

Committees and Clerking

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This presentation relies on *Instructions for the Assembly and Operation of Quaker Committees 1981*, prepared for Haddonfield Meeting, and the information available to us all on the Haddonfield Meeting website.

Why Committees?

They are the organizational framework through which the Meeting operates

They carry out the work and forward the concerns of our Meeting members

They must reflect the concerns of Friends and have the support and interest of the membership

What helps Committees succeed?

Good leadership

Members who:

- Understand their duties and responsibilities

- Are committed to the mission of their committees

Responsibilities of a Committee Member

Attend all committee meetings. If you can't attend for any reason, notify the clerk by phone or email.

Be on Time. Lateness is unfair to others

Come to committee meetings with ideas, suggestions and concerns

Give full attention to the business at hand. Avoid side-bar conversations, **Changing the Subject**, etc

Carry out your assignments

Resign if the committee work proves not to be of interest or it is impossible to attend regularly

Resignations

Resignations are made to the monthly meeting, not nominating committee or the clerk of the committee on which you serve. However, it would be appropriate to let your committee clerk know that you need to resign.

Resignations should be addressed to the meeting clerk and should indicate the reason for your resignation

Please don't just stop showing up

What's Good About Committee Service?

Committees help our community to function well. Good programs happen. The property is well-kept. Our finances are in order.

Serving on committees helps us all to feel that we are part of the community, working toward common goals.

Standing Committees of Haddonfield Meeting

Nominating Committee – brings to the business meeting suggested names for all standing committees. These nominations are usually accepted without question so it is important that members of this committee are familiar with the membership and with the functions of each committee.

Consequently nominating is extremely important and should not be self-perpetuating. Care Committee nominates to the nominating committee. (In other meetings nominating committee members may be chosen by the meeting at large.)

Nominating needs to staff every committee and involve as many members and regular attenders as possible.

Care Committee

Maintain official list of members and attenders

Handle questions of membership – membership inquiries from attenders, release of members, transfers, inactive members

Provide pastoral care for those who are ill or who have other concerns

Organize clearness committees for weddings and other matters

Provide a framework for conflict resolution

Worship and Ministry

Has responsibility for the quality of meeting for worship

Works to enhance the quality of oral ministry when needed

Organizes programs to help advance the spiritual growth of members and attenders

Discerns other opportunities for worship such as Meetings for Healing

Works with individual members to support their spiritual leadings

Religious Education

Establishes the yearly curriculum for “First Day School” programs for adults that advance ongoing education as to how we can apply Quaker testimonies and practice in our lives and educate us as to the work of the wider Quaker world.

Similarly provides programs for children that are both fun and educational. These programs provide spiritual growth for our children and instruct them concerning Quaker history and values

Peace and Social Concerns

Help members to implement the Peace Testimony

Educate members and attenders on current concerns regarding peace and social justice

Support the leadings of individual members in their peace and justice work

When appropriate, bring these concerns to the wider membership for its support

Finance Committee

Provide oversight of the meetings' finances

Provide regular reports to members and attenders concerning the meetings' financial situation

Encourage contributions from members and attenders

Prepares the annual budget and brings it to meeting for approval

Ministry of Child Life

Integrate children fully into the life of the meeting. This includes the spiritual, educational and community life of the meeting.

Provide oversight of childcare: make sure it is available for worship and other meeting events. Serve as supervisors for the childcare staff.

This committee would coordinate with Care, Religious Education, Membership and Community and Worship and Ministry as needed.

Property Committee

Provide care of the physical property of the meeting. This includes the meetinghouse, caretakers' house, the burial ground and other lands and gardens around the meetinghouse, keeping in mind its historic nature.

Provide general care of appliances, equipment and general “orphan clutter”

Define job description for the meeting custodian, hire and provide oversight of him/her.

Maintaining contracts with all 3rd party service providers. Keep us “up to code”.

Provide oversight of rental of meeting property for outside events.

Communication and Outreach

Manage the meeting website and information technology

Provide publicity for meeting events to other meetings, congregations and/or local publications

Maintain and use meeting email list to disseminate information

Oversee presence on community worship directories

Develop social media opportunities

Work with Council of Churches representative to promote involvement in events

Membership and Community

Keep the meeting list updated in terms of correct contact information

Greet visitors and keep the guest book

Organize social events to help members and attenders to get better acquainted and create a greater sense of community

Reach out to new attenders and better introduce those interested to the life of the meeting

Help to integrate ongoing attenders into committee work and eventual membership if appropriate

Communicate with distant Friends

Memorial Service and Graveyard

Begin the process of informing members if a member of the community dies

Reaching out to meeting families to provide assistance as they deal with issues regarding burial or cremation and a memorial service

Maintain burial records for our burial ground

Provide oversight of memorial services

Providing receptions or coordinating with the family for receptions after memorial services

Library Group

A small group that provides care of our library:

- Catalog books

- Choose and purchase new books for the library

- Periodically “prune” books that are no longer of interest

- Inform members of new books for reading

Responsibilities of A Committee Clerk

The first order of business for any committee each year is to select a clerk. Careful reflection should be given to this. It should not be simply the person who wants the job or who has done it before. (if a committee cannot select its own clerk then nominating committee will designate a convenor.)

A recording clerk should be selected as well. Minutes need not be a literary masterpiece but should note the major business conducted, decisions approved. Good minutes help future committees and help the current committee prepare its annual report.

Responsibilities of A Committee Clerk

Inform members of the time and place of each meeting

Start the meeting on time. Delaying for latecomers promotes more latecoming

Start with a period of worship – not a moment of silence

Prepare an agenda and share with the members. At the start of the meeting ask if there are additions or questions in regard to the agenda.

Keep the discussion focused on the item of business under consideration

Develop ways for encouraging contributions from more silent members and for avoiding monopolization by more talkative members

Responsibilities of A Committee Clerk

Keep the decision making process moving forward – try to avoid rambling dissertations and rehashing of points already made

Summarize each decision before it has final approval to be certain that all present understand it

When appropriate, assign specific duties to individual members to be reported on at a subsequent meeting

Set a time for adjournment and close the meeting promptly. Important items should be covered first on the agenda. Less important items can be held for a later meeting if necessary.

Most Important

The clerk and members should function in an atmosphere of love and fellowship in search for right action.

A sense of humor is an asset. Often tense situations can be relieved by a humorous comment

Leave your personal agenda at home and remain open to the light in making decisions within your committee and in the meeting at large.

The Meeting Clerk

The Meeting Clerk functions much like a committee clerk in organizing the business of the meeting but of course on a broader scale.