

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting for Business of the Midcoast Friends Meeting  
April 17, 2016 [The Seventeenth Day of the Fourth Month].**

1. James Matlack, Clerk, opened the Meeting for Business with a brief period of silent worship at 11:25am. He distributed an agenda and asked for any additions and the agenda was approved by consensus. 20 people attended Meeting for Worship this morning, and 13 participated in Meeting for Business.

2. The Minutes of the March Meeting for Business as previously posted on the web site and distributed to the Meeting by an e-mail link provided by Guy Marsden were approved by consensus.

**3. Committee Reports.**

A. **Pastoral Care Committee.** No report. Pastoral Care will meet this Friday at 0930 at Carmen Lavertu's house.

B. **Hospitality.** No report.

C. **Meeting House and Grounds.** Guy Marsden distributed information about a proposal from ReVision Energy for a solar farm which could be set up on part of our property and in which up to nine persons or families could participate. This would be similar to the solar farm set up last year in Edgecomb and more recently at the Morris Farm in Wiscasset. If the Meeting is agreeable to this, we could be on their calendar to be next in line for installation. There would be no cost or liability to the Meeting, and the solar farm would generate revenue of approximately \$600 a year for the Meeting, while contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping address climate change risk. Sue Rockwood had discussed this idea with a ReVision spokesman at a Solarize Lincoln County meeting a few months ago, and Patty Seybold's second Sunday climate discussion group here has been discussing this as a possibility at their meetings, and this proposal has emerged from these discussions. Under current Maine net-metering policy investors can purchase a pro rata share of the output of the solar farm based on their needs, and surplus energy generated in the sunnier spring through fall can be used to meet needs in colder winter months, reducing overall energy expense. Equipment lasts 30 to 40 years, while the warranty on it is for 20 years. Investors could take advantage of 2.9% financing available through ReVision, and take a 30% federal tax break in their income tax for the investment. They would form a limited liability company which handles insurance and maintenance, and the Meeting could specify the LLC would be responsible for any mowing around the solar farm that was required. Usually there is a 20 to 25 year lease with an option to renew. Karen Cadbury asked for time to do due diligence and season on this proposal with a view to taking a decision at the May Meeting for Business since not everyone here was familiar with the concept, and others not present would want to review the proposal. Carmen Lavertu and Bruce Rockwood suggested we agree in principle that this seems like a good idea, and ask Guy to pursue discussions with ReVision with the understanding that a decision could not be taken until our next Meeting for Business. ReVision installed solar panels at the Rockwood home on February 1 of this year, and anyone interested in further information can contact Bruce or Guy directly. While the

Maine legislature has approved a bill updating and formalizing aspects of solar power policy in Maine, it may be vetoed by the Governor and require a veto override. If that fails, the PUC could change the rule for the future, but any existing net metering contracts would likely be grandfathered in, so that would be a reason for reaching a consensus on this as soon as people feel comfortable with the concept. Copies of the proposal circulated by Guy will be sent to the Meeting list with these minutes. For further information, see: <https://www.revisionenergy.com/> ; <http://www.arttec.net/SolarPower/> ; <http://www.midcoastgreencollaborative.org/> ; <http://www.nrcm.org/news/environmental-issues-in-the-news/compromise-plan-gives-hope-solar-power-supporters/>

**C. Finance Committee and Treasurer's Reports.** Bruce Rockwood reported the Finance Committee met here on April 13 at noon to review the draft budget for next year. We discussed it and agreed to ask Guy to send it to the members' list before the April Meeting for Business so that people could review it and come with any questions. He noted the safe deposit box key has still not turned up, so we may need to pay to have the box drilled and get a new key if we decide to keep the box. David Cadbury distributed and reviewed the spread sheet for the final revision of the current year's budget that was adopted at the March Meeting for Business, to show where we are now and why we are focusing on returning some or all of the Four Winds Development fund to our reserves at the NEYM pooled funds. In response to a question, he noted that we have not yet sent our annual contribution to NEYM or to pay for our insurance, but will do so before the May Meeting. Brewster Grace is investigating whether we can find a better quote for insurance going forward. The Finance Committee has prepared reminder letters to be sent out shortly asking members and attenders to fulfill (or make) their annual pledges or contributions to ensure our FY2015-2016 budget year ends in balance. A follow up letter asking for contributions to complete MOPC's fiscal year budget will also be sent.

Karen Cadbury distributed printed copies of the proposed draft budget for FY2016-17 that was sent out by email to the meeting list. She reviewed each section and explained the thinking that underlies it. The Finance Committee generally suggests that contributions by members and attenders to organizations such as FCNL, AFSC, and CHIP should be encouraged, but that while our budget is as tight as it is the Meeting itself should not treat these as budget line items. Contributions to NEYM for next year were calculated based on the statistical list of 33 active members, and set at \$60 per person on that list. Ministry and Counsel is asked to update that list, and we can revise this aspect of the budget as needed going forward. There being no further questions, the draft budget will be brought back to the May Meeting for Business for approval, subject to any further recommendations made at that time.

**D. Ministry and Counsel.** Sue Rockwood asked members and attenders to make sure their contact information (mailing address, phone numbers, and email if any) are up to date. She then read the transfer of membership request and letter from Acton Friends Meeting to Midcoast Friends Meeting for Anne Armstrong. Her membership in our Meeting was accepted joyfully by everyone. Carmen Lavertu suggested the transfer letter be included in our archives, and pointed out that Anne was transferring back to our Meeting and that her babies had been born here when she previously belonged. Sue

reminded everyone that the first "Worship Sharing" session will be held after the rise of meeting and social period next Sunday, April 24, in the worship room. She noted that there are reports of doors not firmly closed after people have used the Meeting House recently, and asked everyone to firmly close both the front door and the doors leading to the deck from the social room, when they are using the building.

Brewster Grace then read the *State of Society Report for 2015* which we are submitting to NEYM. With minor corrections it was approved as read:

State of Society Report - 2015  
Midcoast Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Our meeting is enriched by a growing number of attenders, a broadening and deepening pastoral care, lively outreach and programs on peace, justice and the environment and a revival of our first day school. Our committees are working effectively. We feel more complete and strengthened as a Quaker community prepared to meet the personal and collective challenges coming with growth and change.

Pastoral Care held meetings for worship with Claire Darrow, listening sessions about life experiences, and a book sale to benefit the meeting's Emergency Response efforts. We appreciated dialog between our co-clerks and members of Ministry and Counsel about misunderstandings within the meeting community and steps being taken by Ministry and Counsel, including an upcoming series of worship sharing opportunities. Paradoxically, as the meeting ages, fewer people are available to help while more pastoral care is needed.

Our meetinghouse, its lovely grounds and our library are well cared for. After 20 years of use, a new well pump was needed and installed. The library will be even more user friendly as its collection has been reorganized in specific categories. In September as part of World Peace Day and to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our Meetinghouse and World Quaker Day we erected a peace pole with the prayer "may peace prevail on earth" in six languages.

The Finance Committee completed the five year outside financial review, and is this year working with a bookkeeper to help keep records of receipts and disbursements current and more easily reportable to the Meeting. A policy minute on grant requests has been drafted and approved by the Meeting for Business. Our challenges and concerns going forward are to meet the financial needs of the Meeting without reliance on drawing down reserves; developing a capital budget and long term planned giving program; and establishing a committee to review how our reserves are invested with a view to improving diversification and returns while remaining true to our values.

The Ministry and Counsel Committee reflects our Meeting as a whole, in that we are a small group and keenly aware of the challenges of age and change. We experience the frailty of our bodies during worship as we shift about on the cushions, we hear the occasional whistle of someone's hearing aide, and we discreetly nudge a neighbor when a

snore rises unbidden. We have experienced some new attenders and the return of seasonal friends this year as a chance to freshen our practices and our self-awareness. The comfortable inertia of years of group worship with seasoned friends was transformed as we worked to embrace new seekers and occasionally forgetful old Friends--who may not have been aware of some of our worship practices (such as waiting to let a message season before rising with another). New pamphlets and worship cards have been sprinkled along the benches and tables; a donation of cushions has eased many backs; children attending once a month with their parents have caused us to read new queries for those Sundays instead of the ones we'd been using for years. We have generally risen to the challenge: our worship together continues to be a group exercise of earnest seeking, and we often have deep and meaningful experiences of the Spirit.

The Midcoast Outreach and Peace Center (MOPC) worked in 2015 to design programs for young families and to attract new members. MOPC launched programs for parents and children, assisted meeting members with scheduling public peace education programs and helped create a lively, active and welcoming atmosphere in the meetinghouse. In addition a children's program is planned for the first Sunday of each month when we also have the Meeting's monthly potluck lunch. A workshop on "Creative Parenting" was held featuring Nat Shed from Friends China Camp. Peace and environmental presentations have attracted between 15 and 35 participants for each. A more ambitious speaker series on Humanitarian Crises was planned and grant applications have gone out to seek funds for it. We also expect the granddaughter of a meeting member to share her experiences last year working on women's issues in Nepal, especially after the recent major earthquake. We are working to discover what kinds of offerings best serve our goals of outreach and can sustain us over the long term and to secure our long-term finances while developing our outreach activities. A full roster of rentals for use of the meetinghouse has added to both our outreach and income. Expenses included the part time coordinator's salary and support for office activities; we have been meeting our expenses with the help of our meeting, individuals and grants, in addition to income from renting our facility.

E. **MOPC.** Karen Cadbury reported on the request for a grant to the NEYM Legacy Gift Fund, and a meeting she had had with a spokesman from NEYM about this request that was very positive. David Cadbury and Heather Burt attended that discussion. She pointed out we have two committees: Steering Committee for oversight, and Program Committee, for helping develop MOPC programs. MOPC would welcome new members to participate in the Program Committee. Sue Rockwood noted we would like more ideas for outreach, and cited the program on "Raising Adventuresome Children" with Nat Shed on March 11, and her involvement with the Diaper Drive, as examples of what MOPC is working on. Scheduling programs can be hard for families for younger children, and the suggestion has been made for activities the whole family might engage in at the Meeting, such as a community garden or someone leading children's songs. Suggestions are highly welcome! Sue also would like to share with the Meeting the Friends Camp programs for this summer: **Friends Camp News: Camper Registration** Friends Camp still has openings for youth ages 7 to 17 in all of the camp sessions. If you are interested in sending a young person to a one-week or two-week sessions, please visit our web page

[www.friendscamp.org](http://www.friendscamp.org). **Spring Work Weekend:** Please plan on coming up to Friends Camp during the weekend of May 20-22, 2016 to work, play, and to enjoy some great food! We need your assistance with several projects that must be done prior to the start of the summer. Cleaning, fixing, raking, building, splitting and staking wood. Join us for a buffet dinner on Friday night from 6 PM to 8 PM and a Contra Dance on Saturday night. In order that we have a head count for meals, please sign up on line at [www.friendscamp.org/friends-camp-work-weekend-may/](http://www.friendscamp.org/friends-camp-work-weekend-may/) or e-mail [director@friendscamp.org](mailto:director@friendscamp.org).

**Camperships :** To ensure that all camper families have the opportunity for an affordable summer camp experience for their children, please consider making a donation to the Codman Fund (for teens who attend a charter school in Dorchester, Massachusetts) or to the One Child at a Time Fund (youth who have a parent who is incarcerated). Please visit: <http://friendscamp.org/friends-camp-camperships/>

**Mt. Monadnock Climb ("The nicest small mountain in New England."):** Families, counselors, teens, First Day School groups, and Quakers from around New England are welcome to join in a hike up Mt. Monadnock in Jaffrey, New Hampshire on Saturday, June 4th. For this year's hike we will gather at 10:30AM at the start of the Old Halfway House Road on Route 124 between Jaffrey Center and Marlborough, NH. This wonderful hike is about 4 miles roundtrip, so we should be down at about 3:00 PM. Bring a small backpack. Pack a lunch. Bring a few water bottles and some warm clothing. If you plan to join us for this mountain hike, please e-mail Nat Shed at [director@friendscamp.org](mailto:director@friendscamp.org) a prior to June 2<sup>nd</sup>. / Nat Shed, Director, Friends Camp, 25 Burleigh Street, Waterville, ME 04901. [207-445-2361](tel:207-445-2361) (summer); [207-873-3499](tel:207-873-3499) (fall/winter); [207-877-1963](tel:207-877-1963) (cell)

**G. Other Business/Concerns.** Anne Burt's video will premiere at the Meeting House at 5:30pm on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bruce Rockwood reported that the Coastal Senior College Events Committee sponsored a talk here at the Meeting House on April 7<sup>th</sup> by our James Matlack and Prof. Mel Zarr of the University of Maine School of Law on their experiences in the 1964 voter registration drive for blacks in the South known as "Freedom Summer," and voter suppression today. Art Mayers of LCCTV recorded the talk and a link to his report for the *Boothbay Register* and a YouTube edited version of the talk, is: <http://www.boothbayregister.com/news>. Carmen Lavertu asked that deposit bottles from the Meeting be contributed to the "clink" bag collection used for Hannaford to raise funds for an orphanage in Kenya. Carmen also introduced her friend Neal Crane from Thomaston, who has been attending meeting recently. Anne Burt recently attended a program "Out as You Want to Be: in Rockland, and asked that we consider some way to use the Rainbow flag or image as a means of identifying us as a welcoming space. See their web site: <http://outmaine.org/> Jim Matlack reported that NEYM Annual Sessions will be in Castleton, VT August 6-11, and distributed fliers about this opportunity; for further information, see their web site: <http://neym.org/sessions>. Mary Lord reported she will shortly resume her traveling ministry with a visit to Baltimore, and will request a traveling minute from the Meeting for a later visit to Kansas in the summer. Karen

Cadbury suggested while we lack a newsletter, that someone volunteer to draft a one page summary of recent events/planned activities to be mailed to those on our members and attenders list that lack an email. Bruce Rockwood suggested we help folks get an email account that they could access in a local library or coffee shop as one way to enhance communication. Carmen Lavertu mentioned that she and Brewster Grace had acted as a clearness committee for Anne Burt's request for funds from the Lyman Grace Fund. [*Is this a grant under the care of the Meeting? If so, the recent policy minute would apply to it.—Bruce Rockwood comment*]

4. **Closing Worship** Meeting for Business closed with a brief period of silent worship at 1:15pm. The next Meeting for Business is scheduled for May 21, 2016 [21<sup>st</sup> Day, Fifth Month, 2016 as Quakers traditionally express it!]

Respectfully submitted,  
*James Matlack*, Clerk, and  
*Bruce L. Rockwood*, Recording Clerk