

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

Second Month 2023

Meeting for Worship: 10:45a Sundays

First Day School: 10:30a Sundays



1837 Forest Ave Portland, ME 04103
portlandfriendsmeeting.org 207-200-6544

Connections

Co-Clerks

Rob Levin

Peter Woodrow

coclerks@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

Recording Clerks

PFM.recordingclerk@gmail.com

Treasurer, Contributions

Jane Mullen, 215-421-5257

jmmmaine@aol.com

Treasurer, Operating Account

Kathy Beach, 207-233-2065

katherinegbeach@gmail.com

Treasurer, Special Funds

Special Needs Funds

Elizabeth Szatkowski 207-274-3564

Pastoral Care Coordinator

Muriel Allen, 207-420-1021

murielpfm@gmail.com

Childcare Coordinator

Susan Grannell 401-413-5951

pfm-nursery-coordinator@gmail.com

Religious Education

Adult: On Hiatus

Youth: Bart Cxyz btcxyz@gmail.com

Youth Religious Education Coordinator:

Emily Troll etroll@wesleyan.edu

Use of the Meetinghouse

meetinghouse@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

e-group membership

pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions

Heather Denkmire

pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

Address/directory changes

directory@portlandfriendsmeeting.org

Calendar

- February 11** 6-7:30p Small-group study: "Members One of Another: The Dynamics of Membership in Quaker Meeting," Part 1 of 3, Adult Learning, Meetinghouse Parlor (Details inside)
- February 12** Rise of Meeting, Blessing for Cuba delegation
- February 18** 6-7:30p Members One of Another, Part 2 of 3, Adult Learning, Meetinghouse Parlor
- February 25** 6-7:30p Members One of Another, Part 3 of 3, Adult Learning, Meetinghouse Parlor
- March 19** 9:15-10:30a "The Light: In Words and in Experience," Adult Learning, Meetinghouse Meetingroom
- April 4** 6p Contemplative Writing with Theresa Oleksiw at the Meetinghouse, Adult Learning, fmi contact Thersa at toleksiw@gmail.com

Every Month

- Every Sunday:** 10:30a First Day School/All Ages Youth Programming at the Meetinghouse
10:45a Meeting for Worship* at the Meetinghouse and on Zoom;
- Every Wednesday:** 7p Young Adult Friends Mid-Week Worship
email yaf@portlandfriendsmeeting.org for location
- Every Weekday:** 10:30-11a Meeting for Worship on Zoom*

*contact Clerks for online Meeting for Worship links

Portland Friends Meeting Email Lists

Our Meeting has two email lists, also sometimes referred to as "e-groups" or "Google groups:"

- 1) **Life of the Meeting:** Announcements about Meeting for Worship, committee work, Quaker business or events, and gatherings for the Portland Friends Meeting community. To send an announcement to this list, email: pfm-life-of-the-meeting@googlegroups.com.
- 2) **PFM Wider Community:** Everything else!
To send an announcement to this list, email: pfm-wider-community@googlegroups.com.

For any questions related to the lists, including requests to add yourself to one or both: pfm.email.list.owner@gmail.com.

Portland Friends Meeting
Minutes of Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business
February 5, 2023

Rob Levin, Co-Clerk
David N. Hingston recording

Members and attenders of Portland Friends Meeting gathered in worship at 8:45 am. Some forty-one Friends gathered, in person at the Meeting House and remotely via Zoom. Co-Clerk Rob Levin opened by reading a quote and following it with a query:

“I tend to the Light, but I also like to boogie.”

– Anonymous, pin seen in Quaker circles in 1980s

How do we as individuals and as a Meeting tend to the Light, and how do we boogie? Can boogieing be a form of tending to the Light?

Following a period of silent worship, Rob welcomed Friends and read a list of upcoming “Opportunities for Joy and Community-Building:

Sat 3/4: Bread Day

Sat 3/11: Potluck Dinner and Talent Show

Sun 3/12: Connecting the Dots

Sat 4/1: Living Faith

Sun 5/6: All Maine Gathering

Rob then expressed thanks to Mags Fehr for holding the Meeting in the Light, and to Soph Michelewicz for in-room technical support. Thanks also go to Heather Denkmire for zoom tech support.

1. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Meeting next **approved** the minutes of Meetings of January 8 and January 15, 2023, with a note of appreciation to Theresa Oleksiw for her recording duties at these meetings.

2. MINISTRY AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE

Dorothy Grannell reported that the Committee has advanced the names of five individuals who have offered to take turns representing the Meeting at meetings of the Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition (MIRC) and report back to the Meeting: Muriel Allen, Ann Dodd-Collins, Dorothy Grannell, Becky Steele, and Fritz Weiss. The Meeting **approved** the appointments with thanks to the five volunteers.

Next, Beth Bussiere-Nichols presented the draft *State of Society* report dated 1.28.23. Before reading the draft, Beth noted that the report is prepared for multiple audiences, including Portland Friends Meeting, other Friends’ meetings in New England and elsewhere, and for the future. Beth also commented that the report is but a moment’s snapshot of a continuum of activity, and thus never captures the totality of the Meeting’s interests, concerns and goings-on.

Beth then read the first draft, attached hereto as Attachment 1.

In discussion after the reading, one Friend noted the importance of avoiding “we/them” language, particularly when reporting on the Meeting’s commitment to being an Open, Affirming and Advocating Congregation. Another Friend requested substitution of a nonviolent term for the word “battling” in the discussion of indigenous peoples’ quest for sovereignty. A third Friend suggested that the report mention that a number of the year’s activities provided Friends with opportunities to acknowledge and examine our own biases.

The discussion closed with an expression of the Meeting’s thanks to Beth and those who are working with her on the report. We will expect to consider a final draft at the March Meeting for Business.

3. HVAC AD HOC COMMITTEE

Clerk Karin Wagner introduced the Committee’s *Summary Report for Replacement of Current Boiler and Decarbonization*, dated February 5, 2023 and attached herewith as Attachment 2. Karin explained that the report does not provide a specific recommendation at this time, and that the Committee seeks the Meeting’s feedback and guidance—particularly regarding financial discernment—before it can make a recommendation. She then listed the tasks that the Committee was originally given by the Meeting: (1) replacement of the Meetinghouse’s aging heating system; (2)

(Minutes continued from p.2)

reduction of the Meeting's reliance on fossil fuels ("decarbonization"); and (3) improvement of indoor air quality throughout the Meetinghouse building.

Denis Lachman next invited members of the Meeting to consider the matter as a choice among three bowls of porridge—small, medium and large—and asked, "What is our appetite?" He summarized the report's three courses of action, and explained that the courses might be considered independently or sequentially. Karin then reiterated that the Committee is not seeking a final decision at this time, but rather asking for the Meeting's guidance with respect to its appetite for spending to achieve decarbonization.

In response to questions and discussion, the following points arose:

Correction of a safety issue with the electrical service to the building will also provide an upgrade that will be required for any of the proposed courses of action and should be pursued promptly.

One Friend proposed that we "grow into" decarbonization over time and that the Meeting should "go slow" with the proposed courses of action.

The existing boiler, given its age, could fail slowly over time, or it could fail suddenly and require immediate action.

The existing roof configuration does not lend itself to efficient installation of solar electrical panels.

No other major building-related expenditures or emergent conditions are foreseen at the present time.

Another Friend, commenting on the pace of improvements, spoke in support of the second course of action and suggested waiting on the third step to see what technological or other developments might emerge.

With any of the courses of action, a generator would be required to maintain heat in the event of a significant power outage.

It will be important for someone to be tracking energy-related technological and other trends on behalf of the Meeting.

It will also be essential that any selected course of action be woven into the Meeting's ongoing financial discernment discussions.

Upgrade of the windows is one of the conservation-related measures being considered under any of the proposed courses of action.

No final decision was proposed or acted on at this time. Friends are encouraged to reach out to Karin and Denis with additional questions and feedback on the possible courses of action.

4. DISCERNMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

- a. *Addendum Two Overview:* Dorothy Grannell presented the Committee's *Addendum Two to Proposal for Use of PFM Financial Resources* dated February 5, 2023, attached hereto as Attachment 3, and explained that this Addendum proposes subdivision of the Meeting's investments into five funds (rather than the previous four). Dorothy added that both the Cemetery and Financial Stewardship Committees have yet to meet to consider the changes and provide their recommendations as to the inclusion of a separate Cemetery Fund.

In response to a question, Dorothy explained that Friends are encouraged not to specify a particular fund for their donations. Donations, under the proposal, would go first to cover operating expenses, and any surplus would be split evenly between the Capital Reserve Fund and the Shared Witness Fund. Further, the Meeting is not being asked for a decision today pending further development of details by the Committee.

Committee members added two points: (1) flexibility in the use of funds is essential, as needs both within the Meeting and in the world at large change from year to year; and (2) the Committee is acutely aware the duration of its work in this matter, and is striving to bring closure within a month or so.

- b. *Update About Bequests:* Jane Mullen reported that the Co-Clerks have invited anyone who is so moved to confidentially share their plans for bequests with our Treasurer for Donations, in the hope that the Meeting will benefit from future bequests from members and attenders. Here is a summary of what has been shared to date:

Respondents represent six households; some respondents are individuals, others are couples.

Respondents are in each decade of life from their 40's to their 70's.

Four have named PFM as beneficiary in their will; two have not but envision doing so in the future.

(Minutes continued from p. 3)

As the givers' financial needs and/or financial priorities may change over the balance of their lives, these planned bequests are not guaranteed to come to fruition.

In this vein, one respondent intends to eliminate PFM from their estate plan. This change stems from their discomfort with the ways that the Meeting has approached financial decision-making since early 2022.

In discussion, Rob emphasized the importance of fundraising, and stated that it is essential for everyone to be engaged with the Meeting's financial needs. He also urged Friends who are considering stepping back from their giving to bring forward their reasons for doing so. Another Friend noted that the Meeting's demographic makeup includes many older Friends who are on fixed incomes.

In closing, Dorothy reiterated that "We're all in this together," and that part of caring for one another includes paying our bills.

- c. Proposed Shared Witness Seasoning Committee: Heather Denkmire presented the attached *Proposal to Establish Shared Witness Seasoning Committee* (Attachment 4) and opened discussion by noting that the Meeting's response to the need for housing showed that we can accomplish big things together. Heather continued by explaining that the proposed committee would be a supportive group for Friends to go to for seasoning of potential uses of the Meeting's funds, and there are no proposed policies or procedures yet.

Ensuing discussion included the following:

Clarity is needed regarding the respective roles of the proposed committee and the Leadings Committee; in any event, the two groups would need to work together.

Some Friends requested more guidance on the proposed committee's role and process to avoid constant reinvention. Institutional memory is vital to the Meeting's effective functioning.

The proposers recognize the need for additional clarity on policies and procedures and the proposed committee would need to attend to such matters.

The proposed committee is *not* a grant-making body and would not be in the position of processing applications.

Co-Clerk Rob Levin asked whether the Meeting was prepared to either (1) carry the matter over, or (2) approve establishment of the proposed committee, with the charge that the committee's first task be to bring back to the Meeting a plan for its own working procedures. In response, it became clear that the matter would be carried over for future discernment.

Recognizing the impending start of the weekly Meeting for Worship, the Meeting then rose at about 10:35 am, to meet again for the Conduct of Business on March 5, 2023, according to Divine will.

State of Society 2022 Rough Draft 1.28.23

We testify in the larger community and society to the Spirit in human affairs, to what is loving, true, and just ... Quaker practice is not an individual practice of individual enlightenment, but of forming a beloved community and society. We seek a beloved society in which we order every relationship with others and the natural world in accord with the Spirit.

From Nadine Hoover's Walking in the World as a Friend: Essential Quaker Practices

The last few years have brought times of uncertainty, fear and loss. We know from our indigenous neighbors the blueberry fields need to be burned to remain productive. When competing grasses, encroaching bushes and last year's remaining blueberry plants are reduced in shimmering sheets of flame, they return their nutrients to the soil to nurture future fruitfulness. As this year ends, we know that our beloved community is resilient and blessed by the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Portland Friends Meeting decided to take a year turning inward in order to step out outward together. That sounds simple but this discernment has been complex and challenging work. This year we have been held in all our many gathering places by God's sustaining grace. We hear of deep silence as well as spoken ministry that draws us to deeper communion in spaces large and small within our beloved community: meeting for

(Continued on p. 4)

worship, meeting for worship for conduct of business, threshing sessions, faithfulness groups, small ongoing worship gatherings, committee meetings, joining in spiritual support of a member on trial for climate action, intergenerational worship and more.

Discernment on the use of resources was a searching exercise. While the leading topic has been the use of our financial resources, it has led to questions of who are we as a community, what is our shared purpose, in what ways are we shaped by White privilege, in what ways are we shaped by God and how wide a range of beliefs can we hold and still be one community? Superficial discussion can hide both disunity and unity. There were times when a clear view of our differences made us fear that we might not be able to live in community together. We were grateful to be guided by a discernment steering committee who created threshing sessions throughout the year.

In September, many of us gathered in person at Friends School of Portland with an outside facilitator. We were invited in the circle to give voice to our own perspective and then to try standing in someone else's. Our final activity showed two deep desires: to care for our neighbors in need, and to care for our community and meeting home. As this year ends there is a renewed trust that we can do hard things together. We find that while we may differ in our use of language, sense of priorities, or even beliefs that we may still come together with a shared sense of how to use our resources.

Summary Report for Replacement of Current Boiler and Decarbonization Portland Friends Meeting HVAC Ad Hoc Committee Meeting for Business, February 5, 2023

Foreword

In step with many others, our overall trajectory toward decarbonization is to increase our reliance on electricity as our energy source for heating while transitioning away from natural gas. Transitioning the Meetinghouse's source of energy is a journey of ongoing discovery. This summary report provides a brief snapshot of where we are in our discovery. At this time, no single overall solution with an associated budget has been identified, no specific recommendation proposed and no decision sought. Instead, this snapshot is intended to contribute information helpful to Meeting's deep discernment about how we allocate our resources. We urge you to receive this information with reflection rather than focusing on its details. In addition to offering this report, we reciprocally seek Meeting's guidance for our next steps to proceed. Please see Next Steps below.

Background

The HVAC Ad Hoc Committee was formed in April 2021, comprised of members of the PFM Buildings and Grounds Committee and the wider PFM community. The Committee's goals were (1) to address the anticipated need to replace the aging gas boiler heating system in the Meetinghouse; (2) to improve indoor air quality; and (3) to act on the Meeting community's interest in decarbonization. The Committee began working with mechanical engineer Curt Bartram on this project in early 2022. His final report defining options for this project was issued November 3, 2022.

In addition to our goals described above, the following were considered:

- Energy sources and consumption: Reduction in our overall energy consumption and use of fossil fuels and increase in our use of sustainable/renewable energy sources.
- Physical Practicality: Degree of interventions and modifications to the current physical building.
- Installed and Operating Costs: Installed cost is a one-time expenditure. Operating cost is the ongoing annual cost of consumed energy and system maintenance.
- Unknowns: Collateral improvements, currently unforeseen, that may be required as a result of the

proposed HVAC work, such as conditions uncovered during construction or upgrades mandated by changes in building codes.

Existing Boiler

While the existing boiler is functioning adequately, it is aging and approaching the end of its life expectancy which is why it is "on the radar". If in the future (next month or next year) the boiler shows signs of failure such as leakage or reduced pressure, replacement becomes "urgent". If the boiler does fail, especially in winter, it is an emergency that requires immediate replacement. Such a replacement boiler is relatively common and can be replaced in a week or two. The cost of replacement is in the range of \$30,000 to \$50,000.

Three Possible Courses of Action

Based on the goals and considerations listed in "Background" above, the needs of our building and its use patterns, several interrelated systems are organized into three discrete courses of action. These courses of action can be considered independently, or sequentially, or "leapfrog" from Course 1 to Course 3, as different paths toward decarbonization. Failure of the boiler would likely require urgent action irrespective of the chosen course of action.

- **Course 1** includes (a) conservation measures such as improved insulation and improved window coverings to reduce energy use; and (b) upgrading the electrical service capacity to improve building safety and allow for anticipated future higher electric demands; or
- **Course 2** achieves partial decarbonization by replacing a portion of our gas energy for heating with electric energy. Course 2 includes the conservation measures and electrical upgrade described in Course 1. In addition, Course 2 (a) replaces the existing gas boiler with a new high-efficiency gas boiler; (b) installs electric resistance heaters in parlor, nursery, classrooms, dining room, Meeting Room; (c) installs new high-efficiency heating controls throughout; and (d) provides an air disinfection system in larger common spaces; or
- **Course 3** reaches total local electrification by eliminating our reliance on natural gas as a primary heat source in the Meetinghouse. Course 3 includes the conservation and safety measures described in Course 1 and some of those in Course 2 (to be determined). Course 3 presents a number of options and challenges because there are several types of systems for delivering heating, each with its own advantages and disadvantages, collateral consequences, unknowns and costs (initial and operational). Course 3 might include, for instance, distributed heat pumps throughout the building, a geothermal energy source, and/or a centralized air system. Course 3 might also include fresh air ventilation with or without air conditioning, eliminating the need for air disinfection.

Course 3 is a complex and MAJOR PROJECT that will likely impact every part of the

Meetinghouse. Like all complex projects, it will require a significant commitment by the Meeting and a design professional to identify and consider options, to select and design a preferred option, and then to implement the plan correctly.

Budget Projections

Our consultant provided budget projections for each course of action. These are *highly conservative* projections that include installation, contingency and design costs. The Committee recommends use of these conservative projections for planning in order to reduce the possibility of cost overruns. Actual bid costs may be substantially less, or not, depending on design, unknowns, inflation, and timing.

Course 1 - \$50,000 allowance. Conservation (insulation) and upgrading electrical service. or

Course 2 - \$140,000 allowance (includes \$50,000 Course 1 allowance). Course 1 measures, plus new high-

efficiency gas boiler and controls, electric resistance heaters in parlor, nursery, classrooms, dining room, Meeting Room, and air disinfection system in larger common spaces.

or

Course 3 - \$200,000 to \$580,000 allowance range (includes Course 1 and 2 allowances). Conversion to electricity as the primary energy source throughout the building.

The recommended budget for Course 3 is a broad range because there are several different types of systems that might fit our building, and more study is needed to better understand which one is best adapted to our building and our resources. Each system varies significantly in first cost and longterm expense, and all systems require modifications to the existing building to accommodate piping, ducts, wiring, etc.

Friends with heat pumps installed in their homes may wonder why these budget projections are so much higher than their private installations. The most significant factor is that our Meetinghouse is a complex commercial building that includes the Meeting Room, which is a public gathering space classified by code as an Assembly Use. A private residential system is not comparable to a commercial system that is rated for assembly use.

Ventilation

Friends have expressed an interest in providing fresh air ventilation in the Meeting Room and possibly other spaces, to exchange stale warm air with fresh outside air and to assist in mold reduction. In some ways, ventilation and heating seek opposite goals. Heating seeks to warm the air in a space, and keep it warm by limiting infiltration (drafts) of outside air. A primary step for heating efficiency, then, is plugging air leaks to prevent infiltration by outside air. Ventilation, on the other hand, seeks to exchange stale warm air with new fresh air frequently, typically by mechanical and/or natural means, thereby reducing heating's efficiency.

It is unclear at this stage whether fresh air ventilation will be chosen (or might be required by building codes) in Course 3. More study is required to understand the many unknowns before fresh air ventilation can be meaningfully considered. Allowing more time for these weighty decisions maintains flexibility regarding Meeting's resources and leaves the door open for evolving and emerging technologies.

Additional Considerations

It is also important to note that, in the near future, "Switching the heat source to electricity doesn't truly decarbonize your facility because over 50% of the electric generation sources for CMP are gas- & oil-fired power plants. Currently the most effective way to reduce your carbon footprint is to improve your envelope efficiency, replace the existing boiler with a high-efficiency unit, and purchase your electricity from a community solar farm, if possible." (quote from our consultant). In addition, State law in Maine requires that all electricity sold in the state be 80% renewable by 2030.

Next Steps

In order for the HVAC Committee to proceed, we need the Meeting's guidance for our next steps. How do we value and balance desires to decarbonize the Meetinghouse, maintain heating, and improve indoor air quality, along with multiple other worthy internal and external goals and needs? Specifically:

- How much money is the Meeting willing or led to spend on decarbonizing? There are multiple spending approaches such as: incremental (a little now and a little more later), ramp up (start small then go big) and jump in (the whole at one time).
- How quickly do we proceed along our transition? What is our capacity and appetite for committing time, attention and money?

Addendum Two to Proposal for Use of PFM Financial Resources

Discernment Steering Committee

February 5, 2023

Background: On Sunday, January 15, Portland Friends Meeting approved the general framework in the Discernment Steering Committee’s proposal—and approved creation of the Shared Witness Fund. In the course of discussion, several questions were raised about the interactions among the several subfunds in PFM’s invested accounts, and whether we were approving specific amounts or percentages of the total. This document is intended to clarify those issues in preparation for the February 5 Meeting for Business.

January 15 Minute: Friends approved the establishment of the framework of the four subfunds as set forth in the Proposal, and approved the initial allocation of \$200,000 for the Shared Witness Fund. Further discernment will be needed regarding the amounts and management of the other subfunds, and the process for discerning use of the Shared Witness Fund.

Need for a Cemetery Subfund: After further review, we realized there is a need to ensure funds are available for adequate care and maintenance of the cemetery over the very long term. Over the past several months, three funding options have been proposed: establish a designated cemetery sub-fund, draw from the general meeting /operating budget support fund, or draw from the capital reserve fund. At this time, it may be appropriate to keep the Cemetery Fund as a fifth subfund, in the amount of approximately \$100,000. The Cemetery Committee Financial Stewardship Committee will work together and continue to discern and season these proposals.

With this change, the revised Invested Funds Chart appears graphically as follows:

Capital Reserve Fund	Jones Youth Fund	Cemetery Fund	General Meeting Fund	Shared Witness Fund
Initial fund: \$200K	Approx. \$50K	Approx. \$100K	Approx. \$400K	Initial fund: \$200K
† HVAC and other capital reserve. † Half of projects funded from gifts, half from invested funds.	† Supports children + youth programs in the operating budget. † Draw of 4% per year is \$2,000 to annual budget.	† Supports annual cemetery expenses in the operating budget. † Draw of 4% per year matches our current annual budget allocation for cemetery (\$4,000).	† Supports annual operating budget, including maintenance, buildings and grounds, and donations to Friends organizations, Leading Grants, etc. † A 4% annual “harvesting” generates \$16,000/year	† Amounts to invest or donate through Seasoning Committee. † \$26,000 already committed - MIRC (\$20,000) and Family Promise expenses (\$6,000). Remaining balance of \$174,000.

Financial Stewardship Committee will work with Friends Fiduciary on the transition of four invested subfunds (Jones Youth Fund, Cemetery Fund, Barbie Potter Fund, and Meeting Fund) to five subfunds (Capital Reserve Fund, Cemetery Fund, General Meeting Fund (unrestricted to support annual operating budget), Jones Youth Fund, Shared Witness Fund).

How much money is currently in our invested funds and how is it divided among the existing subfunds?

As of 1/31/2023, the breakdown of our invested funds is as follows:

❖ Meeting Fund	\$545,732
❖ Barbie Potter Fund	\$259,409
❖ Cemetery Fund	\$ 100,705
❖ Jones Youth Fund	\$ 43,103
❖ Total	\$948,949

However, please understand that these amounts will rise and fall with the market before we get around to restructuring the various subfunds.

How much money will be in the Shared Witness Fund (SWF)? The Meeting approved establishing the SWF with an initial \$200,000—which happens to be approximately 22% of the total value of invested funds as of early January but may be a somewhat higher or lower percentage when we get around to formally establishing the subfunds. The intent is not to maintain the Shared Witness Fund at 22% of a changing total of invested funds, but to dedicate/release the \$200,000 as we are led. Note: \$26,000 has already been committed to support hosting Family Promise in 2023 and as a donation to the Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition. As of January 31, balance in the SWF is \$174,000.

Elsewhere in the proposals, the Steering Committee suggested replenishing the SWF at a rate of \$5,000 per year—and the Meeting might decide to allocate other amounts in the future and to raise funds for specific efforts.

Will amounts spent from either the (proposed, not yet approved) Capital Reserve Fund and/or the Shared Witness Fund displace or distort the amount in the General Meeting Fund? No, because the amounts in the funds are dollar figures, not percentages, payments out of any one subfund will not affect the other subfunds.

What will happen to market earnings or losses from invested funds—how will the subfunds increase or decrease? Changes in the Friends Fiduciary Fund share value and distribution of earnings per share will be allocated to the proposed sub-accounts on a pro-rata/proportional basis. Assuming that there will be net earnings or losses during some periods, these will be allocated to the subfunds in proportion to the remaining amounts in those funds. For instance, if, at some point, \$100,000 remains in the SWF and there is \$700,000 in the total invested funds pool, one seventh of total earnings (or 14%) would flow to the SWF during that period. Similarly, if there is \$150,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund, earnings would flow to that fund in proportion to the total (about 21% in this example). Similarly, market losses will also be allocated to the subfunds in proportion to their respective percentages. Friends Fiduciary will handle the accounting for each of the subfunds monitored and guided by the Financial Stewardship Committee.

Can Friends designate donations toward specific subfunds? The Steering Committee strongly recommends that donations should not be designated towards specific subfunds. Throughout our discernment process, it's been clear that some of us are more aligned towards supporting outward-facing witness, while others are oriented more towards our Meetinghouse and grounds. This variation among us is healthy and natural, and at the same time we recognize that we are all in this together, and that donations should be made to the Meeting as a whole, starting with the annual budget, and not to specific subfunds.

This approach will emphasize and bolster our unity. Exceptions will be made for special Meeting-wide fundraising campaigns such as capital projects, our annual Family Promise fundraising drive, or supporting a travel mission.

How often should we review the use of our invested funds and the various subfunds? *The original Proposal states that one outstanding issue is to identify a process and timing for review of the Invested Funds after some time has passed. The Steering Committee would like to make a more specific recommendation in this regard. We propose that the Financial Stewardship Committee, working with the Co-Clerks, conduct a Fall 2025 review, in preparation for the 2026 budget. This time frame would give us approximately three years of implementation and experimentation, enough time to get a feel for how things are working and what can be improved.*

Establish the Shared Witness Seasoning Committee Upon further reflection, the Steering Committee would like to offer a simplified Proposal to Establish a Shared Witness Seasoning Committee. Please see the separate document for that proposal.

Proposal to Establish Shared Witness Seasoning Committee

Presented by Discernment Steering Committee to Meeting for Business on February 5, 2023

The Steering Committee is grateful for the proposal drafted by Wayne, Mary, Tracy, Brad, Fritz, Anne, Allen, and others this past summer. It was through the Meeting's consideration of that proposal and through additional community sharing at a recent Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business that we were led to the more open-ended process recommended below.

At that Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business, we heard a concern about the risk that we might turn the Shared Witness Fund into a conventional grants program fund. This proposal attempts to speak to that concern by leaving room for the new committee and the community together to follow Spirit through a simple process without prescribing specific procedures. To a large extent, we will be "feeling our way" as we travel in this journey together.

To discern the right distribution of the Shared Witness Fund, we propose forming a new standing committee of the Meeting: the Shared Witness Seasoning Committee.

This committee's charge would be to season ideas brought by Portland Friends Meeting members or attenders who sense a call to shared witness that includes financial elements. Guided by the Quaker testimonies of stewardship, integrity, peace, community, equality, and simplicity, this committee would be available to hold space for discernment to support the process of some ideas moving into action.

Ideas shepherded with the Shared Witness Seasoning Committee that seem clear for possible action will be shared with the wider Meeting for further discernment in advance of consideration at Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business. When there is clearness about a call to shared witness, clear ideas will be brought to Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business for decisions.

The Nominating Committee would assist with filling this committee with individuals who have the time, skills, background, and interest to commit to the support and discernment required. Ideally, this committee will consist of a spiritually rich mix of people led both by practical and financial knowledge as well as people led by intuition and a "gut sense." A wide range of interpersonal styles, ages, kinds of involvement in the Meeting community, and different ways of sensing

Spirit's call will be essential for this committee to best provide many kinds of support for possible shared witness projects.



Friends who are interested in having a cross cultural Quaker experience are encouraged to register either for an in person experience in North Carolina or an online experience. Keynote and workshop presenters are Noah Merrill, NEYM Exec., Emily Provance, Colin Saxton, FUM and Craig Freshly of Durham Meeting.

Worship, presentations and business are in English and Spanish. There are small group discussions and workshops as well as home groups where individual friendships may be formed. The cost is \$50 for the online weekend.

I hope that we will be able to gather together for some of the sessions as a small group to listen and then have follow up discussions. We will likely meet in homes for those who are interested in a group experience or possibly at the meeting house for some sessions. These Watch PartyHub sessions are still in the design stage. If you are interested in helping to create the PFM hub please let me know. Dorothy Grannell, stemp41@gmail.com, 207-233-6587 The Watch Party Hubs are being tried as an experiment in preparation for the World Conference in South Africa in 2025. What we learn from trying to develop one will inform the planning for the World Conference.

For more information about the event and to register if you are considering attending online:
<https://fwccamericas.regfox.com/fwcc-2023-virtual-section-meeting-registration>

For more information about the event and to register if you are considering attending in-person:
<https://fwccamericas.regfox.com/fwcc-2023-section-meeting>


FWCC Americas 2023 Section Meeting
Becoming the Quakers the World Needs







Haw River State Park
Greensboro, NC
March 23 - 26, 2023





INDIGENOUS MATTERS

The new session of Maine's legislature has begun, and momentum is building at a rapid pace. Many of the more than 2,000 anticipated bills are already printed. Committee work sessions and public hearings are being scheduled. Soon it will be time for folks who are called to spring into action!

Background

The previous legislature approved a number of acts benefiting Wabanaki people. Sadly however, a bill removing state barriers to full self-determination of the Tribes in Maine failed due to the opposition of Governor Mills, despite strong majorities in the House and Senate.

This past December, The Harvard Project on American Indian Development published a study which found that "Whereas per-capita income for non-Maine tribes [within US boundaries] has grown by 61 percent between 1989-2020, it has barely advanced for the Wabanaki Nations, which have seen only 9 percent growth for the same period." It continued, "Unique to Maine,



Crow Flight
by our Portland neighbor
Mihku Paul, Maliseet

the federal Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (MICSA) empowers the state government to block the applicability of federal Indian policy in Maine. As a result, the development of the Wabanaki Nations' economies and governmental capacities have been stunted.

"Today, all four of the tribes in Maine — Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot — are stark economic under-performers relative to the other tribes in the Lower 48 states. Surrounding off-reservation economies and communities have quite consistently, if not absolutely always, experienced net benefits as tribes have taken the reins of self-government and conditions have improved on reservations under Self-Determination. Put more bluntly: The subjugation of the Wabanaki Nation's self-governing capacities (under MICSA) is blocking economic development to the detriment of both tribal and non-tribal citizens, alike."

An overview of the Harvard study is available here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JZE8vHU1yoEbR3U8v1Q9BAsE5hZoLi9d1Bw2Duzro/edit>

And here is the full study:

<https://ash.harvard.edu/publications/economic-and-social-impacts-restrictions-applicability-federal-indian-policies>

Maine Quakers Approve Minutes of Support for Tribal Sovereignty

Within the past few months, both Falmouth and Vassalboro Quarterly Meetings approved minutes in favor of the as-yet-published legislation which intends to restore essential elements of self-determination that were lost to MICSA. This approval signals that Quakers statewide are now enrolled along with dozens of other faith groups and other organizations in clear support of Tribal sovereignty.

How Can YOU Help?

1. Individual Friends can find many ways to help make passage of the upcoming bill a reality. First, make contact with your state Representative and Senator, and urge them to support the bill, even if it has not been finalized. If you contact me, I can check the Wabanaki Alliance "whip sheet" to get contact information for your legislators and find out how they may be leaning. You also may wish to attend weekly meetings of the Coalition that is actively assisting the Alliance by contacting their Executive Director John Dieffenbacher-Krall at johndk@wabanakialliance.com and asking to be on their email list.
2. Sign up for Friend Shirley Hager's e-list. Here you'll learn about the latest legislative alerts, newly-published bills and opportunities to participate (shirley.hager@maine.edu). And, check out the Wabanaki Alliance's excellent website (<https://wabanakialliance.com>) to learn more about the issues and to access their social media presences.
3. Make use of these resources:

Find the 131st Maine Legislature Bill Tracker here: <https://wabanakialliance.com/131st-bill-tracker/>

Find the revamped Wabanaki Alliance Take Action page here: <https://wabanakialliance.com/stand-with-wabanaki/>

Friends, hopes are high for success during this session of the Maine legislature. I encourage you to jump in and do your part, in solidarity with our Indigenous sisters and brothers!

Wayne (wcoobb2@gmail.com)



Friends School of Portland Strategic Planning Process Ahead

Dear Friends,

In my second year at Friends School of Portland, I am looking forward to the strategic planning process that our school community is embarking on. This is the second strategic plan that FSP has envisioned and will help chart the school's course for the next 5-years. We are in the process of holding informational sessions about the school's progress and our planning process ahead. Quinn Lavigne '09 and I co-hosted a recent strategic planning session for families. I appreciate that Quinn was part of FSP's first graduating class. From Mary Tracy's leading supported by Portland Friends Meeting, the school has grown in leaps and bounds.

FSP's board and I hope to hear from members of Portland Friends Meeting as we chart this next chapter. There are many Portland Friends Meeting members/attenders who serve on the FSP board and would be happy to entertain your questions (Lise Wagner, Kirk Read, Doug McCown, Kathy Beach, Jeff Peterson, and Fritz Weiss). I would also like to extend the invitation to an [upcoming informational session via zoom](#) on **Thursday, Feb., 16 at 6:30pm.**

We plan to have an in-person visioning session in the morning on Saturday, March 18. Please reach out to me directly if you are interested in learning more about FSP's process ahead!

I look forward to your conversation.

Warmly,

Sara Primo

sara@friendsschoolportland.org or call (207) 558-6212)

Registration link included above: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtcCprTqsG9PcK6-RzSsBJIM_WWEp-J_Q



Daily Weekday Silent Worship:

This is an opportunity for silent worship. The group meets for thirty minutes each Monday through Friday at 10:30 AM. All are welcome.

The zoom link is: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/88630165246?pwd=QXhMYWozZnRteWFsWmdJTUQqamIUUTo9>

No clear impressions, either from above or from without, can be received by a mind turbid with excitement and agitated by a crowd of distractions. The stillness needed for the clear shining of light within is incompatible with hurry.

Caroline Stephen, 1854-1909

Bread Day

Do you like baking bread? Or do you want to learn?

Do you want to connect with Friends who are older or younger than you?

Do you hunger for a hands-on spiritual experience?

Are you unstoppable with the bread puns?

If you've said yes to any of the above, please join us for our second annual **Bread Day on Saturday, March 4th at Portland Friends Meeting**. You are welcome to arrive between 10:30 and 11am and we will finish up by 4:30 or 5pm. No expertise or materials are required. Bread Day is a leading and an invitation from Gretchen Baker-Smith and Maggie Fiori to New England Yearly Meeting to gather in our local meetings around baking bread as a spiritual practice while centering youth and families. So as we gather in Portland, there will be Friends all over New England doing the same!

What will we do? We will connect as a whole community through worship, games, singing, and baking bread, with a special focus on building meaningful relationships across generations, in pairs and trios. We'll ask one another— what makes the yeast, a funny tiny stinky little organism, bubble and froth and how does it make the dough rise? What might it look like for us to be like yeast? What can yeast teach us about listening to Spirit, feeding our souls, and transforming our community?

Here's an idea of the schedule:

- Arrive between 10:30 and 11am, eat snacks and play games
- Singing + Invocation from Maggie
- Making our dough in teams
- Lunch + reflecting on being like yeast in our dough teams
- Punch down the dough, then options: worship sharing, letter writing, play, rest, walk, etc
- Shape and bake our dough, closing worship + singing
- Eat bread!



The yeast has been bubbling in our meeting this year in the form of faithful ministry, spirit-led decisions, and our willingness to be transformed. We welcome Friends who want to dive deep into reflecting on all this through the metaphor of bread and yeast, *and* we welcome Friends who come for the silly fun, and those who want both. Part of coming together with all ages is being able to hold all of this together and seek the spiritual nourishment we need in the moment, which might be different from others.

RSVP here [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeeY8J7WdYRbXAY70k2QTkoebeY1qg_vot5JweBjHjmm-oYYQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

[1FAIpQLSeeY8J7WdYRbXAY70k2QTkoebeY1qg_vot5JweBjHjmm-oYYQ/viewform?usp=sf_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeeY8J7WdYRbXAY70k2QTkoebeY1qg_vot5JweBjHjmm-oYYQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

by March 1st, so we can plan for appropriate numbers.

Covid Precautions: We will follow our meeting's current precautions for preventing the spread of Covid. We will require masks in the meeting room (for full group programming) and masks will be optional in other parts of the building. Additionally, we will ask all Friends attending Bread Day to take an antigen test before coming, with extra tests available when you arrive.

Children of all ages are welcome to participate in all parts of the day. Parents and guardians, please indicate on your RSVP if you would like to arrange childcare for younger children who will need a break from scheduled activities.

Falmouth Quarter Meeting, by zoom

28 January 2023

Present

Brunswick: Marian Dalton, Christine Holden

Durham: Kim Bolshaw, Wendy Schlotterbeck, Leslie Manning, Susan Gilbert (Regrets, Mey Hasbrook)

Portland: Fritz Weiss, Sue Reilly, Ann Dodd-Collins, Sydney McDowell, Andy Grannell, Dorothy Grannell, Wayne Cobb

Southern Maine: Louise Sandmeyer

Windham: Julianne Moore, Janice Beattie (pastor), Penny Loura (clerk), Nancy Dolittle, Betty Davis

Theme: These are challenging times; what is before us is difficult. Our focus is paying attention to what is exercising us, what we are feeling passionate about or called to.

Song: Lift Every Voice and Sing, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEjUVV4_-2w

Wendy Schlotterbeck led us into open, waiting worship with a passage from John Lewis' memoir, *Walking With the Wind*, in which he wrote about a childhood memory and Beloved Community.

Following open worship we chose one of four breakout rooms and had almost 50 minutes to read or view the prompt and share our reflections.

ROOM 1 Sailing in the Fog- read and share reflections

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XxHmfEExRvFbFc8oftgSV9MDUKaCMbml/edit>

ROOM 2 Praying with clay or markers

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uauG2caHYlyAepKyXlckLiyou7_pgL_DXcj6CYmMvhQ/edit#

ROOM 3 Praying with Poetry

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Dx708p_HjFprmScXl1P96cdw7A8rWX81lmgwTfslyAw/edit

ROOM 4 Movement as prayer- Parable of the trapeze <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWvV5N4hOGc>

Following a short break, Wayne Cobb introduced the proposed "FQM Minute on the Inherent Right of Tribal Sovereignty of the Wabanaki". (Attached) A similar minute has already been approved by Vassalboro Quarter. Several questions and concerns were raised. It was pointed out that this minute does not support a specific bill; it acknowledges and supports the sovereignty of the Wabanaki Tribes and Nations within Maine and supports bills that will come before the Maine Legislature that would recognize and implement tribal sovereignty. More information is available on the Wabanaki Alliance website, <https://wabanakialliance.com/>, and Wayne is willing to answer questions, wcobb2@gmail.com.

WE APPROVED THE MINUTE.

Recognizing that by doing so we are also committing to further action as opportunities arise.

Wayne Cobb will send the updates on Wabanaki issues that he currently sends to Portland Friends Meeting to all the meetings in Falmouth Quarter.

We closed with a period of worship, expecting to gather again at the All Maine Gathering on May 6, 2023.



Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

Address Service Requested

Next newsletter deadline:
Wednesday, March 8, 11:58pm

submissions: pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

