

**Celo Friends Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MFWAB)**  
**March 17, 2024**

**Present: Barb Wulff, Jennie Boyd Bull, Eric Gilmore, Catherine Reid, Donna Idol, Lucy Perry, Charley Cloak, Joni Thibault, James Mize**

**Present but entering after the start of the meeting: Rachel Weir, Jim Stockwell, Bob McGahey**

**Clerking: Catherine Reid**

**Minutes: Lucy Perry**

The meeting started with a period of silence.

The clerk then read a passage from Friends Consultation on Worship, Richmond, IN, providing the reasons for addressing the clerk rather than each other during the meeting for business.

**1. Ministry and Care Committee report**

Catherine Reid presented this committee's report, as the current rotating clerk of that committee.

- **Query for this month**

This month's query is: "How do I recognize and support the gifts of others?"

- **Reviewing the proposal for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals (MFWAA)**

The proposal was read aloud by Barb Wulff. It is appended at the end of these minutes.

We approved this proposal.

- **State of the Meeting Report**

Joanna Flynn compiled a draft State of the Meeting with support from the CFM Ministry and Care Committee and with input from some of CFM's committee clerks. This draft was read aloud by Charley Cloak and some corrections were noted.

We added a clarification "... has created conflict with SAYMA"

We approved this State of the Meeting Report.

The State of the Meeting Report is appended at the end of these minutes.

## **2. Nominating Committee Report**

This committee report was presented by Donna Idol.

- **Potluck committee job description**

The nominating committee drafted a job description for the Potluck Committee.

Donna Idol read the draft job description aloud and some small changes were suggested. This job description is being shared today and will be considered for approval at the next MFWAB.

The draft job description is appended at the end of these minutes.

The committee needs a couple more members in addition to the current ones.

- **Potluck committee members**

The following people are proposed as members of the potluck committee: Richard Martin, Peggy Tibbets, Jennie Boyd Bull, Danny Blose.

These names will be brought for final approval at next months' business meeting.

## **3. SAYMA Climate Statement**

This minute from SAYMA was read and considered closely at last month's business meeting. It was mostly approved except for some small changes, which were incorporated into a revised draft. Barb Wulff read the revised draft aloud.

We added some further changes that were suggested today, and we approved this revised draft. The approved statement is appended at the end of these minutes.

The clerks will send our version back to SAYMA along with a statement that we tested this minute against our own sense of integrity, which necessitated the suggested changes.

## **4. Approval of Julia Hudson as a Friendly Adult Nurturer for SAYF**

Catherine Reid presented this item on behalf of Mari Ohta.

SAYF is the Southern Appalachian Young Friends.

Julia Hudson has attended a training to be a “Friendly Adult Nurturer” (FAN) for SAYF. There are also a number of criteria for this position, which Julia has met.

We approve Julia Hudson as a Friendly Adult Nurturer (FAN) for SAYF, and so she will be serving in this capacity at the upcoming SAYF retreat next weekend.

## **5. Racial Equity Committee Report**

Presented by Jennie Boyd Bull

Jennie read us the minutes from two recent Racial Equity Committee meetings.

These REC meeting minutes are appended at the end of this document.

Jennie also gave some updates on the status of the project to protect Lincoln Park properties.

The Racial Equity Committee is asking for Celo Friends Meeting to express support for this work. Jennie read us a draft minute of support, written by the committee.

Some suggestions were made today about this proposed minute of support, including the idea of sending an actual letter of support. We drafted a letter of support, which the clerks will send from Celo Friends Meeting, to the relevant members of the Lincoln Park Community:

Celo Friends Meeting supports the work of the Lincoln Park Preservation Team in preserving historic land and property in the Lincoln Park community in Burnsville that may be threatened by purchase for development. Celo Friends supports the use of American Friends Service Committee funds and other funds as a way to work towards preserving this historic community.

We approve this letter of support, and we look forward to staying apprised of the progress.

**These minutes were approved in the face of the meeting.**

**Appendix:**

- Proposal for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals
- State of the Meeting Report
- Draft job description for Potluck Committee
- Minutes from two meetings of the CFM Racial Equity Committee
- SAYMA Climate Statement as edited and approved by CFM

**Proposal for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals (mfwaaaa), Sunday, April 28**  
(Joanna will clerk)

Location: upper parking lot (accessible parking area). Please bring a chair or blanket to sit on.

10:45am - singing

11:00am - worship (clerk will introduce the process)

Children are welcome to stay with us for the entire worship! If they would like to, they could share what their animal means to them. As we do in regular meeting for worship, we speak out of the silence after a pause has been given.

Some guidelines:

Please secure your pet (leash, carrier, box, etc...).

Leave your pet at home, and bring a picture of them, if they:

- would become aggressive
- would bark/meow way too much, (we expect some barking/meowing, some growls, etc...)
- would lose their minds

Please quietly come and go as needed with your animal.

Clean up after your animal (bring poop bags if you have them).

Be gentle with each other's animals.

Enjoy the chaos!

Also available on Sunday, April 28th:

Meeting for Worship (no animals) 9:45-10:45am in the meetinghouse.

## State of Celo Friends Meeting in 2023

The theme for Celo Friends Meeting in 2023 was *community through Spirit-led worship and work*. Our meeting holds space for spirit led worship for everyone who enters. It is through the silence that each of us comes into the light following our own path. By listening in waiting to the spirit from within, and vocalizing when the spirit cannot be contained, all present are changed by this moment of inspiration. Be it sadness, or gladness, the change has already happened.

Our meeting community is held together by our abiding love and respect for one another, which manifests in an ability to listen deeply to each other. Our weekly potlucks provide ongoing cheer and nourishment, encouraging and deepening our felt sense that we are a family. Despite our sometimes quirky personalities, at the core of our community, we have faith in each other.

Our spring and fall Work Days are another way to get to know each other better. This year, in addition to the regular chores of cutting back brush, raking leaves, moving woodpiles, and painting and repairing neglected areas in the three buildings, we cleared an area for a new 8' x 12' storage shed. It arrived in December, which means the tools, fuels and paints that had long been stored in the crawlspace under the caretaker's apartment, are now housed in an easily accessible area. The joy of such shared labor—when our efforts are so visible—is a vital antidote against the grimness of the day's news.

The children's program in Meeting has continued to grow this year. We all benefit from this as the children bring love and Light to us. There are broad smiles of members and attenders as we sing with our children and watch them share. We are grateful to have young families and dedicated leaders. First Day School is a balm for us all.

When the Israeli/Palestine conflict broke out in October, young adult attenders openly expressed their grief, and were led to coordinate a peace vigil to hold Israel and Palestine in the Light. The openness and response have increased witnessing in worship about the conflict and more focus on the peace testimony in the meeting.

Celo Friends Meeting Adult Religious Education Committee has utilized worship sharing groups, online readings and videos to explore the Vocal Ministry, The Testimony of Equality and Racial Justice, Quaker Eldering, and our history of Quaker Social Activism. These sessions deepen our personal relationships and also strengthen our understanding of our prophetic faith.

Racial Equity and Refugee support have been other concerns, through participation by some members in the SAYMA Racial Conflict Transformation program, reinstitution of the meetings' Racial Equity Committee, and Adult Religious Education programs and worship-sharing groups on racial justice. The approach to dealing with racism has been varied within the meeting and has created conflict with SAYMA, with two members withdrawing financial support from SAYMA (due to a lack of trust in the Uplifting Racial Justice Committee).

Our Meeting community has also been struggling to meet the increasingly complex needs of some of our older members with both bodily disease and mental pain. We have realized that our resources are limited despite our hearts being ready to help.

Celo Friends Meeting is a loving spiritual community, which is bolstered by our children and by our faith in each other.

## **Draft Job Description for the Potluck Committee**

March 15, 2024 (Current committee: Richard Martin, Peggy Tibbits, Jennie Boyd-Bull, Danny Blose)

The Potluck Committee ensures that each Sunday the dining room, kitchen and fellowship room are set up prior to the Meeting for Worship, that the food is organized and served, and that Margithaus is cleaned up after the potluck.

The committee will decide among themselves

- how to organize, i.e. who convenes this committee (this may change seasonally),
- who ensures there is someone assigned to host the potluck every week,
- how to arrange cover during absences,
- how people are trained,
- who makes sure the name of the potluck host is published in Saturday's update.

It is important that the committee undertakes to organize someone to complete the tasks on the checklist for every Sunday potluck.

### **Potluck Checklist**

#### **Set-up (before meeting for worship)**

Set out plates.

Set up folding table in the dining room.

Put fork container, cups, water and napkins at the end of the folding table closest to the sliding Door.

#### **Set-Up (after meeting for worship)**

Set up the second folding table in the Fellowship Room.

Put folding chairs around the table.

Set out dishes from the top shelf of the refrigerator or from the stove or oven. (Turn off burners and oven.)

Make sure dishes that need a serving utensil have one.

Remove lids and wraps.

#### **Dishes Prep**

Fill the First Rinse tub with water and a small amount of soap.

Wipe off cutting boards, stove and microwave.

Put the large cutting board over the left-hand burners.

If there is meat, set out the meat scraps compost bucket.

If there is food that will create a lot of compost (e.g. corn on the cob, a whole watermelon), set out the large compost bucket.

Start water in the sink.

Wash utensils used to prep food (e.g. knives).

## **The Last Leg**

Dry dishes.

Put away clean cups, napkins, etc.

Empty coffee grounds into the compost.

As possible move food from the table to the counter.

Put covers on dishes.

Wash utensils, pots, bowls, etc. that stay in Margithaus.

Wipe off surfaces (tables, counters, stove, microwave).

Put folding table in hall closet.

Put away folding chairs.

Rinse or wash recyclables (including bags). These may be left in the dish drainer.

Take out the compost if it is more than half full. Toss the meat compost in the woods.

Put away the coffee pot. Empty the electric kettle and put away.

Wash out First Rinse tub and compost bucket.

Put away toys.

Sweep up any messes.

Spot mop if needed. (Cloth is under the sink hanging on the drain pipe.)



Racial Equity Committee of Celo Friends Meeting, Minutes of Feb 26, 2024

In Attendance: Geeta McGahey and Lydia Wexler (Co-clerks), Jennie Boyd Bull, Gib Barrus, Cathy Henson, Erica Edwards and Joey Shade.

After a period of silence and introductions, Jennie gave an overview of the history of the REC committee and its activities. Some histories of Yancey County Schools integration, Camp Celo and Arthur Morgan School's history of integration were told, plus mention of our involvement with the local NAACP and Los Vecinos. The history of previous ownership of this land, local archeology study and plans for land acknowledgement were told. The REC purpose statement was read. The Committee expressed its desire to help the Lincoln Park historically black neighborhood in Burnsville retain its integrity as a community, which includes historic buildings, the historic Griffith Chapel church, the Oakcrest School, and a cemetery and ballfield.

Funds that Sam Maren administers thru AFSC are available to help in preventing certain properties, part of the original post-slavery land grant, be lost due to unpaid back taxes, over-valuation, and auction buy-outs by out of state people and others. The Committee feels that this effort is in agreement with its mission.

The immediate concern is an upcoming auction to be held March 14, 2024 of a "homeplace" property. Discussion was held of how best to prevent the loss of this property. Sam will attend the auction, and ballpark amounts were discussed, roughly \$15,000 towards the property to be auctioned (referred to as the "Kay Griffith" property) and \$9000 to the Ervin property, when the time comes for that. None of this \$ is coming from or through Celo Friends Meeting at present, but a line item could presumably be started thru CFM to accept donations and any funds raised in future, under the right conditions.

More discussion will be held on that subject in later meetings.

The Lincoln Park folks are looking into setting up a non-profit with 501.3c status for Historic Preservation. Jennie will research local historic preservationists. The next meeting was set for March 13, 2024, just prior to the aforementioned auction, at Griffith Chapel, Burnsville.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Wexler.

Racial Equity Committee meeting

Minutes 3/13/2024, held at Griffith Chapel with Lincoln Park Community members.

In attendance, Geeta McGahey, Lydia Wexler, Gib Barrus, Annie Barrus, Jennie Boyd Bull, Sam Maren, Cathy Henson, Joey Shade, Erica Edwards, André\_\_\_\_\_, and Ellen Denker.

The "Kay Griffith" property will be auctioned on 3/14/2024. Various ideas were proposed for the ongoing preservation of the historically-black Lincoln Park community. Ellen Denker, who has worked with the "Traditional Voices" group in Burnsville has prepared "Lincoln Park Remembers" with Sam Maren. She is interested in getting landmark status for certain historic buildings under the state Historic Preservation office.

Erica is working on starting a non profit for Lincoln Park.

Joey will put up personal money at the auction tomorrow (depending on bids/circumstances) and Sam will be there to back him up financially using the AFSC fund he administers, if necessary.

The next meeting will be on April 10th, 2024 at 5.30 pm, at Griffith Chapel.

Recorded by Lydia Wexler

## Climate Statement

### Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA)

The Religious Society of Friends **bears** witness to the truth of our times. In this moment, we recognize that we are facing an existential crisis that requires a response greater than individual actions. The systemic structures as well as the daily choices of peoples, governments and faith communities across the globe must act in radical concert to address the climate catastrophe we have created.

World leaders will come together for the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (COP29). SAYMA calls on them to acknowledge that the burning of fossil fuels is the primary cause of the climate crisis, and to recognize that many of the nations that are hardest hit by a warming climate have been the least responsible for the crisis and are least able to cope with the consequences. We call on COP29 to clearly state that the existential crisis of climate change requires more than merely an orderly transition. **~~We must end our use of fossil fuels by 2030.~~** We call on COP29 negotiators to commit to fully finance the Loss and Damage Fund to compensate developing countries, and the Green Climate Fund to implement renewable solutions in developing countries.

**We recognize the need to end our use of fossil fuels. We also recognize their ubiquity in our lives. We strive to take the difficult steps to end their use and develop sustainable alternatives.** The continued burning of fossil fuels is destabilizing the climate, acidifying oceans, and destroying the natural systems that humans and all living creatures depend on. Friends in the Southern Appalachian region are guided by our query for Care of the Earth that asks “How do I hold in the Light the impact of climate change on the 'least of these,' the vulnerable members of the human, animal, and plant communities?”

Every Friend, household, and meeting in our community is asked to be responsive to this query and we all ask our neighbors around the world to take immediate and practical steps to reverse our dependence on fossil fuels and demonstrate a communal reverence for interdependent life.

*This statement has been brought forward by SAYMA's Earth Justice Committee, which plays the essential role of helping SAYMA be accountable to our commitment. We acknowledge the work of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and PYM's Climate Witness Stewards, from which we have drawn much of the language in this statement.*