

## **Business Meeting for Blue River Quarterly**

Minutes for 9/24/2005

Dubois Center, near Mt. Vernon, IL

### *Attending:*

- Bloomington Normal Friends Meeting (BNFM) - Michael Dennis, Beth Schobernd
- Clear Creek Friends Meeting (CCFM) - Grayce Mesner, Neil Mesner
- Columbia Friends Meeting (CFM) - David Finke, Robert Wixom, Pat Wixom
- Decatur Friends Worship Group - no one present
- Rolla Preparative Meeting of Friends (RPM) - no one present
- St. Louis Friends Meeting (SLFM) - Steve Hinson, Margaret Katranides, Dawn Rubbert
- Southern Illinois Friends Meeting (SIFM) - Dawn Amos, Lisa Johnson Zee, Carolyn Zee
- Springfield Worship Group (SWG) - no one present
- Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting (UCFM) - Mariellen Gilpin, Charlotte Green, Sharon Haworth, Peter Lasersohn

*Clerk:* Peter Lasersohn

*Recording:* Michael Dennis (BNFM)

### *Opening*

Meeting began with silent worship.

Michael Dennis read the minutes for the 4/16/05 business meeting, which had not been approved at that time. The minutes were approved. *Continuing business:*

- A letter has been composed and sent to monthly meetings outlining reasons for attending Blue River Quarterly and the value of presenting a written state of society report.
- Dawn Rubbert made the requested minor revisions to the letter recommending a Department of Peace and forwarded them to several congressional representatives. She is continuing to follow-up on this and will try to reach all in the IYM geographic area. BRQ took this issue to IYM and encouraged them to follow suit.
- Margaret Katranides reported that southern small meetings have scheduled the fall 2006 BRQ m 9/15-17 at Camp Brimshire, in Missouri.

### *State of Society*

The following informal reports were offered:

- Bloomington Normal Friends Meeting (BNFM) - no report
- Clear Creek Friends Meeting (CC) - Grayce Mesner reported that they lost Clance Wilson this year, which was very hard. They have continued to follow through with Becky Morris, and continue to seek clemency. CC continues to host a regional meeting on the

first First-Day of the month. The renovations continue on the yearly meeting house. Decatur worship group has transferred all of their membership to Clear Creek, and is meeting with Springfield worship group once a month. No one has heard anything about Macomb worship group. Clear Creek hosted the FWCC Midwest Gathering and IYM Environmental Concerns Committee, which met jointly in September.

- Columbia (COL) Friends Meeting - David Finke reported they are in the process of concluding their Sabbath year, have suspended many committees and are trying to focus more on spirituality. Maurine Pyle, accompanied by Margaret Katranides, will lead a spiritual retreat to try to recap the year on the first and last weekends of 10th month. The meeting has had three weddings conducted under their oversight and this has led to more people being involved with meetings and a new member. Anyone who is interested in getting a copy of their newsletter should contact David Finke <dfinke@coin.org>. They are reopening the question of same sex marriage. The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) has a strong local leadership in their meeting. Please hold Garry Walden in your heart; he has congestive heart failure himself and has an ailing mother at home. Next week the meeting will participate in the Columbia Peace Works gathering.
- Peoria Galesburg - no report
- Rolla - no report.
- Saint Louis (STL) Friends Meeting - They are still struggling with mold and bad acoustics. One wedding is in progress in Tennessee and one divorce is in progress. The Meeting has revived their Unity with Nature committee, and Established an Adult Religious Education committee. A nurse with trauma experience has a leading to go south to help hurricane survivors and Meeting is providing support for him and his family. Plans are under the way to collaborate with other churches to help hurricane evacuees in the St. Louis area. Landscape and Grounds committee has worked with the Meeting's neighbors to beautify their joint property fronts with native plants. They continue to raise money for Quaker-run schools in Burundi. They were visited by Cecile Nyiramana, who attended AVP workshops in Rwanda, run by the African Great Lakes Initiative, and then began a program bringing together women survivors of genocide with women relatives of men who are in prison accused of genocide. Anna Sandidge is coming to the end of her 3 month stay in Rwanda, working with AGLI.
- Southern (So) Illinois Friends Meeting - They have had increased attendance at meeting for worship, up to 18 attenders at one time. They have been working on their bylaws and handbook, discerning who they are and how they wish to describe themselves to the outside world. They have an interesting fall with lots of opportunity to unite them, including trying to decide their relationship with the coalition that owns the building where they meet. All of their older high school kids are males turning 18, so they have been holding CO training. Tomorrow they hope to unite behind a new clerk and recording

clerk (a Young Friend!). They have recently had a divorce that still affects the Meeting, and the son of that couple was in a bad car accident. Two adults and two children went to the FGC Gathering, and they have hosted a visitor from FWCC. They have a new baby adopted into the meeting.

- Urbana Champaign - They have two new members who are about to get married under the care of meeting. The study group has been reading J. Brent Bill's "Holy Silence: The Gift of Quaker Spirituality". They held two special events in connection with the anniversary of Hiroshima; many were held in collaboration with 17 other area churches.

### *Treasurer's Report*

Grayce Mesner distributed a treasurer's report showing a starting balance of \$847.46, deposits of \$1227.10, and expenses of \$354.03, for an ending balance of \$1720.53. The report was accepted. In the absence of a nominee for treasurer, Grayce offered to stay on and meeting joyfully accepted.

### *Other Business*

1. Two monthly meetings (Bloomington-Normal, Peoria-Galesburg) have not been sending reports or regularly attending BRQ. Mariellen Gilpin, Peter Lasersohn, David Finke & Dawn Rubbert were asked to draft a letter of concern to let them know that we miss them and to offer support.
2. David Finke noted that two BRQ friends (Ruth Raffensperger and Greg Woods) attended the World Gathering of Young Friends. They will be glad to visit our Meetings to report on their experience.
3. Appointments. We are off cycle on nominating and terms. Meeting agreed to have nominating committee named in the fall meeting of even years, reports in the spring meeting of odd years, with terms beginning with the rise of the meeting where the nominating committee report is accepted. The current terms will end at the rise of meeting in Spring of 2007. Subsequent terms will run for two years.
4. Peter Lasersohn has set up a formal minute book with copies of back minutes. Meeting praises his diligence.
5. Charlotte Green read a minute from Urbana Champaign opposing nuclear power and asked that BRQ do the same. Meeting agreed and approved the following minute:

The Blue River Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends opposes the use of nuclear power as an energy source for the following reasons:

- adverse health effects of radiation from routine radioactive releases from nuclear power plants;
- danger of a nuclear reactor accident to humans and all species
- no safe place to store radioactive wastes
- the connection between nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

Blue River Quarterly Meeting promotes reducing the demand for energy through conservation and increasing the use of renewable energy sources.

6. Charlotte Green shared a letter sent by Urbana-Champaign Meeting to representatives in the U.S. Congress, asking them to support the Religious Freedom Tax Fund bill, to allow people to opt out of war taxes as conscientious objectors. BRQ agreed to have the clerk modify the letter to read BRQ and send it in our behalf.

7. Division of BRQ planning group into two parts - this proposal was held over from IYM's summer session to the October continuing committee. The proposal was circulated. BRQ agreed with reallocating one Chicago meeting from the northern to the southern group, but recommended against: 1) assigning cleanup responsibility to an "ad hoc" group at the end of IYM, and 2) breaking up BRQ (would make two much smaller groups). We prefer to stay with the same three planning groups, but to work to make them of approximately the same size, based on the number of IYM attendees who would be actually available for planning (i.e., excluding elderly coming in for just the Plummer lecture).

8. Friends approved sponsoring a float trip in the Spring of 2006.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

### **Business Meeting for Blue River Quarterly**

Minutes for 9/25/2005

Dubois Center, Mt. Vernon, IL

#### *Attending:*

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*Clerk:* Peter Lasersohn

*Recording:* Michael Dennis (BNFM)

Peter read the attached letter to BNFM and PGFM, expressing our concern about the lack of contact with them, to let them know that we miss them and to offer support. The meeting approved the letter. Mariellen said she feels led to visit these Meetings on behalf of BRQ, and asked permission to submit expenses for travel to the BRQ Treasurer. Meeting approved.

*Next Meetings:*

- Spring BRQ meeting will be held on April 28-30, Camp CILCA, Illinois. Small Northern Meetings will be responsible for planning.
- Southern small meetings have scheduled the fall 2006 BRQ on 9/15-17 at Camp Brimshire, Mo. Small Southern Meetings will be responsible for planning.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

*Letter to Bloomington Normal Friends Meeting  
and Peoria Galesburg Friends Meeting*

Beloved Friends,

We miss your presence at Blue River Quarterly. We don't know how you are doing. Can you give us any news of your meeting and how it fares? We wonder whether you are meeting regularly for worship and business, whether you are finding ways to grow the meeting, whether you are tender to the movement of the Spirit among you, and whether the presence of the Spirit is palpable in your meetings for worship. How do you see the present state of your meeting and its corporate functioning as a monthly meeting within Blue River Quarterly and Illinois Yearly Meeting?

We are ready to help in whatever ways would best meet your needs. For instance, would you welcome visitors from nearby meetings? Would having support in the planning of a retreat in \_\_\_\_\_ be of interest? Friends, please let us know how things are with you and whether we can be of assistance.

Blue River Quarterly Meeting of Friends  
Peter Lasersohn, clerk