

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS
MIDCOAST FRIENDS MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2017**

Fifteen Friends gathered in silent worship to open the meeting. Following a Review of the Agenda, the MINUTES for the December 18th Business Meeting were approved. (Kate Perkins volunteered to take notes to assist in preparing Minutes. *A Recording Clerk is needed.*)

PASTORAL CARE Clerk Jim Matlack read two messages from Leeds, England about the death of Anna Needham who attended Midcoast Meeting regularly in recent years. They conveyed the high regard and loving concern for Anna among Friends in Leeds. A more specific message addressed to Midcoast Friends affirmed their support in facing the challenges of coming days in the U.S.

Jean Crawford described a discussion on the topic “What is Quaker Process?” to be held after the rise of meeting on January 29th. An e-mail notice of this gathering has been sent which includes links to several helpful resources to assist in preparing for this discussion. Consult Guy Marsden for the e-mail links. Jean Crawford can also provide printed copies of the resources if necessary.

Rachel McGinness reported on recent activity in Lincoln County by C.H.I.P. They are busy in winter, especially with assistance in meeting the cost of heating oil fuels. Some work is also done improving insulation in old houses.

MEETING HOUSE AND GROUNDS The proposed Solar Farm has been cleared to be built. Guy Marsden and Bruce Rockwood reported on the favorable action by the town Planning Board of Damariscotta. Construction by REVISION will begin as soon as weather permits—late March/April. The NAME of the Solar Farm was unresolved. Selection lay with members of the meeting. After discussion the name chosen was: Midcoast Friends Community Solar Farm.

FINANCE Bruce Rockwood reported on a variety of Budget and Financial matters. The meeting approved appointing Bruce as Treasurer as well as a document affirming this change to be provided to the bank. Bruce will also continue to serve as Clerk of the Finance Committee for the immediate future. A Budget Sheet tallied expenditures from June to January in the amount of \$9,173 against a budget total of \$16,000. The current balance in the checking account is \$16,287. There was agreement with the Finance Committee decision to hire Sunnyside Accounting to prepare regular reports on meeting finances.

MINISTRY AND COUNSEL Jim Matlack reported on an ongoing effort among the monthly meetings in the Vassalboro Quarter to more fully coordinate their endeavors and to provide mutual spiritual support. Ministry and Counsel representatives from many of these meetings held a special gathering today in Orland, Maine. No representative from Midcoast was able to attend.

The next regular Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting will be held on February 4th at Winthrop Center Meeting House. The afternoon program will feature staff from Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Service who will speak about the challenges of bringing refugees into Maine communities.

Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting will also hold "Day Treat with Ministry and Counsel" with members of New England Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel on March 18 at Winthrop Center Meeting House. The All-Maine Gathering will be hosted by Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting on May 6th at South China Community Church.

A request from New England Yearly Meeting to prepare a State of Society Report was referred to the newly appointed Ministry and Counsel Committee. The report is due by June. Mary Lord has agreed to serve as Clerk of this committee.

Sue Rockwood handed out the full list of new committees and officers for the coming year. The absence so far of a Recording Clerk was noted. The assignments as listed were approved. Bruce Rockwood will explore the appropriate method/location for storage of meeting archival materials.

MIDCOAST OUTREACH AND PEACE CENTER Building the Beloved Community—An Interfaith Martin Luther King, Jr. Service will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, January 16th, at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle. Clerk Jim Matlack will speak at this service. Attenders will be urged to sign up for follow-up activities.

After the church service and in conjunction with an ongoing "People Against Racism" group, Midcoast Meeting will host a discussion group at 6:30 p.m. on January 31st on the topic: "Understanding Intergenerational and Historical Trauma" led by Lindy Gifford. There will also be a follow-up/pot-luck meal at 12:30 p.m. on February 12th at the 2nd Congregational Church in Newcastle.

On February 20th at 5 p.m. Midcoast will host: "Views from the Ground—Migrants and Refugees in the Middle East and Central America" featuring two international staffers for the American Friends Service Committee. Fabiola Flores Munoz oversees programs in Central America and the Caribbean; Alma Abdul-Hadi Jadallah supervises work in the Middle East. More detailed notices for this event (which follows the Camden Conference) will be widely distributed in coming weeks.

Sue Rockwood reported on the many families aided by the local Diaper Drive. She also thanked those who have made contributions to support MOPC projects.

OTHER CONCERNS Clerk Jim Matlack and Bruce Rockwood reported on an unexpected DONATION OF \$2,000 to Midcoast Friends Meeting from a Friend—Rachel Terry Harper—who has made a similar donation to every monthly meeting in New England. Her cover letter was read aloud along with a lengthy personal statement reflecting her concern and her intent to empower Friends meetings in facing the challenges ahead under a new and controversial Administration.

An active discussion followed regarding the best use of the \$2,000 gift. Various ideas were advanced including the thought that checks might be made to see how other meetings intended to apply their \$2,000 allocation. A process to sort and clarify best options for Midcoast was clearly required. Some initial screening of proposals should take place but any recommended course of action would come back before the full meeting membership for approval.

The donor clearly intended her donation to enhance positive responses to the social and political issues that will emerge in coming weeks and months. No hasty decision should be made. Well-considered judgment will arise from observing the controversies and crises that develop before committing the funds. In the end the Program Committee of MOPC was seen as the best place for assessing proposals and ultimately making a recommendation.

Members of the meeting are encouraged to send their suggestions for best utilization of the \$2,000 to: JIM MATLACK, Clerk of the MOPC Program Committee at: jmatlack@roadrunner.com or by mail c/o P.O. Box 714, Damariscotta, ME 04543

The meeting approved the following Minute:

All members of the meeting should conscientiously address the best use of the \$2,000 donation and share their views as appropriate. Any final allocation of the funds will be a decision of the whole meeting. Friends are reminded that the discernment process is more than setting a pragmatic program priority— it is a collective endeavor to seek Divine Leading in this matter.

Possible CSA at Midcoast An inquiry has come to the meeting from a young farmer, Hannah Court, who has started an organic farm near Wiscasset. She asks whether Friends at Midcoast might be interested in co-sponsoring a Community Supported Agriculture program with distribution at the meeting house. Anyone could take out a paid membership in the CSA in return for which they would receive direct distribution of fresh farm produce each Sunday for ten weeks in the harvest season. (Hannah was trained at the farm with which the UU Church in Rockland has had a very successful CSA program for ten years.)

Some interest was expressed in the proposal but age, geographical dispersion, and part-year attendance factors at Midcoast hindered reaching a sufficient basis to sustain a CSA project. Sue Rockwood will explore possible partners for such a project. It was noted that two CSA's already operate in Damariscotta.

The meeting closed with brief silence.

NEXT MEETING FOR BUSINESS is scheduled for SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25th due to conflict with the Camden Conference on the 18th

