NCFF Fall Business Session Minutes

November 16, 2024

10am-12pm

Welcome

Clerk Richard Wilcox welcomed about 35 Friends to the Fall Business Meeting of NCFF, held at First Friends Meeting. He expressed the hope that this morning all would meditate on who we are and who we are called to be, and leave energized.

He told an amusing story from his youth about an experience he had being part of a Mock UN meeting that took place far from his home. Several years later he and his friends were startled when he was at a sporting event and saw – again, far from his home – one of the participants in that Mock UN gathering. In remembering those times, he reflected on the lives we all touch, the memories we have and the ministries in which we are engaged.

Memorials Received

Richard noted that the list of deceased Friends (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/monthly-meeting-memorials-2024/>) represented 3060 years worth of life stories. Open worship followed.

Minutes

The minutes of the last three meetings (18 November 2023, 9 March 2024 and 7 September 2024) were approved:

See <https://www.ncfriends.org/ncff-minutes-of-18-november-2023/>

“ <https://www.ncfriends.org/ncff-minutes-of-9-march-2024/>

“ <https://www.ncfriends.org/ncff-minutes-of-7-september-2024/>

State of the Meeting Reports

Reports were received from four Meetings:

See <https://www.ncfriends.org/state-of-the-meeting-report-from-first-friends-meeting-2024/>

“ <https://www.ncfriends.org/state-of-the-society-report-from-jamestown-meeting-2024/>

“ <https://www.ncfriends.org/spiritual-condition-report-for-new-garden-meeting-for-2024/>

“ <https://www.ncfriends.org/state-of-the-meeting-report-from-somerton-meeting-2024/>

Askings Report

The Askings Report shows contributions from each Meeting. (see <https://www.ncfriends.org/askings-report-fall-2024/>) Friends can contact Judith Cranford regarding any discrepancies.

Financial Report

The Income & Expense Report was reviewed. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/income-expense-report-2024/>) It was noted that the Outreach Working Group would be meeting later today and deciding how to spend money on appropriate projects.

NCYM, Inc. Meeting at Quaker Lake

NCYM, Inc. met on November 2, and Richard attended. One item of interest was the announcement of a celebration next year of Quaker Lake’s 75th anniversary. Friends from some distance will be expected to attend – on June 7, 2025. In commemoration of this milestone, staff will be planting white oak trees, the seeds for which are being nursed now.

Richard brought a request from the Board for Bill Davis and Bill Eagles to serve three-year terms representing NCFF. **This was approved.**

Also at the meeting there was a compelling report from Friends Disaster Service. This group does not arrive immediately following a disaster; they go later and assist those who have fallen through the cracks.

Grant Request for Friends Disaster Service

Frank Massey submitted a grant request for $10,000 from NCFF for Friends Disaster Service. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/fds-grant-request-16-november-2024/>) The group will be working with Western NC after they complete current projects in New Bern. **Friends were moved to approve $20,000.**

FWCC Report

Bill Eagles submitted a report from Friends World Committee for Consultation. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/fwcc-report-fall-2024/>) He noted that they had had a very good year. Their capital campaign received almost twice the goal. Director Robin Mohr, former Executive Secretary, has left for another position, and Evan Welkin (a QLSP alumni of Guilford College) has taken her place. The highlight of the year was the World Gathering in South Africa, in which 500 Friends from 53 countries participated.

FUM Report

Bill Eagles also submitted a report from Friends United Meeting. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/fum-report-2024/>) His remarks centered on the situation in the Middle East. He expressed to Friends how stressed, grief-stricken, fearful and angry the Ramallah Friends School community is, following the attack on Israel by Hamas last October, and the resulting firestorm of attacks by Israel on Gaza and the West Bank. He asked Friends to hold this community closely in the Light.

Faith & Practice Committee Update

Bill Davis reported that the group of four (Cassandra Israel, Richard Wilcox, Khaleelah Gantt and himself) continues to work on the draft for NCFF’s Faith & Practice document. They are not sure when it will be completed, as they are actually writing it together – meeting each week on Zoom. They appreciate our patience and ask that we hold them in the Light as they work on this important task. Sara Beth Terrell expressed a deep Thank You to the group, which resonated with all those present.

Quaker Archives at Guilford College Report

Gwen Gosney Erickson reported on a very busy year. (See <https://www.ncfriends.org/quaker-archives-report-fall-2024/>) In June she was able to represent North Carolina Friends at the “Fox at 400” Celebration in Lancaster, England. She served on a Quaker Archives panel and also presented a paper on George Fox’s 1672 visit to North Carolina.

Her work in the Archives involves educating faculty and staff at Guilford, and high school students on the Underground Railroad activities in the New Garden area in the 1800s. New stories that come to light are shared, as well as known history.

She noted the progress of the Carole Edgerton Treadway Endowment. Carole worked in the Archives for more than 30 years. One of Carole’s colleagues, Damon Hickey, and his wife Mary recently made an endowment challenge gift of $500,000, and will match donations dollar for dollar going forward. This endowment will help fund the Quaker Archivist position, currently held by Gwen.

Gwen reminded Friends that the Archives not only assist Guilford students in their research, but it is a rich resource for North Carolina Friends and beyond. Funds donated from various Meetings and organizations allow for a part-time employee currently, Beth Saunders. (In the past she was paid by North Carolina Yearly Meeting.) Beth handles the records that come in. These records should be brought to her on a regular basis from NC Meetings. Should Friends have questions about what to submit, they should contact Beth at archives@guilford.edu

Friends discussed contributing to the Quaker Archives. **Approval was given to donate $10,000 to the Carole Edgerton Treadway Endowment and $1000 for Operations.**

Nominating Committee Needs

It was noted that volunteers are needed to fill the representative positions of AFSC, FCNL, FWCC and the Quaker House Board. **Phillip Raines volunteered to be the FWCC rep.**

Richard Wilcox announced that, due to new responsibilities in his work, it was necessary for him to step down as Clerk, so that position will need to be filled. He will remain in his position until the end of 2024. Assistant Clerk and Assistant Recording Clerk positions will need to be filled.

Wallace Sills, current Nominating Committee Clerk, then announced that he needed a replacement. **Dan Allen agreed to call a meeting of the Nominating Committee to fill these positions.**

Outreach Working Group

Beth Massey announced that the Outreach Working Group would be meeting in the afternoon, to decide on projects to fund. So far they have agreed to provide $5000 to the Living Letters Ministry of Max & Jane Carter in Palestine. They are also looking at a new mission statement, trying to discern the difference between “Missions Then and Now.” The goal for the new statement is to achieve more cultural humility – providing service in a way that is not paternalistic. They will submit a report in March.

Announcements

Jack Ciancio is offering another course on Medieval Theology on December 7, 2024 and January 11, 2025.

The Clerks of North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative and Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting & Fellowship are interested in a joint meeting. As was done a few years ago, the plan would be to meet together for worship and fellowship, and then have separate business meetings the same day. Richard is open to ideas about this meeting and where it might be held. It was suggested that Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting be included also. Richard will provide updates.

David Smith announced a Post-Election Support Group. The first meeting will be held at Jamestown Meeting on December 4th at 7pm. It will be a time to process feelings and build bridges with Friends and others that allow us to come together in productive ways.

David is also camping out on the grounds of Deep River Meeting next week, as he collects food and monetary donations for Western North Carolina. His goal is 10,000 lb. of food and $5000 in monetary donations.

Some Friends involved in FEMAP (Friends Emergency Material Aids Program) have contacts in Western North Carolina, so the kits that are now being put together will be sent there. They are sending pet food, along with hygiene kits to assist people still struggling in that area.

Kat Smith told Friends of the Missions Committee Poinsettia Project at Deep River Meeting. For $12 each, one can buy a poinsettia (to be collected at the rise of Meeting for Worship on December 22), and the proceeds will benefit Western North Carolina. More information is on their website.

Marcie Newell reported that Winston-Salem Meeting is focusing on assistance to those who are homeless. Blankets, hats, mittens and scarves, toys and hygiene kits can be donated to the Meeting, and a police bicycle patrol they partner with is responsible for distributing them.

Edith Shepherd reported on Miami Meeting, which is small and shares worship space with other religious groups. They are very concerned about the situation in Cuba – the lack of reliable electricity, and lack of basic community resources, particularly. They are sending care packages with over-the-counter medications there and welcome our support. She asked that we hold them in the Light.

Dottie Hobbs expressed appreciation to all in NCFF for offering of support where it is needed – especially Beth and the Outreach Working Group.

Kathy Adams wondered if we should do something specifically for Swannanoa Meeting. Friends noted that they had been told the Meeting is still assessing what they need. Bill Eagles suggested a letter of support, and that we could be in contact regarding further action once they know what would be helpful. **Richard agreed to write a letter of support to Swannanoa Meeting.**

Lou Gordh inquired about Statesville Meeting. Marcie Newell had reached out to them a couple of years ago and the Friend did not want to talk to her. She thought the best idea was to hold them in the Light.

NCFF Proposed Meeting Dates for 2025:

There is potential for a March or April joint meeting with NCYM-C and PFYM&F, but a location is needed.

The Annual Gathering at Quaker Lake will hopefully be held on September 6, 2025. **Richard will check on availability.**

The Fall Business Meeting will be held on November 15, 2025 at Jamestown Meeting.

Conclusion

Richard reminded Friends that the Light is stronger than the darkness, that Love always wins, and that each of us can make a difference.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Seel, Recording Clerk