

## Historical Changes in the Function of Quarterly Meetings Illinois Yearly Meeting Workshop, 2006

**Plan:** Review changes in the officially listed functions and responsibilities of quarterly meetings in London Yearly Meeting to 1783, Baltimore and Ohio Valley Yearly Meetings to 1875, and Illinois Yearly Meeting to the present; discuss implications of these changes for current and future quarterly meetings in IYM.

**Why these yearly meetings and these dates?** Illinois Yearly Meeting was established in 1875 and initially consisted of two quarterly meetings, which had previously been part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting (known at that time as Indiana Yearly Meeting), respectively. For early history, we examine policies in London Yearly Meeting, which were more-or-less normative for the entire Society of Friends.

**Sources:** For London Yearly Meeting, I examined the 1783 volume *Extracts from the Minutes and Advices of the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London, From its First Institution*. This was the first Friends policies-and-procedures manual, and formed the basis for later books of discipline. As the title suggests, it consisted of extracts from yearly meeting minutes and epistles, setting forth policies, procedures and other advice to Friends and constituent meetings. Each passage is dated, so it is possible to track the historical course of disciplinary policy, including the developing role of quarterly meetings. This volume is available on-line, at the Earlham School of Religion's "Digital Quaker Collection," <<http://www.esr.earlham.edu/dqc/index.html>>.

For Baltimore and Ohio Valley Yearly Meetings, I used their published disciplines. Baltimore published its discipline in 1806, with revisions in 1821, 1844 and 1860; Ohio Valley published its discipline in 1835 with a revision in 1849. The Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting discipline was based directly on the Ohio Yearly Meeting discipline, which had been based directly on the Baltimore Yearly Meeting discipline, so all these volumes differ only in detail. They were republished in 1999 as part of *The Old Discipline: Nineteenth Century Friends' Disciplines in America*, Quaker Heritage Press.

For Illinois Yearly Meeting, I used published disciplines, minutes and handbooks. The original IYM discipline was published in 1878, with a revision in 1892. The Handbook was first published in 1965, with multiple revisions since then.

In 1927, Illinois Yearly Meeting adopted the "Uniform Discipline" of Friends General Conference. In 1957, it adopted the 1955 edition of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*, with a paste-in sheet detailing differences in practice between Illinois and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. In 1991, IYM adopted the 1972 edition of PYM's *Faith and Practice* "as a working document," and in 1999 "affirmed the use" of the 1997 edition, "except where past IYM practice differs significantly." These documents were therefore also examined.

**Some Background on Historical Patterns of Organization:** It should be kept in mind that for much of the history of Quakerism, each quarterly meeting (and each monthly meeting, yearly meeting, etc.) really consisted of three separate organizations: a *men's meeting*, a *women's meeting*, and a *meeting of ministers and elders*.

Differences in responsibility between men's and women's quarterly meetings are slightly obscure, and will not be dealt with in detail here. With the exception of Baltimore 1806, the disciplines I examined did not list separate responsibilities for men's and women's quarterly meetings. Baltimore 1806 lists several specific responsibilities for women's quarterly meetings, but finishes the list vaguely with "they are to attend to those matters which may properly come under the notice and care of Women's Quarterly Meetings." The entire list is deleted in subsequent editions of the discipline.

It should be recognized that through much of this period, men's and women's *monthly* meetings were not completely equal: only the men's monthly meeting could finalize disownments. By extension, and inferring from the Baltimore 1806 list, it seems likely that men's and women's quarterly meetings differed in their authority to handle appeals of disownments; but this appears nowhere to be stated explicitly.

The Illinois Yearly Meeting discipline of 1878 is explicit that men's and women's meetings at all levels are equal, and that the concurrence of both is necessary in all decisions.

Meetings of ministers and elders existed at the monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting levels. (At the monthly meeting level, these were known as "preparative meetings of ministers and elders.") Ministers and elders meetings were generally replaced by committees on ministry and counsel (or the like) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their functions are given in more detail below.

## Quarterly Meeting Timeline

- 1656** “And about this time I was moved to sett uppe ye mens Quarterly meetinges throughout ye nation though in ye north they was settled before.” — Fox’s Journal, Penney edition p. 267. (In contrast, the systematic establishment of monthly meetings began in 1666; the first session of London Yearly Meeting is usually given as 1668.)
- 1671** Fox urges systematic establishment of women’s business meetings.
- 1819** Blue River Quarterly Meeting, consisting of two monthly meetings in southern Indiana, is established as part of Ohio Yearly Meeting.
- 1821** The western parts of Ohio Yearly meeting, including Blue River Quarterly, become Indiana Yearly Meeting.
- 1828** Hicksite separation in Baltimore and Indiana Yearly Meetings, including Blue River Quarterly. (Hicksite branch of Indiana Yearly Meeting is renamed Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting in 1976.)
- 1866** Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting, consisting of three monthly meetings in Iowa, is established as part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.
- 1875** Blue River and Prairie Grove Quarterly Meetings join to form Illinois Yearly Meeting.
- 1884** Blue River and Prairie Grove Quarterly Meetings both combine their men’s and women’s business meetings.
- 1889** Nebraska Half-Yearly Meeting is established as part of IYM, consisting of two monthly meetings previously part of Prairie Grove Quarterly. The minutes state that the half-yearly meeting “in its scope and duties shall be identical with a Quarterly Meeting in every respect except to the time of holding it.”
- 1912** Nebraska Half-Yearly Meeting is laid down, as one of its two monthly meetings closes. The other is moved back into Prairie Grove Quarterly.
- 1920** Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting holds its last session. It continues to exist on paper for years afterwards, and has still never been officially laid down.
- 1939** Blue River Quarterly Meeting begins holding one of its four annual sessions jointly with Chicago Quarterly Meeting of Western Yearly Meeting.
- 1940** The last monthly meeting in Prairie Grove Quarterly is quietly dropped from IYM directories after years of inactivity. Illinois Yearly Meeting is now coextensive with Blue River Quarterly.
- 1952** Blue River Quarterly Meeting is formally dissolved, and two new quarterly meetings are established, corresponding roughly to the northern and southern halves of the yearly meeting. The northern quarterly takes the name Fox Valley Quarterly Meeting; the southern meeting takes the name of the old quarterly, Blue River Quarterly Meeting. Fox Valley continues the tradition of holding some, and eventually all, of its meetings jointly with Chicago Quarterly Meeting.
- 1960** Northern Half Yearly Meeting is set off from Fox Valley Quarterly.
- 1962** Blue River Quarterly drops to a three-times-a-year schedule as one of its four monthly meetings finds hosting to be too burdensome.
- 1967** Blue River Quarterly drops to a twice-a-year schedule.
- 1970** Fox Valley Quarterly Meeting is merged into the newly established Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting. According to IYM minutes: “Chicago General Meeting is a new organization taking the place to some extent of the Quarterly Meetings in the Chicago area which were formerly attached to Illinois Yearly Meeting, Western Yearly Meeting, or both. The group meets for sharing, worship and concerns, with a de-emphasizing of business except as the business of Friends is their concern with the social health of the World.”
- 1975** Northern Half Yearly Meeting becomes Northern Yearly Meeting, separating from IYM.
- 1991** Blue River Quarterly begins holding its meetings as weekend retreats at camps or retreat centers, rather than one-day meetings at local meetinghouses. (Some experiments with this format had already been made in the early 1970’s.)

## Official Functions of Quarterly Meetings

### 1. Taking Reports from Monthly Meetings, and Reporting to the Yearly Meeting

#### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1681:* Reports of sufferings are to be read first in quarterly meeting, before being forwarded to the yearly meeting. *1692:* Quarterly meetings are required to answer three queries annually to the yearly meeting. *1696:* Eight additional queries are added to the list which quarterly meetings are to answer. *1755:* Monthly meetings are required to answer nine specific queries at each quarterly meeting. *1761:* Monthly meetings must give their answers to queries in writing, and the answers must be “full and explicit.”

#### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

*Baltimore 1806:* Sufferings are to be reported by monthly meetings to the quarterly meeting, which then may approve and forward them to the Meeting for Sufferings. Deaths of ministers and elders are to be reported by monthly and quarterly meetings to the yearly meeting. Three times a year, monthly and preparative meetings are to send responses to three queries to their quarterly meeting; and once a year to nine additional queries, after which the quarterly meeting is to forward an account of the responses to the yearly meeting. *Indiana 1835:* Like Baltimore 1806, except quarterly meetings need not report the deaths of elders to the yearly meeting.

#### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Twice a year, monthly and executive meetings are to send responses to three queries to their quarterly meeting; and once a year to eight additional queries, after which the quarterly meeting is to forward a summary of the responses to the yearly meeting. Monthly meetings or executive meetings establishing an indulged meeting are to report their care of it to the quarterly meeting once a year.

#### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* The quarterly meeting “receives and forwards” reports from the monthly meetings to the yearly meeting. Reports include statistics on membership, time and place of meetings, etc., on forms provided by the yearly meeting Representative or Executive Committee. Meetings are to consider twelve sets of queries once a year, but written answers are required only for portions of seven of them.

*PYM 1955:* Monthly meetings are to minute answers to twelve sets of queries annually; these answers “may form the basis” of the monthly meeting’s report to the quarterly, with each quarterly determining its own procedure for handling reports. An additional eight queries are to be answered directly to the quarterly meeting; the quarterly meeting summarizes the answers in its report to the yearly meeting.

*PYM 1972:* Monthly meetings prepare reports to their quarterly meetings annually; quarterly meetings summarize these reports in their annual reports to the yearly meeting. Monthly meeting reports may be based in part on responses to the queries; sets of queries on 15 topics are provided.

*PYM 1997:* Monthly meetings send an annual “state of society” report to their quarterly meeting, along with a report from their committee on worship and ministry. The quarterly meeting draws on these reports in its reports on the same two subjects to the yearly meeting. Quarterly and monthly meetings both also report directly to the yearly meeting the names of their officers, and membership statistics. Twelve sets of queries are provided, but there is no indication that they are to be used as the basis for the reports.

#### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*Sometime after 1971:* Monthly meeting state-of-society reports, which had previously functioned as reports by the monthly meeting ministry and counsel committees to the yearly meeting ministry and counsel committee, are instead submitted to the yearly meeting itself, and are no longer a regular part of yearly meeting ministry and counsel meetings. This establishes a pattern of direct reporting by the monthly meetings to the yearly meeting.

*1972:* Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting stops reporting to IYM, just two years after its establishment.

*1976:* Blue River Quarterly stops sending regular reports to IYM. (Occasional reports have been sent since.)

*1993:* Blue River Quarterly requires written reports from monthly meetings only at its spring meeting. Monthly meetings need only write one report per year, and use the same one for both the quarterly and the yearly meeting.

**Summary & Discussion:** The traditional system of organization did not call for direct reporting by monthly meetings to the yearly meeting; monthly meetings reported to the quarterly meetings, which summarized the results to the yearly meeting. Since the early 1970s, IYM has moved away from this system in favor of direct reporting by monthly meetings to the yearly meeting. This eliminated much of the purpose of quarterly meeting reports to the yearly meeting, which have now mostly been dropped.

## 2. Financially Supporting the Yearly Meeting

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1672:* A collection may “occasionally” be made in the various counties (i.e. by the quarterly meetings) for defraying the expenses of the society.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

*Baltimore 1806 and Indiana 1835:* Collections are to be made occasionally from the quarterly meetings, in proportions to be determined by the yearly meeting.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

The yearly meeting cash fund is to be maintained by “an occasional collection from each Quarter,” in proportions determined by the yearly meeting.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927 and PYM 1955/1972/1997:* Quarterly meetings are supported by contributions from the monthly meetings, according to a quota decided in the quarterly meeting; the yearly meeting is supported by contributions from the quarterly meetings, according to a quota decided by the yearly meeting.

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*1963:* IYM begins transitioning to a system in which the yearly meeting is supported by direct contributions from the monthly meetings, rather than the quarterly meetings. The transition is complete by 1964.

**Summary & Discussion:** In the traditional system, monthly meetings did not contribute directly to the yearly meeting; they contributed to the quarterly meetings, which in turn contributed to the yearly meeting. IYM moved toward a system of direct financial support of the yearly meetings by the monthly meetings in the 1960’s.

### 3. Setting up and laying down monthly meetings, preparative meetings, and meetings for worship

#### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1715:* No monthly meeting may divide itself into two separate monthly meetings without the permission of the quarterly meeting.

#### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

*Baltimore 1806:* Setting up and laying down a preparative meeting or meeting for worship requires approval first from the monthly meeting, then by the quarterly meeting. Quarterlies may set up or lay down monthly meetings directly. Setting up or laying down a quarterly meeting requires yearly meeting approval.

*Indiana 1835:* Like Baltimore, except monthly meetings may “indulge” meetings for worship without approval of the quarterly meeting.

#### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Unlike the Baltimore and Indiana YM disciplines, the Illinois YM discipline did not require quarterly meeting approval for the establishment of a preparative meeting; otherwise the same.

#### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

Quarterly meeting approval is needed for the establishment of a monthly meeting. Separate procedures are given for several different scenarios under which a monthly meeting may be established. Monthly meetings may not be discontinued without quarterly meeting permission.

*FGC 1927, PYM 1955/1972:* Monthly meetings may establish preparative and indulged meetings directly, without needing approval from the quarterly. (*PYM 1972* does not mention “indulged” meetings.)

*PYM 1997:* Establishment of preparative meetings requires approval of both the monthly and the quarterly meeting.

#### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*1963:* IYM approves a request from Lake Forest Monthly Meeting (previously established by the Friends Fellowship Council) to affiliate with IYM directly, without joining a quarterly meeting — the first monthly meeting to do so. *1968:* IYM approves direct affiliation by Rock Valley Monthly Meeting. To my knowledge, Rock Valley had no earlier affiliation or recognition from an existing Friends body; so this decision appears to have been the first direct establishment of a monthly meeting by IYM. *Handbook 1982:* A preparative meeting may request monthly meeting status from its monthly meeting; a worship group may request it from the quarterly meeting, or if there is no appropriate quarterly meeting, from IYM Continuing Committee. In any case, the group receiving the request makes a recommendation to the yearly meeting for final approval. Preparative meetings may be established directly by a monthly meeting. No procedure is given for laying down meetings. *2002:* IYM lays down Thorn Creek Monthly Meeting directly, “there being no functioning Quarterly business meeting to consider Thorn Creek’s request” — implying that Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting is not a functioning quarterly business meeting.

**Summary & Discussion:** In the traditional system, the yearly meeting did not set up or lay down monthly meetings; this was done by the quarterly meetings. (In other words, a monthly meeting could join the yearly meeting without yearly meeting approval.) In IYM, yearly meeting approval for the establishment of monthly meetings began as independent meetings requested direct affiliation in the 1960’s. By the mid-1980’s, a regular policy requiring yearly meeting approval for the establishment of a monthly meeting was in place; quarterly meetings could no longer establish monthly meetings on their own, and quarterly meeting approval is not even needed for a preparative meeting becoming a monthly meeting.

#### 4. Appointing members of the Meeting for Sufferings, Representative Committee, or Continuing Committee

##### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1675:* The Meeting for Sufferings is established to provide a systematic response to cases of persecution. (It soon takes on the function of handling whatever yearly meeting business needs to be dealt with between annual sessions.) Initially, each quarterly meeting is asked to appoint at least one representative, or “correspondent”; additional members (from the London area) are appointed directly by the yearly meeting. *1717:* Quarterly meetings are limited to appointing a maximum of four representatives to the Meeting for Sufferings.

##### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

*Baltimore 1806:* Each quarterly meeting is to appoint four representatives to the Meeting for Sufferings; twenty additional members are to be appointed directly by the yearly meeting.

*Indiana 1835:* Each quarterly meeting is to appoint four representatives, 26 members are appointed directly by the yearly meeting.

##### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Each quarterly meeting appoints three Friends of each sex to the “Representative Committee or Meeting for Sufferings”; 21 members of each sex were appointed directly by the yearly meeting. The Representative Committee was empowered to: represent the yearly meeting between its annual gatherings; approve publications printed in the name of the Society of Friends; maintain titles to property; raise funds; receive proposed memorial minutes from the quarterly meetings, and if approving them, forward them the yearly meeting for final approval; render assistance to persons suffering for Friends testimonies; and correspond with similar committees of other yearly meetings.

##### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* Quarterly meetings appoint representatives to the “Representative or Executive Committee” in numbers determined by the yearly meeting, with proportions reflecting statistical reports. The yearly meeting may also appoint members directly, and the clerk and treasurer of the yearly meeting are automatically members.

*PYM 1955:* The “Representative Meeting” consists of no more than 85 members, up to 30 of which are appointed directly by the yearly meeting, with the remainder appointed by the quarterly meetings in proportion to their membership; the clerk of the yearly meeting and clerk of the Yearly Meeting on Worship and Ministry are also members *ex officio*. (However, the clerk of the yearly meeting is prohibited from serving as clerk of the Representative Meeting.)

*PYM 1972:* The Representative Committee includes representatives from the yearly meeting Committee on Worship and Ministry, Finance Committee, and such other standing committees as the yearly meeting decides; the yearly meeting may also appoint at-large members.

*PYM 1997:* The number, selection, and terms of service of members of the “Interim Meeting” are determined by the yearly meeting. Members are not considered representatives of constituent bodies.

##### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*1920:* The Representative Committee changes its name to the Executive Committee. *1921:* The Executive Committee is reduced from 54 to 25 members, including the three yearly meeting officers and 22 members appointed by the yearly meeting. Quarterly meeting representation is discontinued. *Handbook 1965:* The Executive Committee is replaced by the Continuing Committee. Each monthly meeting appoints one representative to the “Committee of Representatives” (which functions as a nominating committee); these representatives also serve as “at-large” members of the Continuing Committee, along with the chairs of all yearly meeting standing committees, and the presiding clerk of the yearly meeting. No provision is made for quarterly meeting representation. *Handbook 1986:* The clerks of Blue River Quarterly and Metropolitan Chicago General Meetings are members of the Continuing Committee (along with some additional yearly meeting officers not listed in earlier versions of the handbook).

**Summary & Discussion:** The equivalent of Continuing Committee originally consisted of representatives appointed by quarterly meetings, with additional at-large members appointed directly by the yearly meeting. In IYM, quarterly meeting representation was discontinued in 1921. Monthly meeting representation was instituted in 1965. A measure of quarterly meeting representation was reinstated in the 1980’s, so that the clerks of quarterly meetings now serve on Continuing Committee in more-or-less the same way as committee clerks.

## 5. Appointing Representatives to the Yearly Meeting

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1728:* Quarterly meetings are to appoint four representatives to the yearly meeting (except York may send eight and London twelve). The yearly meeting is also open to members of the Meeting for Sufferings, and to ministers. *1733:* The quarterly meetings are divided geographically into five groups. Each year, the representatives of all the quarterlies in one of the groups chooses the clerk of the yearly meeting.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Each quarterly meeting appoints at least four representatives to the yearly meeting. The quarterly meeting representatives choose the yearly meeting clerk and assistant clerk.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Each quarterly meeting is to appoint four or more representatives to the yearly meeting, who are to attend with the report, and who, together with the representatives of the other quarterly meeting(s), are to nominate the yearly meeting clerk and assistant clerk.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* The number of representatives is not specified. Representatives are to make reports of the yearly meeting to their quarterly meetings, and are to perform whatever other duties their quarterly meetings or the yearly meeting assigns to them. They have no special privileges. The method of appointing yearly meeting clerks is left to the yearly meeting; it appears from the minutes that IYM continued the practice of having the quarterly meeting representatives nominate the clerk.

*PYM 1955/1972/1997:* Monthly meetings, not quarterly meetings, appoint representatives to yearly meeting. The clerk and other officers of the yearly meeting are selected by a nominating committee appointed by the quarterly meetings.

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*Paste-in Sheet 1957:* Nominations for yearly meeting clerks are brought forward by the quarterly meeting representatives, rather than a nominating committee as in PYM 1955.

*Handbook 1965:* A Committee of Representatives is established, consisting of one representative of each monthly meeting. This committee serves a nominates the yearly meeting clerk and other officers. As this eliminates the primary official duty of quarterly meeting representatives, the quarterly meetings stop appointing them. As the appointment of yearly meeting representatives had for several years been the sole item of business at one of Blue River Quarterly’s three annual sessions, it drops to a twice-a-year schedule. (The IYM Committee of Representatives was replaced by a separate Nominating Committee in 1985.)

**Summary & Discussion:** Quarterly meetings originally appointed official representatives to the yearly meeting; these representatives nominated the yearly meeting clerk. In the 1960’s, this responsibility was transferred to representatives of the monthly meetings, and the position of quarterly meeting representatives was eliminated.

## 6. Exercising Authority Over Monthly Meetings

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1743*: Monthly meetings are required to abide by the judgments of their quarterly meetings, but may appeal decisions of the quarterly meeting to the yearly meeting if they seem objectionable. If a monthly meeting refuses to accept a decision of the quarterly, and also refuses to appeal that decision to the yearly meeting, then the quarterly meeting may lay it down and attach its members to other monthly meetings.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Preparative meetings are accountable to their monthly meeting; monthly meetings to their quarterly meeting, and quarterly meetings to the yearly meeting.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Monthly and executive meetings are to fulfill the instructions of the quarterly meeting in any matter where the quarterly meeting has authority.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

No statement is made the quarterly meetings have authority over monthly meetings. *PYM 1955* states explicitly “the chief authority in matters of business ... is the business meeting of the local group, known as the Monthly Meeting.” However, FGC 1927 and PYM 1955/1972 do allow for the appeal of disownment decisions by monthly meetings to the quarterly meeting (see below).

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

To my knowledge, neither IYM nor any of its quarters has issued a statement claiming or denying quarterly meeting authority over monthly meetings in this period; but a “culture of local autonomy” seems to be widely taken for granted.

**Summary & Discussion:** Quarterly meetings were originally understood to have authority over monthly meetings; but this is no longer generally assumed.

## 7. Taking Appeals of Monthly Meeting Decisions

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1727:* Friends who feel themselves unjustly disowned or otherwise injured by decisions of their monthly meetings are given the right to appeal these decisions to their quarterly meetings (and, if still dissatisfied, to the yearly meeting).

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Like London 1727, but with a more detailed procedure for how appeals are to be handled.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

A detailed procedure is given for handling appeals of disownments or other decisions.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* Contrary to what is stated in a 2003 document produced by the IYM Faith and Practice Committee, a detailed procedure is given for appealing disownments to the quarterly meeting.

*PYM 1955/1972:* Appeals are allowed for, but no procedure is explicitly given.

*PYM 1997:* Individuals being involuntarily released from membership are to be informed that “an appeal to quarterly meeting is possible”; however, the quarterly meeting is to play a mediating role only; “it is ... the monthly meeting’s responsibility to make the final decision.”

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

To my knowledge, no disownments (or other decisions for which an appeal might be appropriate) have taken place in IYM during this period; nor has an explicit policy been put forward.

**Summary & Discussion:** Traditionally, disowned Friends could appeal their disownments to the quarterly meeting. The trend exemplified in PYM is to shift final authority in such matters to the monthly meetings. IYM policy is unclear, but disownments are now so rare that this is really a moot point.

## 8. Approving Travels in the Ministry

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1699:* Friends traveling in the ministry are asked to obtain the approval of their monthly or quarterly meeting before setting out. *1720:* Monthly and quarterly meetings approving Friends traveling in the ministry are asked to provide certificates to that effect. *1763:* Friends traveling overseas in the ministry are required to gain the approval of their quarterly meetings; and unless to Ireland, also the approval of the meeting of ministers and elders in London.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Ministers making “general visits” to meetings within or beyond the bounds of the yearly meeting must obtain certificates from their quarterly meetings. Visits overseas require the additional approval of the yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Visits to specific meetings outside the quarterly require a certificate from the monthly meeting; visits within the quarterly should be approved by the monthly meeting or meeting elders, but do not require a certificate.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Quarterly meeting approval is required for ministers expecting to visit extensively with non-Friends or in another yearly meeting. If the visit is to a foreign country, yearly meeting approval is also required.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* Travels within the yearly meeting should be approved by the monthly meeting; travels to other yearly meetings should be approved by the quarterly meeting; and travels overseas should be approved by the yearly meeting.

*PYM 1955:* Travels within the yearly meeting should be approved by the monthly meeting; travels beyond the yearly meeting should normally be approved by the quarterly meeting, but exceptions are possible in urgent cases. Travel to foreign countries are should normally be approved by the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Worship or Representative Meeting.

*PYM 1972:* Travels within the yearly meeting must be approved by the monthly meeting; travels outside the yearly meeting should be approved by the quarterly meeting if time permits, *and* by the Representative Meeting or yearly meeting Committee on Worship and Ministry.

*PYM 1997:* Travels outside the yearly meeting are “usually” submitted for approval by the quarterly meeting and the Interim Meeting or yearly meeting Committee on Worship and Ministry.

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

To my knowledge, neither IYM nor any of its quarterly meeting have minuted specific policies on this issue during this period.

**Summary & Discussion:** Quarterly meeting approval is traditionally required for travel minutes to be used beyond the yearly meeting. The trend exemplified in PYM has shifted final approval of such minutes to a yearly meeting body rather than the quarterly meeting. IYM policy is somewhat unclear.

## 9. Providing Assistance, Advice or Judgment to Monthly Meetings

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

Not mentioned.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Still not mentioned.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

A detailed procedure is given for cases where a monthly meeting is unable to reach a decision on a disownment or other issue: The monthly or executive meeting may request assistance without specifying the nature of the difficulty. The quarterly meeting is then to appoint a committee to work with the meeting requesting assistance, hear the cause of the trouble, and then give its judgment in the case. (The monthly or executive meeting is not obliged to accept this judgment, however.)

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927:* Quarterly meetings should always be ready to help monthly meetings when they ask for advice or assistance.

*PYM 1955/1972:* If a monthly meeting has difficulty fulfilling its obligations, the quarterly meeting (by request of the monthly meeting or on its own initiative) may appoint a committee to assist it in the transaction of business.

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

Monthly meetings in need of assistance are perhaps now more likely to seek it from the IYM Ministry and Advancement Committee than from their quarterly meeting.

**Summary & Discussion:** Explicit reference to a quarterly meeting role of providing advice and assistance to monthly meetings arises fairly late. Much of this role is also now shared by the IYM Ministry and Advancement Committee.

## 10. Miscellaneous Duties and Responsibilities

**Appointing representatives to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders.** *London 1754:* The yearly meeting of ministers and elders is established; each quarterly meeting is asked to appoint one or two elders to attend as representatives, alongside any ministers. *Baltimore 1806* and later disciplines make this the responsibility of the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, not the regular quarterly meeting.

**Approving the recording of Friends in the ministry.** *London 1773:* Ministers must be approved by their monthly or quarterly meeting, and then by the meeting of ministers and elders, before becoming a member of the meeting for ministers and elders. *Baltimore 1806* later disciplines: The only approval required at the quarterly meeting level is by the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.

**Approving memorial minutes.** *London 1713:* Memorial minutes of deceased ministers must be approved by the quarterly meeting. *Baltimore 1806/1821/1844/1860, Indiana 1835/1849, IYM 1878/1892:* Memorial minutes are to be reported by monthly meetings to the quarterly meeting, which then may approve and forward them to the Meeting for Sufferings. Memorial minutes approved by the Meeting for Sufferings are sent to the yearly meeting for final approval. *PYM 1955:* "It may occasionally seem appropriate for a Monthly Meeting to prepare a memorial minute for a deceased member. In exceptional cases such a minute, if approved by the Quarterly and Representative Meetings, may be passed to the Yearly Meeting." *PYM 1972:* Memorial minutes are prepared by monthly meetings; no mention of quarterly or yearly meeting approval.

**Supporting the poor.** *London 1709:* Monthly and quarterly meetings are charged with providing for the education of the children of poor members. *Baltimore 1806* and later disciplines: Care of the poor is treated as a monthly meeting responsibility.

**Record-keeping.** *London 1675:* Monthly and quarterly meetings were directed to keep a record of all disownments, and all acknowledgments of error by Friends under dealing for disciplinary infractions. *1695:* Quarterly meetings are requested to keep one copy of each Friends book published. *1703:* Quarterly meetings are to keep records of all trusts and conveyances of meetinghouses, burial grounds, and charitable bequests. *1767:* Detailed instructions are given on how records of trusts and conveyances are to be kept. *1727:* Quarterly meetings are required to keep copies of all minutes and epistles of the yearly meeting. *1774:* Monthly meetings must report all marriages, births and burials annually to their quarterly meeting, which must keep a record of them. *Baltimore 1806/1821/1844/1860 and Indiana 1835/1849:* Quarterly meetings are to keep a record of all certificates issued to traveling ministers. They are to keep minutes of their proceedings. They are to keep copies of all trusts and conveyances for property. *IYM 1878/1892, FGC 1927:* Quarterly meetings are to keep minutes of their proceedings.

**Distributing Friends literature.** *London 1682:* Quarterly meetings are asked to take responsibility for selling or otherwise distributing Friends books approved by the Meeting for Sufferings.

**Maintaining schools.** *Baltimore 1806/1821/1844/1860 and Indiana 1835/1849:* Quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings are all urged to establish and support schools, with Quaker teachers.

**Maintaining a treasury and other property** as the need arises. Mentioned in *IYM 1878/1892, FGC 1927, PYM 1955/1972/1997:* Quarterly meetings may hold property for their own purposes, and are also to receive any property belonging to discontinued monthly meetings (except those which are merged into another monthly meeting).

**Approving changes in the discipline.** *IYM 1878/1892:* Proposals to alter the discipline are to originate in a monthly or executive meeting; if approved there, they are to be sent to the quarterly meeting; and if approved there, forwarded to the yearly meeting for final approval. *FGC 1927:* Proposals for change may originate in a monthly meeting, in which case they must be approved by the quarterly before being considered by the yearly meeting; or they may originate in the yearly meeting itself, in which case no action may be taken for one year after the proposal is made. *PYM 1955/1972:* Like FGC 1927, except proposals may originate in a quarterly meeting or in the Representative Meeting. *PYM 1997:* Major revision may be initiated only by the yearly meeting. Minor changes may originate at any level, and should be presented to Interim Meeting before consideration at yearly meeting. Proposals must be presented to yearly meeting one year prior to final acceptance.

**Providing inspiration, counsel, cooperation, fellowship, etc.** *FGC 1927 and PYM 1955:* "The Quarterly Meeting is designed to bring together a larger group for inspiration and counsel and to consider more varied interests than a Monthly or Preparative Meeting can undertake." *PYM 1972:* "The Quarterly Meeting has been ... an aid to cooperation among neighboring Monthly Meetings. Religious fellowship and the stimulation of worshiping in large groups, with a greater variety of ministry than individual Meetings usually experience, often contribute to the value of Quarterly Meetings."

## Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders Timeline

- 1727** *London*: “Monthly meetings are desired to appoint some serious, discreet, and judicious friends, who are not ministers, tenderly to encourage and help young ministers, and advise others, as they in the wisdom of God see occasion; and where there are meetings of ministring friends, the friends so appointed be admitted as members of such meetings of ministers, and act therein for the good purposes aforesaid.” Friends appointed in this way became known as “elders.”
- 1757** Systematic establishment of ministers and elders meetings at the monthly and quarterly levels in London Yearly Meeting. (At the monthly meeting level, these meetings were known as “preparative meetings of ministers and elders.”) Ministers and elders meetings were “select,” that is, closed to non-ministers and non-elders. London Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders had been established in 1754. The quarterly meeting of ministers and elders is to include one or two elders appointed by each monthly meeting, in addition to any ministers.
- 1773** Monthly meetings are given liberty to appoint more than two elders as representatives to their quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.
- 1806** The composition of quarterly meetings of ministers and elders is left somewhat obscure in *Baltimore 1806/1821/1844/1860 and Indiana 1835/1849*; it may be that all ministers and elders in the quarter were members.
- 1878** In *IYM 1878/1892*, all ministers and elders are members of their quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.
- 1915** Last surviving minutes of Blue River Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders.
- 1920** Last meeting of Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders.
- 1921** Illinois Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders is replaced with a Meeting for Oversight and Counsel.
- 1927** According to the *FGC 1927*, each monthly meeting is to appoint a committee of ministry and counsel. All members of the committees of ministry and counsel for the various monthly meetings in a quarterly meeting are automatically members of the quarterly meeting’s committee of ministry and counsel; all members of the committees of ministry and counsel for the various quarterly meetings are automatically members of the yearly meetings’ committee of ministry and counsel.
- 1955** *PYM 1955* gives a system like *FGC 1927*, except that the committees are called “meetings on worship and ministry.” Meetings “may, on appropriate occasions, be open to all who are concerned to come.”
- 1957** *IYM Paste-in Sheet*: “No counterpart of the Philadelphia-defined *Quarterly meeting on worship and ministry* exists in Illinois Yearly Meeting.”
- 1972** *PYM 1972*: The committees are called “committees on worship and ministry.” The quarterly meeting committee on worship and ministry consists of the monthly meeting committees on worship and ministry, or representatives appointed by them. “The existence and composition of a Quarterly Meeting Committee on Worship and Ministry, meeting independently of the Quarterly Meeting, should depend on the needs of the constituent meetings.”

# Official Functions of Quarterly Meetings of Ministers and Elders and their successors

1. Taking reports from the preparative meetings of ministers and elders, and reporting to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders.

## **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1757:* The ministers and elders of each monthly meeting are to meet once every three months as a preparative meeting of ministers and elders and prepare answers to a series of queries, to be forwarded to the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders. The quarterly meeting of ministers and elders is to summarize the query responses for approval by the quarterly meeting as a whole, before forwarding them to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders. Queries focus on the lives and conduct of ministers and elders.

## **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Reports consist of responses to three queries four times a year, with one additional query annually. Same pattern of reporting as in London 1757.

## **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Reports consisted of responses to four queries four times a year. Quarterly meetings of ministers and elders report to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders, with no requirement that the report be approved by the regular quarterly meeting.

## **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927, PYM 1955:* Quarterly meeting committees of ministry and counsel take reports from monthly meeting committees on ministry and counsel, and report at least once a year both to the quarterly meeting, and to the yearly meeting committee of ministry and counsel. Reports are to concern the spiritual condition and needs of meetings for worship, and the committee’s efforts to address those needs. Sample queries are given as a guide to organizing the reports, but specific answers to the queries are not required.

*PYM 1972:* Reports are to describe the religious life of the meeting and review the services of the committee. A set of queries is given, but there is no indication that they are to serve as the basis of the report. If no quarterly meeting committee on worship and ministry exists, the quarterly meeting as a whole should prepare a report for the yearly meeting committee on worship and ministry.

*PYM 1997:* The monthly meeting committee on worship and ministry reports to the monthly meeting, and also to the quarterly meeting committee on worship and ministry “where such a group is active.”

## **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*By 1933:* Meetings of the yearly meeting committee of ministry and counsel hear of “state-of-society” reports from *monthly* meetings — the beginning of systematic reporting by monthly meetings directly to the yearly meeting, rather than through quarterly meetings. Sometime after 1971, these shifted to direct reports from the monthly meetings to the yearly meeting itself.

**Summary & Discussion:** Ministers and elders’ reports were originally concerned with the conduct of ministers and elders. As ministers and elders meetings were replaced by committees on ministry and counsel, the reports shifted to cover the spiritual condition of the meeting for worship more generally. Eventually these reports evolved into our modern state-of-society reports, serving as direct reports from monthly meetings to the yearly meeting, and often covering a broader set of topics in meeting life than just the meeting for worship.

## 2. Appointing representatives to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders.

### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1757:* Each quarterly meeting of ministers and elders appoints four or more representatives to the yearly meeting for ministers and elders.

### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

Same as London.

### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892 and other developments:**

All ministers and elders were members of their quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, and of the yearly meeting of ministers and elders. “A suitable number of representatives” should be appointed, but their only official function was to deliver reports. *1921:* The yearly meeting of ministers and elders is renamed the Meeting for Oversight and Counsel. It is unclear if this change also involved a change in how members were appointed. The name was changed again to Committee on Ministry and Counsel in 1926, to conform to the forthcoming FGC uniform discipline.

### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927, PYM 1955:* All members of the monthly meeting committees of ministry and counsel (or meetings on worship and ministry) are members of the quarterly and yearly committees of ministry and counsel.

*PYM 1972:* The yearly meeting committee on worship and ministry, “though open to the attendance of all Friends,” consists of 40 members, appointed by the yearly meeting, including at least two from each quarterly meeting. The quarterly meetings themselves do not appoint representatives.

*PYM 1997:* Attendance and membership in the yearly meeting committee on worship and ministry is not limited, but the yearly meeting is to appoint at least two members from each quarterly meeting.

### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*1962:* The yearly meeting Committee on Ministry and Counsel is eliminated, and its functions assigned to the Executive Committee; the membership of the Executive Committee is expanded to include a member for ministry and counsel — in effect, a one-person committee. It is somewhat obscure how this member was chosen, but presumably he or she was appointed directly by the yearly meeting. (Several other yearly meeting committees were “consolidated” in the same way.) *Handbook 1965:* As the Executive Committee is replaced by the Continuing Committee, the “one-person committees” that had been part of the Executive Committee are combined into a new Special Concerns Committee (also called the “Special Concerns Leadership”). “It should be understood that if time and conditions should dictate, these committees could be expanded to full committee size.” *1973:* The yearly meeting Ministry and Counsel Committee begins to expand again to include more than one member. Appointments are made by the yearly meeting. *1982:* The yearly meeting Ministry and Counsel Committee is combined with the Advancement Committee to form the Ministry and Advancement Committee.

**Summary & Discussion:** Originally, the yearly meeting of ministers and elders consisted of representatives appointed by the quarterly meetings of ministers and elders. This evolved into our modern IYM Ministry and Advancement Committee, appointed by the yearly meeting.

### 3. Approving the recording of ministers and elders.

#### **London YM “Book of Extracts” 1783:**

*1773:* Ministers must be approved by their monthly or quarterly meeting, and then by the meeting of ministers and elders, before becoming a member of the meeting for ministers and elders.

#### **Baltimore YM Discipline 1806/1821/1844/1860; Indiana YM Discipline 1835/1849:**

*Baltimore 1806:* Recording of a minister is to be proposed first by the preparative meeting of ministers and elders, then approved by the monthly meeting, then by the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders. Elders are first proposed by a nominating committee, then approved by the monthly meeting, then by the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders. *Indiana 1835:* Like Baltimore 1806, except elders are proposed first by the preparative meeting of ministers and elders, then approved by the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, then forwarded to the men’s or women’s monthly meeting for final approval.

#### **Illinois YM Discipline 1878/1892:**

Recording of a minister was to be proposed first in the preparative meeting of ministers and elders, then approved by the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, then by the monthly or executive meeting. Elders were appointed directly by the monthly or executive meeting for terms not to exceed three years. Removing a minister or elder from their station requires approval first from the preparative meeting of ministers and elders, then from the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, then from the monthly or executive meeting.

#### **FGC Discipline 1927; Philadelphia YM Faith and Practice 1955/1972/1997:**

*FGC 1927* makes no provision for recording ministers or elders.

*PYM 1955:* The initial recommendation to record a minister or elder may come from the monthly meeting, or from its meeting on worship and ministry, which must then forward the recommendation to the monthly meeting. After approval, the proposal is forwarded to the quarterly meeting on worship and ministry, which reports its decision to the monthly and yearly meetings. Recorded ministers and elders are automatically members of their local meeting on worship and ministry.

*PYM 1972/1997:* A monthly meetings may record a minister with the approval of its committee on worship and ministry. Recorded ministers are automatic members of the monthly meeting committee on worship and ministry. No mention is made of recording elders.

#### **Illinois YM minutebooks 1927-present, “paste-in sheet” 1957; Handbook 1965-present, and other developments:**

*Paste-in Sheet 1957:* “Recording of *ministers and elders* is regarded as optional for each Monthly Meeting by the Philadelphia discipline. In Illinois Yearly Meeting, there is no provision for this special recognition.”

**Summary & Discussion:** Quarterly meetings of ministers and elders traditionally played a role in approving the formal recognition of ministers and elders. However, the practice of recording ministers and elders is no longer maintained in IYM.

## Recent Business of Blue River Quarterly Meeting

To get a sense of the current business functions of a quarterly meeting in IYM, I examined the minutes of Blue River Quarterly Meeting for the period 1996-present, and found the following categories of business:

1. Receiving reports from monthly meetings and worship groups. Informal oral reports are given in the fall; formal state-of-society reports are given in the spring.
2. Receiving treasurer's reports, reports on the archival of records, etc.
3. Nominating and appointing officers, including a clerk, recording clerk, and treasurer; deciding on terms of office; considering proposals for the establishment of additional structure (such as a peace and concerns committee or worship and ministry committee).
4. Bringing business to the yearly meeting, including proposals to for IYM to establish a Peace Resources Committee, to form a partnership relation with Lugari Yearly Meeting, to minute its support for legislation establishing a federal Department of Peace and for the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Bill, etc. Usually these proposals have originated in a monthly meeting, and were approved there and in the quarterly meeting before being forwarded to the yearly meeting.
5. Laying down monthly meetings. BRQ passed a minute laying down Friends Hill Monthly Meeting in 1997. (But note that IYM also passed a minute stating "Illinois Yearly Meeting reluctantly releases Friends Hill Monthly Meeting from its affiliation with us and with Blue River Quarterly. We acknowledge that they have chosen to dissolve their monthly meeting...") BRQ appointed a committee to arrange for the necessary membership transfers and receive the records of Friends Hill. BRQ also minuted its recognition that Heartland Worship Group had laid itself down in 2004.
6. Donating money to various organizations, including Right Sharing of World Resources, the Campaign of Conscience for the Iraqi People, Project Lakota, etc.
7. Minuting the meeting's position on various issues, and writing members of congress or other authorities to notify them of these positions and request their support.
8. Receiving reports on projects of IYM or of constituent meetings, including the listening project on same-sex issues, Project Lakota, etc.
9. Contacting meetings which were unrepresented at quarterly meeting and which did not send reports, and expressing the hope that these meetings would reinvolve themselves with BRQ.
10. Planning its own future sessions, including choice of location and assignment of planning responsibilities to local meetings or groups of meetings; discussion of ways to stimulate attendance at quarterly meeting; consideration of the general purpose and function of the meeting, etc.
11. Sponsorship of events, specifically the annual Quaker Family Float Trip.

Blue River Quarterly Meeting also serves as one of IYM's three planning groups. However, IYM planning sessions in recent years have been held separately from the regular business meeting, and this function does not seem to be a function of quarterly meetings as a matter of principle. At one business meeting BRQ did consider and minute a response to a proposal in IYM to reorganize the system of planning groups.

## Overall Summary and Questions on the Role of Quarterly Meetings Now

Originally, yearly meetings were not understood as associations of monthly meetings, but more like associations of quarterly meetings. There was very little direct institutional contact between monthly meetings and yearly meetings; quarterly meetings formed an intervening level.

The general historical pattern has been one in which the traditional functions of quarterly meetings have mostly been assumed instead by the monthly meetings or the yearly meeting, or have been discontinued altogether. (The same trend is apparent in many other yearly meetings — IYM is not unusual in this respect.)

An effect of this trend has been that the yearly meeting has come to function less and less like an association of quarterly meetings and more and more like an association of monthly meetings — in fact, many Friends seem to conceive of IYM as just that: an association of monthly meetings and worship groups.

This means that IYM is conceptually and functionally similar in many respects to a traditional *quarterly* meeting.

### **Questions for discussion:**

*What functions do quarterly meetings now serve? Do they have a well-defined business function? Do they serve other important functions, not specifically related to their business proceedings?*

*What functions can/should they serve in the future?*

*Can/should they play a specific business role, or focus on other matters?*

*Are there reasons for restoring some of the original responsibilities of quarterly meetings back to them?*

*Can/should quarterly meetings be assigned an increased role in ways **other** than recovering their historical functions?*