

## **MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS JANUARY 18, 2015**

Clerk Jim Matlack called the meeting to order with some twenty Friends present as well as two visitors from New England Yearly Meeting staff—Holly Baldwin (former member at Midcoast) and Shearman Taber.

The meeting began with a period of silent worship. The Agenda was reviewed and the Minutes of the November 16<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting were approved. The recent death of longtime member Tom Reardon was noted. A Memorial Minute will be presented at a future meeting.

The clerk welcomed the visitors from New England Yearly Meeting. Holly Baldwin spoke briefly about seeking fuller engagement between local meetings and the Yearly Meeting staff and programs. Further discussion with Baldwin and Taber was to take place at the rise of the meeting.

**PASTORAL CARE** Carmen Lavertu reported that a meeting member needs assistance with unusual medical expenses beyond what the committee can provide. Those who wish to contribute should send a check to Treasurer Deb Haviland at 33 Stonewood Road, Rockland, ME 04841. Be sure to designate on the check made out to “Midcoast Friends Meeting” that it is to be allocated to: “Pastoral Care Financial Assistance.”

**MINISTRY AND COUNSEL** Sue Rockwood noted the success of the previous Sunday’s Potluck event with children and parents in attendance. Friends accepted the presence of small children and their “small noises” in the opening minutes of the worship hour and were pleased at their energetic play after the meal as a sign of potential growth for the meeting.

A report and request then came from Alex Ulin—a sophomore at Bates College and Polly Ulin’s grand-daughter. Alex has an opportunity to work for five weeks this coming summer with an organization focused on women’s needs in Katmandu, Nepal. She would likely work with a childcare program. To help meet expenses Alex is eligible for a grant from the Pickett Endowment but needs explicit endorsement from a local Friends meeting as part of her application. After her clear and compelling report Alex was warmly supported by the meeting to pursue her plan. A suitable letter will be sent forward by the clerk. Patty Seybold will serve as liaison in this process.

Sue Rockwood then presented preliminary lists of committee members based upon voluntary sign-ups as is the current practice. Additional names will likely be added since committees are open to new members at all times. A more complete list of committees and their clerks will be presented for approval at a future Business Meeting. Ministry and Counsel will also prepare a “State of Society” report in time for submission to Yearly Meeting by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

The committee lists led to a discussion about procedures for assigning members to committees and selecting their clerks. Current practice at Midcoast has evolved over recent years as the former Nominating Committee was replaced by a Gifts and Leadings Committee that encouraged a voluntary sign-up process. The voluntary approach was broadly successful—enough so that Gifts and Leadings Committee was laid down last year when committee lists were approved. Brewster Grace offered to research the Minutes of the last few years to document this overall evolution in committee process.

Contrary to a suggestion made in the discussion, there are no stated terms in office or on committees. The full slate of officers and committees is approved each year. It is reasonable to expect “rotation” for those serving in the most demanding offices (e.g. clerk) but no multi-year term limit is involved.

It is hoped that meeting members will take part in committees and the overall governance of Midcoast Meeting as they are led. Ministry and Counsel will continue to have general oversight of these matters as they do on all aspects and issues bearing on the wellbeing of the meeting.

**FINANCE** Martin Imm distributed a current Financial Report and explained several items on the chart. Deb Haviland said that she expected to serve one more year as Treasurer. She noted that pledges already made seem likely to cover the current shortfall in the annual budget total for income received. A suggestion was made that the Meeting website have a “DONATE” button to ease the process for those wishing to contribute. It became clear in the discussion that this was not a simple matter to implement. Holly Baldwin said that she has some experience in a similar situation and offered to help. Shearman Taber suggested that Fred Martin be consulted who had worked on creating a “Donate” feature for the Yearly Meeting.

Finance Committee will gather on Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>. After a separate session Finance will then hold a joint meeting with the Steering Committee of the Midcoast Outreach and Peace Center to clarify budget and other issues.

**MIDCOAST OUTREACH AND PEACE CENTER** Sue Rockwood reported on the two committees that share responsibility for the center—Steering Committee and Program Committee. She has had success in getting local people engaged in various ways at the meeting house. Andy Burt’s first “Video and Vittles” event was well attended.

Sue requested a more permanent sign by the road to signify that MOPC and its programs are based in the meeting house. With some attention to careful design, the meeting approved having such a sign mounted under the existing sign.

At present Guy Marsden has the e-mail distribution list for all meeting members. It was suggested that Sue Rockwood also have access to this list since Guy was not always available for timely notices. The meeting agreed to this shared approach. Both Guy and Sue will consult the clerk if any doubts arise about the suitability of sending out a specific item.

Sue also requested that the meeting arrange to mow the grounds twice in the summer now that more activities will be held at the meeting house through the summer months. This suggestion was well received but passed on the Buildings and Grounds Committee for possible implementation.

George Chappell reported that Portland Friends School exceeded their December fund-raising goal. Appreciation was expressed to David Cadbury and Suzy Hallett for their service as co-clerks. The meeting closed with a brief period of silence.

**NEXT BUSINESS MEETING---February 15th**

Jim Matlack – Clerk

Tom Hagan – Recording Clerk Pro Tem