

Comments from Rich Liversidge on Report to Interim Meeting, June 2016

One thing that I thought was missing is the over-arching purpose of the process itself. BYM needs to fund what it is led to expend. After income from the camps, annual sessions and other programs, whatever is not funded from fees and other revenue sources must come from the member meetings that comprise BYM.

Apportionment is the process for doing that in the most equitable manner possible. It is the gap financing needed by BYM to cover its excess costs. To do that, both the programs and the resources of BYM must be taken into account. The new General Secretary and BYM's committees must discern what it is that BYM should take on. That includes the extent to which that work can be self-funding. That determines, to a large extent, what funding shortfall needs to be apportioned among the monthly meetings.

Understanding BYM's true leadings and scope of activities is crucial to this.

Camping Program. Given the scale of the camping program, and its out-sized importance in our budget, I continue to wonder whether it can be made independent from the rest of BYM, and also be made even more self-funding. As a separate nonprofit entity, it might also be able to incur project financing for investments, supported by camper fee and contributions income.

In that event, both BYM's direct program costs and its indirect staff and administrative costs would need to be examined and possibly re-allocated, with some of those costs allocated to the camps. With that done, the apportionment of the remaining BYM costs might be more apparent to the member meetings. It also might allow the meetings with a smaller proportion of children attending camp to fund a relatively smaller portion of the total apportionment amount.

I was present in the 1980s and early 1990s, before the acquisition of Shiloh, when the trustees of Catocin Camp were considering the difficulty that the separate Catocin trust had in funding itself and its needs. Part of the problem stemmed from the fact that Catocin originally was formed by six or seven monthly meetings, not all of BYM, and the financial burden was shared unequally. That was because it served kids from throughout the YM.

In the 1990s, that funding issue and the difficulty in funding camp investments and maintenance were addressed by bringing Catocin into the BYM structure and having the full needs funded by BYM. However, not all meetings take advantage of the camps for children, and this causes some resistance within those non-participating meetings when the camps' needs become part of the apportionment process funded by all.

This is not a matter that's easy to address in a way that's seen as fair to all, but perhaps it should be included in the general apportionment considerations.

To some, but not all, what I have identified may be considered controversial. However, I believe a consideration of apportionment should take into account where the demands for apportionment funds originate on the "Uses" side of the funding equation, as well as on the "Sources" side.