

Haddonfield Monthly Meeting
Called Meeting for Worship for Business
2012-02-05

MINUTES

Connie and Bob Brookes clerked the meeting in the absence of Drew Biehl.

Bob Brookes introduced the issue to be addressed in this meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting will be discontinuing financial support for all of its Quarterly Meetings' staff positions, beginning next July. Doing so will impact the Haddonfield Quarter staff position held by Priscilla Adams for the past 26 years. If the Quarter were to assume complete financial responsibility for Priscilla's full-time staff position next July, it is estimated that the annual cost (salary, benefits, and program costs such as travel expense) would total about \$75,000. That amount is about \$30,000 more than Monthly Meetings currently commit to the Quarter to support her work. On January 22, Haddonfield Quarter conducted a Threshing Session to consider actions going forward with respect to this staff position. At the conclusion of the Quarter's Threshing Session, queries were formulated for considering the position along with the current job description for distribution to each Monthly Meeting for discernment. The Meetings were asked to report back to the next Quarterly Meeting. The purpose of Haddonfield Monthly Meeting's Called Meeting for Worship for Business was to address these Queries.

Bob read the Framing Questions put forth by the Quarterly Meeting Threshing Session:

WHAT IS THE WORK OF HADDONFIELD QUARTER?

HOW SHOULD OUR WORK BE DONE?

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?

**WHAT THE WORK OF HADDONFIELD QUARTER IS
—OR SHOULD BE—OR COULD BE...**

Elements most frequently mentioned by Friends during Threshing Session:

Outreach / Membership

Social Justice Programs

Youth Programs

Pastoral Care

Quarter Participation

NOTE: Priscilla Adams has always said: “My work is to help Friends put their faith into action.”

HOW SHOULD THE QUARTER’S WORK BE DONE?

SUGGESTED ROLE OF THE QUARTER

- As a Quarter, we need to work at being better connected, and have better fellowship and communication.
- Reinstate written Annual Reports from Monthly Meetings.
- Revive Worship and Ministry Committee at the Quarter level, with a yearly report.
- Establish an Inter-visitation Committee for the Quarter
- Establish a Quarterly body intended to strengthen the connection to the Yearly Meeting.
- Establish committees at the Quarter level which mirror the committees of the Monthly Meetings. The initial members could be clerks or their representatives from the same committee at the Monthly.
- It is important to keep good records and to encourage the work of the committees.

Connie read the Queries that were generated at the Threshing Session, a copy of which are attached hereto.

The Meeting settled into a period of silent worship. Following are some of the messages that were shared.

- Priscilla sees her responsibility to be that of a facilitator rather than a “doer.” The investment in her salary therefore generates activity by many more Friends than just one staff person. Priscilla coordinates actions by other individuals in the Quarter rather than doing the work itself.
- A large part of Priscilla’s work is coordinating the delivery of pastoral care to members of the Quarter. Because of the confidential nature of these issues, she often puts people in touch with resources in other monthly meetings. This is a valuable and not well known activity.
- Does having a staff person relieve individuals from carrying out their responsibilities in carrying out the peace testimony of Friends? AFSC discontinued its activities in PYM areas where Quarterly Meetings have paid staff. Should the mission of the Quarter be converted to doing the tasks that Priscilla has been accomplishing?

- Priscilla is able to work sensitively among individuals. For example, in the Garden Project, there is no distinction between volunteers from the Quarter and the women in the criminal justice system. The officials now trust Priscilla enough to no longer require a phone call on a land line to communicate that the women involved had reached the site.
- Is it really a good idea for the Quarter to have full committees, given the difficulty that monthly meetings have now in staffing their committees?
- Financial concerns need to be addressed. Should Priscilla's position become a part-time position? Should Priscilla be retained as a consultant on an hourly basis? Then the Quarter would not have the responsibilities of payroll tax withholding.

The Meeting settled into worship for a few minutes to consider how the position(s) of Priscilla and her successor should be defined. Then additional messages were received:

- We should come up with a job description. Without it there can be no oversight or accountability.
- Priscilla has the largeness of heart and vision that we want in a Coordinator. She works far more than the 40 hours per week for which she is paid. Are we exploiting our employee?
- Coordinating volunteer activities, like painting the kitchen at Newton Meeting, is a lot of work. This is not an area that should be cut for financial reasons.
- The costs of benefits to employees and the administrative responsibilities of employers. Benefit issues must be identified and addressed. Retaining Priscilla as an independent contractor would relieve the Quarterly Meeting of many of these liabilities. Perhaps the Quarter could contribute sufficient funds to PYM to keep her on the PYM staff and benefit package. Is there a way for PYM to lay off staff but continue to provide payroll and other administrative services?
- It is not the responsibility of a monthly meeting to draft a job description; that would be the responsibility of the Quarterly Meeting.
- Priscilla doesn't have a job, she has a ministry. This ministry cannot be described in a job description.
- We should clarify what role we want the Coordinator to serve. After that time we can focus on a job description. At the next called meeting for worship for business we should consider the top two or three functions we want her to fill.

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business concluded with a period of worship.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Kane Williams, Recording Clerk.