

Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
November 17, 2024

Agenda

1. Opening Worship
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Reading of Query for the Eleventh Month
4. Clerk's Report
5. Nominating: Proposed Slate of Officers
6. Landscape Annual Report
7. Peace and Social Concerns Annual Report
8. Minutes for Approval: October
9. Announcements
 - a. Reports due in January
 - i. Library Annual Report
 - ii. Worship and Ministry Annual Report
 - b. Arch Street Meetinghouse by Candlelight, 4:30 to 7:30 pm on Dec 6
 - c. PQM Quarterly Meeting at CHFM on Jan 26
 - d. Release date for Dec 21 (3rd Sat) is tomorrow
10. Closing Worship

Query for the Eleventh Month: Education

- What does our meeting do to support and improve public education?
- What help do we provide for the children and adults in our meeting to pursue their educational goals?
- What is our meeting's role in support for Friends' education? If our meeting is connected to a Friends school or schools, does this relationship nurture spiritual life and the manifestation of Friends principles?
- Do we enable children in our meeting to attend a Friends school? Does our meeting work with the family to consider all available means of support?
- *How do I show my concern for the improvement of public education in my community?*
- *Do I demonstrate my encouragement and support for Friends education through awareness and service?*

Nominating Committee Report and Recommendations
Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting
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Each fall, your Nominating Committee presents a slate of five officers for the next year. Four of our five current officers will continue in their positions next year:

Miyo Moriuchi:	Clerk
Peter Warrington:	Assistant Clerk
Bob Reynolds:	Treasurer
Amey Hutchins:	Recorder

Our recording clerk, Liz Williams, will not continue into 2025 after four years of exemplary service. For the position, Nominating recommends Inaara Shiraz.

We believe Inaara is well qualified for the position. With a joint degree in literature and history, she served as director of communications at the Church of the Holy Trinity, and now serves as coordinator for inclusion and belonging for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

We therefore strongly recommend her for the position of recording clerk, even though she is not a Meeting member. In approving her for this position, we ask that the Meeting waive the general policy (as stated only as a recommendation in our handbook) that all officers be Meeting members.

Respectfully,
Steve Elkinton and Jon Landau
On behalf of the CHFM Nominating Committee

**Landscape Annual Report
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People: 2025: Will Anninger, Cyane Gresham (co-clerk), Ann Jones, Claire Landau, Tom Murtaugh, Pete Winebrake. 2026: Marcy Abhau, Sharon Doerner, Miriam Fisher, Bruce Sacks, Grace Wicks, Beth Zelasky (co-chair).

What We Do: We strive for connection in what we do:

Presence on the grounds, esp. Saturday mornings during Farmers Market

Coordinate with neighboring community

Maintain drain in upper parking lot to prevent floods and erosion

Manage mowing contractor KC McGinty

Care for each other and care for the Earth

Coordinate with other committees

Monitor and manage vegetation, especially trees and shrubs.

Funds: The Meeting's annual budget allocation has been \$7,500. In FY 22-23, landscape expenses for mowing and heavy work totaled \$8,062. In FY 23-24, \$4,628. The growing season runs spring to fall, and our mowing contractor KC McGinty sends invoices late. It is always challenging to match receipts to fiscal year.

This committee has also done fundraising through plant sales and memorial bequests (2024) - to be used for improvement projects, see below. The total seems to be \$6,073.78; Treasurer Bob Reynolds has looked through financial records to check.

Fortunately, there have not been disasters or expensive problems for several years. We are aware that climate change, drought, and aging stress our trees. It seems prudent to budget for future necessary expenses like tree work. We would like to follow the example of Property to set aside money (separate from improvement fundraising).

Workdays throughout the year provide opportunities for involvement. In our 2022 and 2023 annual reports we reported over 200 hours spread over 20-30 workdays. So far, in 2024, we have logged 15 workdays and over 130 hours. We coordinate with Property and welcome other people and committees. The many hours that volunteers work on the building and grounds provide a substantial value added to the monies raised and provided by the Meeting.

Possible Improvement Projects

Benches: Welcoming places to sit by front door, under portico, and back patio

Bird Decals: To prevent more bird deaths: [Feather Friendly](#)

Redo bluestone paths

Rock seating and play structures around back patio

Other?

Challenges

How do we make committee work inviting and satisfying – and doable?

How do we renew vigor and initiative while dealing with loss and aging?

How do we do the basic work and preserve energy for new ideas and projects?

How do we reach out to others and not get siloed in the weight of our concerns?

Peace and Social Concerns Committee Annual Report
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The Peace & Social Concerns Committee (P&SC) is deeply aware of and concerned about social injustice and violence in our country. The hot wars in the Ukraine and Middle East also sadden our souls. Our principal goal this past year has been to take action as a Meeting community to slow climate change. We believe that when we act in community in accordance with our Quaker values, we have more resilience, persistence and impact than working alone. However, we also support individual leadings as they come to our attention. Also several committee members participated in POWER Interfaith's events and the End Gun Violence Lobby Day.

This year we have tried to follow the five elements in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Playbook for Addressing Climate Change:

- **Advocacy** – Lobbying elected representatives and powerful corporations as well as monthly “Postcards to the Powers,” averaging 22 each month. We also attended a number of EQAT actions.
- **Education** – In the winter and spring of 2024, in cooperation with the Religious Education Committee, we offered a 12-week set of First Day School classes about earthcare. (We hope this can serve as a model for other Meeting committees to help educate our children on Quaker practices.) We also hosted two after-Meeting forums, one a “threshing session” on climate advocacy and the other featuring the new Quaker statewide lobbying group, Quaker Action – Mid-Atlantic Region (QAMAR).
- **Personal actions for reducing emissions** – We have encouraged eating less meat at social hours and vegetarian lunches and dinners.
- **Finance** – We plan an upcoming forum on decarbonizing investments.
- **Resilience/dealing with grief** – This fall we have sponsored weekly “resilience nature walks,” ranging in size from 3 to 12 people. The fellowship and discussions there have proven very therapeutic in these troubled times.

We work closely with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Eco-Justice Collaborative and highly recommend their monthly e-newsletter to stay abreast of the many facets of this complex and spirit-led work.

In addition, we have applied deliberative and careful discernment to awarding \$5,000 in grants and \$5,000 in donations as approved last May at business meeting. We continue to

be concerned that this total of \$10,000 has not changed in 10 years, so its effect is diminished as inflation lowers the value of each grant or donation.

Our August speaker about anera's charitable relief work in Gaza moved many and brought the horrors of that conflict directly to our hearts.

Kay Wood and Linda Rosenwein continue to offer the weekly radio show "Planet Philadelphia," that has now come to wide attention and won a recent award. Through this show, their knowledge of speakers, broad and local issues, and changing trends has benefitted all of us.

Appreciating the stakes in the recent elections, many of us assisted with "Philly Souls to the Polls" to foster voter turnout. In the six weeks following Tom Conrad's leading and supported by many CHFM Friends, a 501(C)(3) organization was set up, a website developed, flyers distributed, and a hotline dispatch center established with five phone lines. Roughly 150 drivers helped more than 300 people vote.

We have continued to struggle with communications among ourselves, within the Meeting, between the committee and the Meeting as a whole, and with the larger community.

In closing, we want to invite all of you next week to hear Jayson Massey, a member of Germantown Monthly Meeting, speak here after worship about POWER Interfaith, how it is reacting to the election results and working on climate change issues.

Current committee members are Pauline Doyle, Moxie Duncan-Tessmer, Diane Dunning, Steve Elkinton, Betty Hartzell, Linda Rosenwein, Jim Victor, Jean Warrington (clerk), and Kay Wood.

In addition, former members Helene Hilger and Sarah Whitman offer invaluable assistance for our climate action work.

Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting
Minutes – Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Oct. 20, 2024

The hybrid Meeting for Business was clerked by Miyo Moriuchi. In total, 14 Friends attended in person and three via Zoom.

The meeting began with a period of silent worship, followed by the Land Acknowledgement. It was observed that Indigenous leaders are asking that we go beyond acknowledging that we live on stolen land, but also think about Land Back, the concept of returning lands to their original owners. In the 16th and 17th centuries, the Lenape occupied a vast area that stretched north from present-day northeastern Delaware to the lower Hudson Valley. The name Lenape means “original people.” British colonists renamed them the Delaware because through the center of the Lenape territory ran the Delaware River, named for the first governor of Virginia, the English nobleman Lord De La Warr. Eventually, the Lenape were forced to move to Ohio, then Oklahoma. It was suggested that if we put our minds and hearts into it, we can think creatively about supporting the recovery of land by Indigenous people. We were asked to take a moment for gratitude and for contrition.

Assistant clerk Peter Warrington read the Query for the Tenth Month, Witnessing in the World: Ministry of Outreach.

- A Friend noted that the Outreach Committee focuses on welcoming those who come here to worship and does not outreach much to others. Recently, she said we have been visited by people from the Rock Ministries of Kensington which does outreach to help the neighborhood’s residents. Ideas about further outreach by CHFYM were welcomed.
- Another Friend noted that during PYM sessions yesterday, someone commented that not only the Outreach and Worship committees handle outreach, we all share that responsibility as a community.
- Another person observed that our meetinghouse will serve as a polling place for hundreds of voters on Election Day Nov 5. On that day in the past, a Friend sat in our Library and answered voters’ questions about our faith. We were asked: Is this a tradition we wish to continue?

1. **Clerk’s Report.** Miyo expressed great appreciation for the joyful Centennial homecoming picnic on Sunday, Sept. 29 and the photo taken outside the meetinghouse with children in front. That day, she said Nikka Landau interviewed people in the library about what the Meeting means to us and those interviews will be available soon. She noted that the Centennial celebration will continue into 2025. She announced that there will be a clerks meeting on Sunday, Nov. 3 at 12:15 pm in the gathering room and invited clerks to share concerns in advance via email to all clerks.
2. **Treasurer’s Annual Report.** Treasurer Bob Reynolds pointed out that comparing the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024 with the previous fiscal year, the Meeting’s revenues from contributions increased \$17,000 or 13 percent, income from rentals went up almost \$27,000 or 100 percent with the COVID recovery, and Skyspace income was strong despite now-corrected technical issues with the opening

mechanism which necessitated a short hiatus in Skyspace openings. In all, total revenues jumped by \$46,000 or 27 percent. Bob said that expenses for wages were under budget because we did not have a meeting secretary for several months and the bookkeeper worked fewer hours than expected. He added that expenses for building and grounds were over budget due to HVAC repairs last spring, but that the HVAC system has been running well. Landscaping is under budget. In total, our budget was \$27,300 in the black for this fiscal year—a complete reversal from the \$27,000 loss the previous year. In sum, Bob said we had a financially strong year with Stewardship doing a great job. He welcomed questions.

It was noted that the Meeting has not yet paid POWER. Another Friend observed that our property insurance expense is big and wondered if we periodically shop for lower premiums. Bob said we are insured through a group of meetings and that we had a small or no increase this year. He said he would talk to a broker to see if there is anything to be gained by shopping our coverage. The clerk of the Landscape Committee noted that there is a significant delay between some landscaping services being performed and our getting invoices, and asked if this would lower next year's Landscape budget. Bob assured her that the Landscape budget will match this year's. In closing, Bob said that the \$5,000 floor scrubbing machine purchased this year was paid for by contributions from members of Property.

- 3. Addressing Racism Committee (ARC) Annual Report.** Clerk Jude Brandt said the committee found preparing an annual report a good opportunity to take stock. She said that the committee has been struggling with fewer people because one member moved to another committee, and another moved out of town. She also expressed gratitude that the committee has been graced with two new people who are checking out its work to see if there is good fit and who have begun to make helpful contributions. Jude said the committee continues to think about what its contribution to the Meeting ought to be. Adding the Land Acknowledgment to the business meeting agenda is one of its recent contributions, she said.

Jude said a lot of effort has been focused on Ujima. One ongoing issue has been the Meeting's commitment to financially support Ujima with \$5,000 annually for five years. So far, the Meeting has provided this support for two years and ARC is now in conversation with the committees who care for the Burial Fund and the Friends Emergency Fund about the next three years' funding. Another issue is the desire by Meeting members to be involved in Ujima. Jude said ARC has concluded that a meetingwide effort to connect with Ujima is not appropriate; individual connections work best. She suggested we can be involved with Ujima by responding to its needs, as we did with our recent support for Ujima's summer camp Freedom School and providing a place for Ujima's annual meeting. Jude also suggested we can be involved with Ujima by joining one of its activities.

A Friend reminded us that we are a member of POWER, an organization that has a number of people of color, and it is a good way to make connections.

Committee member Carla White said she had looked through our minutes to ascertain how members of Meeting have been involved in racial issues. On Nov 10, ARC will be hosting an Adult Class titled “Where have we been and where are we going?” The purpose is to highlight our accomplishments so far and identify what we wish to do next. Queries will be asked about how addressing racism is part of our spiritual life.

A Friend observed that the Meeting is on a learning curve with handling racism and invited Friends to reach out to members of ARC with questions.

4. Property and House Annual Report. Clerk Mike Silverman said the committee is coming out of Covid hibernation and is now holding a monthly work day at the meetinghouse and meeting monthly to conduct business. Mike said the committee has gotten a lot done, but still has a long list of items to be handled, such as replacing light bulbs on the porch. He noted that in the past there were people who knew what needed to be done and did it quietly with no fanfare. However, today the committee is capturing that institutional knowledge, so they understand what tasks need to be done when and how. He highlighted these committee activities:

- **Skyspace.** Property has taken on finding a person or company that we can rely on long-term for the maintenance and repair of the Skyspace opening mechanism. He said the only person we know of today who knows how to fix it works at the company in Ohio that installed it. The mechanism won’t last forever so Property is working with CHFMs’s events coordinator and former construction contractor Mike Flynn to find local expertise.
- **HVAC.** We now have a contract with a local company that is doing regular service checks.
- **Clean floors.** We now have a floor scrubbing machine, which is allowing our cleaner Cedric Wright and events coordinator Mike Flynn to keep the floor in the Social Room clean for yoga, rental events, and our activities.
- **CHFMs User’s Manual.** Property recently discovered that our dishwasher is supposed to be de-limed every three months. However, this has not been done in the 10 years since the new meetinghouse opened. This inspired Property to begin working on a user’s manual for CHFMs’s appliances and other equipment, which they hope to complete by the New Year.
- **Snow removal.** Landscape has negotiated a contract with a new snow removal company.

A Friend pointed out that in the past the meetinghouse’s wooden doors that face the sun have been treated by two Meeting volunteers, but that the other doors have not been cared for and need attention. Mike said this is on Property’s list along with replacing the sweeps on the doors and addressing the large gap between the front doors.

5. Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting Representatives Annual Report. Representative Carla White explained that the Quarterly Meeting is a gathering of all the monthly Meetings in Philadelphia which happens every three months on the fourth Sunday and rotates among monthly Meetings. The next quarterly meeting will be held in January at CHFM, and program ideas are welcome. A friend suggested a presentation on Souls to Polls. Carla said we are welcome to come for any or all of the program and directed us to <https://philadelphiaquarter.org> for more information and to register for the next meeting. She reviewed the high points of the representatives' annual report:

- The Quarter is shrinking. It has lost the Unity Meeting, which wants to turn its building over to a Quaker organization and another meeting, Frankford, has become an “executive meeting,” a committee of the whole since it has less than a dozen members.
- The Quarter misses Phil Anthony and his strong, calm guidance.
- The Quarter needs a recording clerk and welcomes any volunteers for this responsibility to take minutes eight times a year
- PQM has a new website at Philadelphiaquarter.org which is still under development and only bare bones.
- The Quarter’s administrative coordinator Kimani Keaton puts out a monthly email newsletter. Please send announcements to her by the 15th of the month.

6. September Minutes for Approval. The minutes were approved as submitted.

7. Announcements

a. Reports due in November

- i. Landscape Annual Report
- i. Nominating: Proposed Slate of Officers
- ii. Peace and Social Concerns Annual Report

b. Release date for Nov. 16 (3rd Sat) is tomorrow

8. Closing Worship

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Williams, Recording Clerk