

## Minutes for the LEYM Executive Committee Meeting January 7, 2023

*This meeting was held via Zoom.*

Present: Mike Holaday, Sally Weaver Sommer, Jon Sommer, Erika Smith, Flo Friender, Jeff Cooper, Peggy Daub, Bill Warters, Shelley Kotz, Joann Neuroth, Tom Kangas, Clemence Ravacon-Mershon, Susan Loucks (Clerk) and Kate Enger (Recording Clerk)

Meeting opened with silent worship at 10:06 am.

### **EC23-1-1** Sally presented an Update from the Arrangements & Site Committee

- a. A preview of the plans for annual meeting will appear in the January bulletin. Both Arrangements & Site and Program Committees will have details about annual meeting to put in the spring bulletin by the submission deadline of March 15. Friends are encouraged to spread the word about both bulletins at meetings.
- b. May 10 will be the registration deadline. Bill is working on possibilities for online registration. This may be an opportune time to streamline the registration process.

### **EC23-1-2** Clemence presented an update and questions from the Adult and Family Program Committee.

- a. They have not heard from Emily Provance about whether she can speak or do workshops. They hope to hear from her by January 15.
- b. We need a COVID policy for our in-person annual meeting. The committee suggests finding out what is happening at Ashland this summer in regards to risk levels, and find out if there are restrictions in place in any of the counties Friends are coming from. Arrangements & Site will discuss taking this on next time they meet. Peggy offered to help, and Erika said her husband, Marc Smith, has expertise to share. We can also draw from the policies that other yearly meetings have developed.
- c. Program Committee has been using this change back to meeting in person as a time to scramble scheduling in hopes of meeting our needs more effectively. For example, there may be no designated committee time Thursday afternoon. There are lobby spaces where committees can meet on their own. Bible Study and Worship Sharing will be set at different times for Friends who wish to attend both, and there will be some additional worship sharing times. Ashland mealtimes are less flexible than Bluffton's were, so the schedule must work around meals. The committee is prioritizing increased integration of adult and youth and children activities.

### **EC23-1-3** Tom presented a new Giving Page preview.

Friends Fiduciary Committee has an online giving system we may want to adopt. It could also help with taking online payment for annual meeting. Costs are nominal compared to other services, and the system allows Friends to add the 3% that the credit

card company normally takes from their payment. It can be set up to include choices that indicate the money being given is for the purpose of registration. The same could be true for future spiritual formation workshops or children's activities. Finance Committee is looking into specifics.

**EC23-1-4** Joann brought a query received from Wooster Meeting:

Wooster Monthly Meeting has about \$60,000 in a fund, and they have been using the income from it for charitable donations. They inquired if LEYM would be capable of and willing to accept those funds as a sizeable donation/bequest. Joann thinks we've got the infrastructure to accept and keep records. Joann is checking with Jeff about whether there's any policy/procedure or precedent to consider.

Finance Committee's first inclination would be to say the highest priority for use of such funds is keeping our Annual Meetings accessible and affordable so we can gather. The \$10,000 subsidy we decided to use during this learning year is going to move registration fees from \$200-something to \$65/person.

Executive Committee offered additional ideas about how we might use those funds.

- support involvement of youth and children in Quaker activities
- different plenary options?
- Social justice/Racial equity organizations
- subsidize future annual meetings as we did this year with money from the general fund
- build relationships between monthly meetings and people outside our Yearly Meeting

Joann will bring the ideas above back to Wooster for further discussion.

**EC23-1-5** Susan led a discussion about the Format of the 2023 representative meeting. Online or in-person? Hybrid?

March 11 is the meeting date, possibly with an Executive Committee meeting the evening before.

Friends offered the following thoughts:

- Friends appreciate the opportunity to connect in person to individuals and to LEYM as a group, as well as to learn what other Monthly meetings are doing.
- Friends have enjoyed the opportunity to stay in host Friends' homes.
- Committees use the in-person meeting as a time to collaborate with other committees. They can also report back to the body as a whole.
- Ashland will be a good place to meet for annual meeting this year, but when we get together we may be able to exchange thoughts about other options.

- We may want to reach out to representatives to encourage enthusiasm for meeting. This year is a new start in some ways.
- The focus of the representatives meeting may have changed. For example, much of the planning that Arrangements & Site and Program Committees would do is already well underway. We could focus on having Monthly Meetings share their own recent changes and activities in addition to some business of the meeting.
- More difficult topics or unusual topics may be best addressed in person.
- A Friend spoke in favor of in-person meetings by recalling how she sat in on a meeting with a committee that she ultimately joined.
- Friends value sharing food and conversation in person.
- Hybrid options can keep people engaged who cannot attend in-person.
- Shelley Kotz will see if the Victory Center in Toledo is available and Sally Weaver Sommer will check with Broadmead Meeting to see if they can host the meeting
- Susan enjoys being involved in some committee meetings and appreciates getting their minutes. That sort of involvement may be easier in person.

**EC23-1-6** Bill reminded Friends about the monthly digital interest groups. Discussion focuses on important information about the online world. More information is on the LEYM website.

**EC23-1-7** Friends shared silent worship, then rose at 12:04.