

A Guide for LEYM Committee Clerks

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

October 2026

Welcome, and thank you for serving. This guide brings together practical advice for clerks of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting committees. It replaces three earlier documents: *Q&A for LEYM Committee Clerks* (2017), *Resources & Good Practices for LEYM Committee Clerks* (2017), and *Guide to the Annual Records of LEYM* (2010).

Your first source of guidance is always the **presiding clerk**. Other good sources are your committee's previous clerk, the other members of your committee, and the Digital Communications Facilitator (leymworker@gmail.com).

Where to Find What You Need

Your committee's charge. LEYM's *Policies & Procedures* manual (section III.C) describes what each standing committee is asked to do, how many members it has, and whether its meetings are open. It is posted at leym.org/policyprocedures-manual/. The Committee Descriptions page (leym.org/committee-descriptions/) summarizes each committee.

Who is on your committee. The current Committees Slate, approved at Annual Sessions and updated during the year, lists every committee's members and their terms. It is posted at leym.org/committee-members/. Members normally serve three-year terms, and no more than two consecutive terms on the same committee.

The Annual Records. Each year after Annual Sessions, the Publications & Archives Committee publishes the *Annual Records*. For a committee clerk, it is the best single reference. It includes:

- the approved slate of officers, committee members, and representatives;
- minutes of Representative Meeting and Annual Sessions, with the committee reports given at each (use the table of contents to find your committee's past reports and business);
- the budget, in the Finance Committee's report and the Annual Sessions minutes;
- each monthly meeting's officers and committee clerks, so you can see which meetings have a committee like yours and whom to contact;
- LEYM's calendar of due dates for the coming year.

The Annual Records come in two editions. The **printed edition** includes a full contact directory. A copy goes to each monthly meeting and worship group, and you can ask your meeting's clerk or the Publications & Archives Committee about getting one. The **web edition** (leym.org/annual-records/) omits personal contact information to protect Friends' privacy.

Minutes and past business. Approved minutes of Annual Sessions, Representative Meeting, and Executive Committee are posted at leym.org/leym-minutes/.

Deadlines and upcoming events. The online LEYM calendar (leym.org/calendar/) helps you keep track of deadlines and upcoming events. You can also view it at the bottom of the leym.org home page.

Working with Your Committee

Stay in touch through the year. Most committees now meet by Zoom between gatherings, as well as in person at Representative Meeting and Annual Meeting. Clear agendas, sent a few days ahead, matter even more online. The *FGC Suggested Best Practices for Virtual Meetings* (linked from the Committee Descriptions page) has practical advice for clerking online and hybrid meetings. If you'd like help hosting a Zoom meeting, contact the Digital Communications Facilitator.

Keep your membership healthy. Let the Nominating Committee know early about vacancies, Friends who would like to join, and members who are rotating off. Committee clerks are nominated by the Nominating Committee in consultation with the committee. If your committee falls to three or fewer committed members, the Executive Committee will help discern how or whether the work can continue.

Pass it on. When you finish as clerk, give the incoming clerk what they need: when the committee usually meets, the timing of its annual tasks, and where its records are kept.

Know your budget. If your committee has a budget line, you'll find it in the budget approved at Annual Sessions, or ask the clerk of the Finance Committee. Expenses are reimbursed through the treasurer. Forms and financial policies are at leym.org/finance-budget/.

Executive Committee

LEYM's Executive Committee is made up of the Yearly Meeting's officers and the clerks of its standing committees, with the presiding clerk serving as its clerk. It acts for the Yearly Meeting between business sessions on matters that can't wait, and it serves as a place of consultation for the presiding clerk and its members.

Executive Committee typically meets before Representative Meeting, before and just after Annual Sessions, and on one day in the fall. Please add these meetings to your calendar. **If you can't attend, you are asked to send another member of your committee.**

Executive Committee members can reach one another through an email list. For the address, or to be added after you become clerk, contact the Digital Communications Facilitator at leymworker@gmail.com.

Reporting and Bringing Business

Should a matter go to Executive Committee or directly to a business session? If in doubt, bring it to Executive Committee. Between meetings, run it by the presiding clerk.

What does it mean to season an item? To give a matter attention over time, and from a range of Friends, seeking the Light rather than moving hastily. An item can be seasoned outside committee meetings by bringing it to Executive Committee, or by consulting the presiding clerk or other seasoned Friends.

What can simply be reported, and what needs a decision? Anything within your committee's charge can simply be reported. Anything outside it must be brought to the Yearly Meeting for decision, such as a change to the committee's structure or charge, or a minute the committee hopes LEYM will approve. Make sure your committee has approved a recommendation before you bring it to business meeting. Present items for the meeting's *consideration*, not its *approval*.

Representative Meeting or Annual Sessions? Certain actions are reserved to Annual Sessions (*Policies & Procedures* II.A.3). These include changes to policies and procedures, approving the slate and the budget, setting up or laying down standing committees, and endorsing concerns. For a concern, give the presiding clerk written notice well in advance. See also "Bringing Leadings and Concerns to the Yearly Meeting" (II.D). If you're unsure where an item belongs, ask the presiding clerk.

When should I tell the presiding clerk about an item for decision? As soon as you know, and at least two weeks before the gathering if possible. For business that comes up just before a gathering, call the clerk. For business that arises during committee time at a gathering, speak with the clerk before raising it on the floor. If the item is detailed, such as a proposed minute or a slate, make it available to Friends ahead of the session so they can come prepared to discern.

What should a committee report contain? Tell the meeting what your committee has done since its last report that is of general interest. The report should be much shorter than your committee's minutes, and should include what you are working on. Leave out details such as where and when you met. Present any item needing action separately from the report.

Please send the recording clerk an electronic copy of your report, by email before or soon after the session. **Printed copies for the clerks' table are not required, but they are much appreciated.** Three copies (one each for the presiding, assistant, and recording clerks) help the clerks follow, record, and track your business.

Does the clerk have to give the report? No. Anyone on the committee can present it, whether or not the clerk is available. Whoever knows the content best should present it, on behalf of the committee.

Presenting an Item for Decision

These five steps are adapted from *Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches* by Mathilda Navias (2012):

1. **This is the item of business.**
2. **This is where it comes from.** Give a short history, from one to ten sentences, including how the meeting has handled it before.
3. **This is who worked on it:** the committee, and anyone else involved.

4. **This is how we arrived at our recommendation:** what we considered, whom we consulted, what we did. Anticipate Friends' questions about who was consulted and which options were considered.
5. **This is our recommendation.** Generally bring one specific recommendation. Let the presiding clerk call for questions. Once questions are answered, turn the meeting back over to the clerk.

Sharing Your Committee's Work

- **LEYM Bulletin.** The Bulletin is published three times a year. Articles and notices from committees are welcome. Due dates appear on the online LEYM calendar (leym.org/calendar/), in the Annual Records calendar, and in the Bulletin.
- **Website and email.** To post news or an event on leym.org, to send a notice to monthly meeting clerks, or to update your committee's web page, contact the Digital Communications Facilitator at leymworker@gmail.com. For events, you can also use the form on the LEYM Event Planning page (leym.org/events/).
- **Annual Meeting.** Committees are encouraged to offer workshops and displays. Contact the Adult & Family Program Committee well in advance.
- **Annual Records.** Material for the Annual Records is due by July 30.

Prepared October 2026 from earlier guides by LEYM Friends. Suggestions for improving this guide are welcome. Please send them to the Digital Communications Facilitator.