

## **Minutes: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**

December 21, 2025

**Present:** Chip Poston (clerk) Judy Scheckle, Barb Wulff, Geeta McGahey, Joni Thibault, Brian Yaffee, Annie Barrus, Gib Barrus, Jennie Boyd Bull, Gib Barrus, Bob McGahey, Joyce Johnson, Lydia Wexler, Lisa Rose (recording).

*The meeting opened with a period of silent worship.*

### **M&C Report, Bob McGahey**

This month's query: In this season, what are the spiritual gifts of rest?

- Joni Thibault will serve as interim convener of the ARE Committee
- Gratitude is expressed to Jennie Boyd Bull for her service on M&C
- Regarding transportation to SAYF retreats: Parents are coordinating transportation

### **Treasurer's Update, Chip Poston, for Jo Ann Fernald**

The Finance Committee consulted the guidelines for discernment of scholarship requests. Two requests have been received:

1. Request for Natasha Shannon to attend "Playing in the Light of Godly Play. **Approved.**
2. Request by an attender to attend an online certified soil food web lab tech program. The finance committee was unable to approve this request and instead suggests a Go Fund Me be established where Friends may make donations for this training. A Friend suggests that in light of this requests' alignment with the testimony on earthcare, we give \$500 matching funds from the education fund. We were not able to reach unity; this request will be sent back to Finance for final consideration.

*Committee report attached.*

### **Nominating Committee, Chip Poston for Donna Idol**

A Strawberry Creek Meeting will be held on 1/25 at 1:15 pm to listen for guidance on filling the Finance Clerk/Treasurer position, an M&C position, and SAYMA Representative.

- First naming of Soleste Star for Finance Committee.

*Committee report attached.*

### **Margithaus Caretaker Ad Hoc Committee, Barb Wulff**

The caretaker job description has been updated with minor changes and is attached in draft form. The job announcement will be distributed, with emphasis on this being a service job and we are seeking a person who is involved and committed to the Meeting. Interested parties should contact Barb. and candidates will be interviewed by the committee. See Barb, Geeta, Joni, Jo Ann Fernald or Judy with any questions. **Draft job description approved.**

*Committee report attached.*

### **Post-Helene interviews, Gib Barrus**

Jeffrey Howard, a journalist from NYU's journalism school, is interested in interviewing Celo Friends' responses to Hurricane Helene. He also has been visiting Swannanoa Valley Friends

Meeting. He is interested in learning how worship, community life have been affected, and what long term recovery looks like. He stated a desire to share the story with a wider Quaker and Appalachian audience. Gib Barrus will be the liaison with Mr. Howard, and Bob and Geeta McGahey have offered housing if other Friends will offer meals.

*Request attached.*

### **FDS Committee, Gib Barrus**

Three names were presented as child care volunteers last month: Barb Wulff, Opal Felts (Jonah and Gretchen's daughter), and Mattias Kelly (Ray Brommer's grandson). **Approved.**

### **Maintenance Committee - Gib Barrus**

Correction to last month's B&G report, the 3rd bullet point should read: A mini-split will not be installed in the FDS building, but an electrical upgrade is needed to facilitate the use of space heaters.

- The electrical work has been completed by Kevin Freeman and the heater has been repaired.
- The septic tank was pumped.
- Felix Stith has inspected the trees on the playground.

### **SAYMA Representative Meeting - Lydia Wexler**

- Eight Meetings are now participating in Representative Meetings. Cohort four of the Racial Conflict Transformation training will be resuming in January. More information on [sayma.org](http://sayma.org).
- SAYMA received a large donation and there is now a budget surplus. In light of the loss of monthly meetings, there will be a need for increased assessments for 2026. We request the Finance Committee clarify the amount with SAYMA.
- The new clerk is Jennifer Dickie from Atlanta and Jeremiah Gold-Hopton from Atlanta is Assistant Clerk.
- Lydia's two-year term is now finished, she has enjoyed and recommends this job. She is willing to continue on an interim basis if necessary.

*The minutes of Representative Meeting are available at [sayma.org](http://sayma.org).*

### **Announcements**

- **Ad Hoc Cherokee Relations Committee - Bob McGahey**  
The first meeting of the committee was held Dec 17th. The committee's purpose is the conservation and protection of Tribal Interest Areas. A field trip is being planned with the older children in FDS.
- **Peace Pole, Gib Barrus**  
A monument with "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in many languages was offered to the Meeting. A specific proposal will be brought to next month's meeting.
- **FWCC Committee Meeting, Geeta McGahey**  
In November, Geeta attended a meeting of regional coordinators from North, Central and South America in El Salvador. Geeta was particularly moved by the words, "Love is not

an emotion, it is a choice” in a sermon by the new editor of Friends Journal. Theresa Onofrio was Geeta’s travel companion and attended some of the church services.

- **Eileen Flanagan Visit, Joni Thibault**

Eileen is the author of Common Ground. She is holding a book event Feb 21st, and is offering the possibility of a workshop for the Meeting the afternoon of Feb 22nd, with a variety of possible topics available. This will be added to next month’s MFB.

- **Ride Share Program, Jennie Boyd Bull**

A group of Friends, working closely with Esperanza group, is helping our Hispanic neighbors with transportation to appointments. Contact Jennie for further information.

These minutes were approved in the face of the Meeting.

*We closed with a period of worshipful silence.*

*Respectfully submitted, Lisa Rose*

**Appended:**

- Request for Post-Helene Interviews

**Coming soon:**

- Treasurer’s Update
- Nominating Committee Report
- Margithaus Committee Ad Hoc Committee Report

## Request for Post-Helene Interviews

Dear Friends of Celo Friends Meeting,

I'm a journalist based in Morganton, North Carolina, and a graduate student in NYU's journalism school. I'm working on a story about how Quaker meetings in Western North Carolina have experienced and responded to Hurricane Helene and what recovery has looked like more than a year later. (I've also been visiting the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting on occasion during the past year.)

I know that while Celo Friends Meeting's meetinghouse itself was spared, the surrounding community and Camp Celo were hit very hard by Helene, with roads, homes, and the camp suffering major damage. I've read some of the public updates and watched the recent "Still Rising" video about Camp Celo's recovery, and I've been deeply moved by the way Friends and neighbors have come together to clean up, rebuild, and care for one another.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to speak with Celo Friends who are willing to share:

What the storm/flooding and its immediate aftermath were like for you and the wider Celo community

How worship, community life, and mutual aid have evolved since Helene

What long-term recovery looks and feels like now—spiritually, emotionally, and practically

My intention is to tell this story with care and accuracy, highlighting both the losses and the resilience in your meeting and community. I'm hoping to share it with a wider Quaker and Appalachian audience, so others can better understand how small faith communities are living through and responding to climate disasters.

If you are open to talking, or can help connect me with Friends who might be, I would be very grateful. I'm happy to meet over Zoom, by phone, or in person if that's feasible, and I'm glad to share more details about the story and answer any questions before we speak.

Thank you for considering this request, and for the faithful way you have been walking together through such a hard season.

In Friendship,  
Jeffrey Howard  
Morganton, NC