www.ncfriends.org/ncff-minute-on-war-in-israel-palestine-march-9-2024/>

**NCFF September Gathering at Quaker Lake**

The September 7th gathering at Quaker Lake will again be a time for Friends, Fun and Fellowship with no business component. Dottie Hobbs and Kathy Adams, along with two other volunteers will plan the event. During the event a one hour Quaker play titled “The Distance Between Us” will be performed. **Approved: Kathy and Dottie were granted a budget of $1,000 to pay for the services of actors and other costs associated with bringing the performance to our gathering.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassandra Israel, Acting Recording Clerk