



December 11, 2022

# Minutes & Reports

## Friends Meeting at Cambridge

### *Meeting for Business in Worship*

*December 11, 2022*

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December MBW* **1**

Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) gathered in a Meeting for Business in Worship on Sunday, December 11, at 1:15 pm. The Meeting was convened by Lynne Weiss, Co-Presiding Clerk, after a period of silent worship, with 17 people in the Friends Room and 32 people present on Zoom. The Clerk opened the Meeting with a quote from Chapter 3 of the new New England Yearly Meeting *Faith and Practice*:

*The heart of Friends' business process is the nurturing of spiritual openness and deep listening that allows the sense of the meeting to emerge. At times, there may be unanimous agreement that a proposed action should be carried out. However, when those gathered are not in simple agreement, careful consideration will be given to each speaker, and silent worship may be requested. If all in attendance draw on their disciplines of worship and stay mindful that the purpose is to seek the will of God for the gathered body, unity can be found and acted upon. Sense of the meeting is the understanding of where the gathered body is led and does not mean that every individual present is completely satisfied or in total agreement. Contrasting views and perceptions may be expressed and some disagreements may remain. The sense of the meeting emerges from the committed efforts of a loving community and strengthens its bonds.*

Ariel Maddocks, Co-Presiding Clerk, led the Meeting in introductions of all present.

#### ***Appointment of Temporary Recording Clerk***

***2022-074***

The Clerk asked the Meeting to approve David L Myers as Temporary Recording Clerk for this meeting, as the Recording Clerk is sick. Friends approved.

**Announcements**

2022-075

The Clerk read the following quote about the nature of Land Acknowledgements from Chip Colwell, anthropologist and author of *Plundered Skulls and Stolen Spirits: Inside the Fight to Reclaim Native America's Culture*:

*Land acknowledgment is a recognition of a truth, a kind of verbal memorial that those who speak it erect in honor of Indigenous peoples. Like a memorial, land acknowledgment pays respect to Indigenous peoples by recognizing where they came from and affirming who they are today. And like a memorial, land acknowledgment is an education—enlisting speakers and audiences to learn about a region's Indigenous history.*

The Clerk then read the Land Acknowledgement we approved at our February 13, 2022, Meeting for Business in Worship.

The Clerk asked Friends to follow these guidelines during our Meetings for Business in Worship:

- When our Recording Clerk reads Minutes, please only raise substantive corrections, not minor editing concerns. Wordsmithing concerns take up precious time and can be raised after the business meeting with the Recording Clerk directly.
- We need the active discernment of all in Meetings for Business in Worship. Friends, please make allowances for conversations with vision- or hearing-impaired participants who might need something described to them. The clerk will attempt to call on people by name; please consider introducing yourself if the clerk does not identify you or identifies you incorrectly.
- Please actively seek the Light before speaking and listen for the Light in others' comments. Please keep in mind that the topics we consider this afternoon are topics that have brought forth strong feelings in the past. Consider carefully whether you can find your way toward unity despite individual reservations.
- Finally, please hold all of us in this Meeting for Business in Worship, whether physically in the building or on Zoom, and the Meeting as a whole in the Light as we sit together to seek unity.

**Membership Update**

2022-076

Tom Sander, for the Clerks Team, reported that John Cook's and Molly Anderson's transfers of membership to Middlebury (VT) Friends Meeting were accomplished on 11/20/2022.

**IFSWG Report**

2022-077

Patricia Wild, Clerk of the Imagining Faithful Structures Working Group (IFSWG), identified the other current members of the working group (Chris Maddocks, Liz Moore, Alasdair Post-Quinn, Clark Redner, Betsy Roper, and Kim West), and the Meeting held them in the Light. She then presented **IFSWG's proposal for a Meeting Administrator position** which would be 7/8 time and would receive 7/8 of full-time benefits.

The Meeting Administrator would have the following responsibilities:

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- supervising staff (Office Manager, First Day School/Youth Programs Coordinator, Center Residents, Facilities Manager/Handyperson);
- managing space and schedules with outside groups and contractors;
- coordinating social media, including publications and website;
- coordinating nursery coverage both paid and volunteer and ensuring that FMC-provided childcare conforms to FMC child-safety policies;
- managing finances—paying and tracking bills, overseeing expenditures;
- attending relevant committee meetings.

In order to lessen the sense of ever-present responsibility, the Meeting Administrator would not live in the Friends Center apartment.

IFSWG also recommends a three-person Supervisory Committee for the Meeting Administrator comprised of a representative from either Trustees Committee or Ministry and Counsel, a First Day School parent, and an “at-large” representative of the community. This committee would meet once a month, engaging in a collaborative process, using a matrix which elucidates the Meeting Administrator’s responsibilities, and using a monthly self-assessment regarding each responsibility. IFSWG recommends the Meeting Administrator use this same collaborative, matrix process in their own supervisory role. The Supervisory Committee should develop a protocol that will prevent the MA from being effectively the personal assistant of every person in the Meeting community.

IFSWG proposes that Meeting review the Meeting Administrator position in six months.

IFSWG will be considering other issues in the future, including:

- the First Day School/Youth Programs Coordinator position;
- the Facilities Manager/Handyperson position;
- our standing committee/working group/interest group structure;
- how best to use the Friends Center apartment.

IFSWG proposes Kathleen Wooten, currently FMC’s Facilities Manager, for the Meeting Administrator position.

Jan Nisenbaum, staff supervisor on the Interim Coordinating Team, offered comments regarding past FMC supervision structures and practices. Meeting has tried various models of supervision. Jan sees, as most important, mutual accountability for the employee and also for the employer. A supervisory structure should lift up gifts, validate good work, and make sure the employee is doing the necessary tasks. The supervisor serves as support and as a help to the employee in clarifying what tasks they need to prioritize. Also, there is a strong need for a go-between structure to filter requests for new work from people in the community.

After a spirited discussion, **the Clerk suggested that we give the Working Group time to consider the questions and suggestions they heard and bring back a new version of their proposal to the January Meeting for Business in Worship. Friends approved this plan.**

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***Nominating Committee Report***

2022-078

David L Myers, for Nominating Committee, presented two nominations for a first reading: Mary Spitzer to Fundraising Committee through June 2025 and Gail Rogers to Nominating Committee through June 2025. It was announced that Membership Committee now has Co-Clerks Daniel Fitzmartin and Yani Bray, and Peace & Social Justice Committee has Co-Clerks Michael Carey and Ian Harrington.

***Ad-Hoc COVID Listening Group Report and Recommendations***

2022-079

The *Ad-Hoc* COVID Listening Group presented a set of COVID-related proposals for Meeting's discernment.

**Tom Sander, a member of the Group, proposed adding the Selleck Room and Committee Room to the spaces in which small groups may meet, with masks optional if they choose.** Groups using these rooms should close the doors while meeting, and wear masks in going to and from the rooms. **Friends approved this proposal.**

**Ariel Maddocks, a member of the Group, proposed resuming Coffee Hours in the Friends Center with a mask-optional policy when weather does not permit them to be held outdoors.** This depends on being able to find an adequate number of volunteers to provide coffee and snacks. **Friends approved this proposal.**

**Tom Sander proposed that a new group, called HEART (HEAlthy Reopening Team)—be formed to make decisions regarding the details of implementing COVID policies once those policies have been approved.** This group will also have the authority to tighten COVID restrictions if the COVID situation in the Middlesex County area worsens. HEART could also be a resource to committees that want guidance on additional details that the recommended changes from the *Ad-Hoc* COVID Listening Group did not provide, or in other words to “fill in the gaps.”

Any significant loosening of restrictions would only come after a period of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) green light status for Middlesex County, and Clerks Team, as led, would bring a proposal to Business Meeting in Worship following one or more listening sessions with the community.

HEART would have representatives from Fellowship & Outreach Committee, Ministry & Counsel, Trustees Committee, First Day School/Youth Programs Committee, Clerks Team, and ideally at least one person with medical or public health expertise—or, if such a person is not available, someone with a strong science background. If no one with medical/public health or a strong science background is available to serve, Clerks Team would endeavor to find such a person who is willing to be “of counsel” to HEART. The Facilities Manager would sit on HEART *ex officio*. Former members of the Facilities Reopening Group (FROG) would be asked to serve to preserve institutional memory.

The Clerks Team would appoint these people, in consultation with the *Ad-Hoc* COVID Listening Group and with the relevant committees from which representation is sought. People would agree to serve on HEART for one year and after that year would be asked if they wished to serve for a further year.

HEART would make decisions to temporarily suspend on-site activities or optional masking only in response to significant changes in underlying data in the CDC stoplight for Middlesex County, based on cases and hospitalizations, or on changes to COVID concentrations in wastewater.

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HEART would make any decisions regarding policy implementations, along with the reasoning behind these decisions, widely known through the listserv, emails from the database, and notifications on the FMC website when appropriate. **Friends approved this proposal.**

Ariel Maddocks then proposed the following:

- that Meeting recommend that everyone in our community who can receive vaccinations and boosters does so, both for their own safety and for reducing the chance that COVID will harm any other community members;
- that masking continue to be required for Forum, Afterthoughts and Family Worship for All Ages in the Friends Room and Parlor;
- to create an option for those who are unable to mask or who feel that it dramatically worsens their experience, that the balcony be a mask-optional space during Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Business in Worship. People passing through the entry area of the Meetinghouse should be asked to wear masks until they get upstairs. There should be one bench in a corner of the ground floor of the Meetinghouse (likely to the left of the fireplace) designated mask-optional for those who require a mask-optional environment and who cannot climb the stairs to the balcony.

Friends discussed this last set of proposals. Three Friends voiced strong concerns but indicated that they would step aside from the apparent Sense of the Meeting for approval. Due to time pressures, however, **those gathered agreed to revisit the last set of proposals at next month's Meeting for Business in Worship.**

Full details of the report of the *Ad-Hoc* COVID Response Listening Group will be included in a future issue of *Minutes & Reports* once it is clear that discernment about all their proposals is complete.

### **Closing Worship**

Meeting for Business in Worship adjourned at 3:47 pm, with Friends intending to gather next in a Meeting for Business in Worship on Sunday, January 8, 2023, at 1:15 pm on Zoom and in the Friends Room.

Lynne Weiss, Co-Presiding Clerk

David L Myers, Temporary Recording Clerk

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# Friends Meeting at Cambridge

5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge, MA 02138-4816 [www.FMCQuaker.org](http://www.FMCQuaker.org)

Co-Presiding Clerks: Ariel Maddocks, Tom Sander,  
Lynne Weiss  
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617-876-6883

Interim Coordinating Team: Deborah Colgan,  
Jan Nisenbaum, Tom Sander, Jonathan Vogel-Borne  
[ict@FMCQuaker.org](mailto:ict@FMCQuaker.org)

Amy Mercure, Office Manager  
[office@FMCQuaker.org](mailto:office@FMCQuaker.org)  
617-876-6883

Kathleen Wooten, Facilities Manager  
[facilities@FMCQuaker.org](mailto:facilities@FMCQuaker.org)  
617-354-3383

Patricia Wild, Interim First Day School/Youth Programs Coordinator  
[fdsypcoordinator@FMCQuaker.org](mailto:fdsypcoordinator@FMCQuaker.org)  
413-251-6512

To receive links to publications or to join the FMC community listserv, email: [office@FMCQuaker.org](mailto:office@FMCQuaker.org)

## Meetings for Worship at FMC

### 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge

Sundays 10:30 am

Wednesdays 8:30 am to 10 am

### South Shore Preparative Meeting

155 Washington St. (Rt. 53), Pembroke

Sundays 10:00 am

Jim deVeer

781-982-0653

### Worship Group at Brookhaven

1010 Waltham Street, Lexington

Sundays 10:30 am

Elisabeth Cotten

781-862-7578

## Other Nearby Worship Opportunities

### Acton Friends Meeting,

Contact Clerk, [acton@neym.org](mailto:acton@neym.org)

### Amesbury Monthly Meeting, 120 Friend St., Amesbury

Sundays 10:00 am

### Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, 6 Chestnut St., Boston

Sundays 10:30 am

### Cambridge Friends School, 5 Cadbury Rd., Cambridge

Tuesdays 8:30 to 9:00 am

### Framingham Friends Meeting, 841 Edmands Rd., Framingham

Sundays 10:00 am

### Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, CFS Cambridge

Sundays 10:00 am

### Lawrence Monthly Meeting, 15 Forest St., Methuen

Sundays 6:30 pm

### Mill City Quakers, [millcityquakers@gmail.com](mailto:millcityquakers@gmail.com)

### Nashoba Worship Group, [nashobaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:nashobaquakers@gmail.com)

Sundays 10:30 am

### North Shore Monthly Meeting, 74 Hart St., Beverly Farms

Sundays 10:00 am

### Three Rivers Worship Group, [info@threeriversmeeting.org](http://info@threeriversmeeting.org)

Alternate Thursdays 9:30 am

### Wellesley Friends Meeting, 26 Benvenue St., Wellesley

Sundays 10:30 am