

MAR 10 2016



Blacksburg Friends Meeting
404 Mt. Tabor Road

P.O. Box 327
Blacksburg, VA 24063-0327

March 5, 2016

James Lynn, Clerk
Baltimore Yearly Meeting Stewardship and Finance Committee
Baltimore Yearly Meeting Main Office
17100 Quaker Lane
Sandy Spring, MD 20860-1267

Dear Members of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) Stewardship and Finance Committee,

We received the BYM request for the 2016 apportionment for Blacksburg Friends Meeting in the amount of \$4,520. For several years, the Stewardship and Finance committee has discussed with concern the continued increase in the yearly apportionment and the Meeting's ability to pay the requested amount. This year we feel that the requested amount is far too much and have recommended to our meeting that we only pay \$2,900 for 2016. This was the amount for the 2014 apportionment, and we feel that this amount is more representative of our financial capability at this time. This recommendation was approved at Meeting for Business on January 10, 2016. Please be aware that, as we continue to monitor our finances, we may need to decrease our apportionment payment further. We also do not anticipate being able to afford the requested amount (or more) in the near future.

We are in the midst of paying off a fifteen-year mortgage for our new Meetinghouse. For this reason, the current total income for the meeting is inflated, as approximately 81% of our yearly budget is directed at the mortgage and upkeep of the Meetinghouse. Based on our current pledges for 2016 we only have \$5,744 for our total operating budget after taking care of the mortgage and upkeep of the Meetinghouse. For this reason, we do not feel that we can afford a \$4,520 apportionment (which would represent 79% of the remaining pledged operating amount). Members have made great efforts to increase their donations to meet the mortgage, but will likely not be able to continue once the mortgage is paid off.

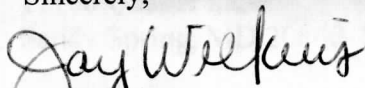
We value our membership in BYM and believe in its mission. But, as a meeting, we also feel that it is important to contribute to our local community and other Quaker organizations as we feel led. In addition to the \$3,620 BYM apportionment for 2015, we contributed \$605 to Quaker organizations, including the BYM Camping Programs. An additional \$1,045 was contributed to other local and international organizations. In addition, we support our college-aged students who are attending Quaker colleges and participating in Quaker programs (\$1,000

in 2015). We feel that in order to continue to support these organizations and our college-aged members we cannot afford the requested apportionment.

Furthermore, our Meetinghouse serves the larger Friends community in Southwest Virginia by being a place for meetings such as the Blue Ridge Gathering and the Apportionment meeting held in the Spring of 2015.

In the future, we ask that you please take into account the nature of the income and expenditures associated with individual Meetings when calculating the apportionment. As you can see, our reported income to BYM does not reflect the actual operating dollars that we have to work with for 2016.

Sincerely,



Jay Wilkins
Clerk, Stewardship and Finance
Blacksburg Friends Meeting