

General Secretary's Report to Interim Meeting
6/15/19

Since our last Interim Meeting Third Month 2019. . . my top priorities have been:

- 1) To continue to represent BYM on behalf of the Trustees in the lawsuit.
- 2) To orient our new Development Director, Mary Braun.
- 3) To hire a new part-time Bookkeeping Assistant to support BYM's accounting services.
- 4) To provide part time interim support for the STRIDE program.
- 5) To support the development of the 2020 budget.
- 6) To visit local meetings.
- 7) To develop a proposal for a long-range planning process for the Yearly Meeting.

What have we achieved?

- 1) I am pleased to report that the legal dispute has been resolved to the satisfaction of the parties. The case has been dismissed. The terms of the settlement are confidential. However, there will be no impact on BYM's financial position moving forward. Again, we owe many thanks to Wayne Finegar, Associate General Secretary, for contributing his legal knowledge and experience to help guide us through this experience.
- 2) Mary Braun started her new work as BYM's Development Director on 5/6/19. She hit the ground running. However, she will need to pace herself for a long run up a steep learning curve. Mary brings a wealth of expertise in nonprofit organization, management, and marketing which will be helpful moving forward. Please plan on inviting her to your Meeting or organize a house party for her to meet your Friends. She wants to meet you and get connected.
- 3) From fifty-plus applicants for the Bookkeeping Assistant position, Comptroller Margo Lehman and I conducted several phone screening interviews and then interviewed four in person. We hired Harriet Dugan, who began work on 5/28/19. Harriet brings extensive non-profit bookkeeping and office management experience to her new job. She is new to Friends, but excited to discover and learn more about BYM.
- 4) Three-quarter-time Youth Programs Manager Jossie Dowling took on an additional temporary one-quarter-time position as Interim STRIDE Coordinator, starting in late March. She has been working with local STRIDE groups to assure that 2019 STRIDE campers have the support they need to have a great time at camp this summer (i.e. enrollment, funding, gear, orientation, transportation). Jossie is doing this in addition to her regular job organizing and carrying out conferences for Junior Young Friends and Young Friends.
- 5) Discernment concerning BYM's program and budget priorities, apportionment, and fundraising capacities intensified this past quarter. I attended apportionment meetings with a couple of dozen local meeting representatives in Roanoke (VA) and Little Falls (MD) to respond to questions and concerns. I met with the Stewardship and Finance and Development committees and the Comptroller to advance the next draft of the budget – based on input we received from local meetings, program committees, Supervisory Committee, and administrative staff. We still have a long way to go to balance the priorities and needs of our programs and operations with what we believe we can raise from fees, apportionment, and contributions.
- 6) I visited Little Falls, Penn Hill, Roanoke, Sandy Spring, and Warrington meetings this past quarter, including Warrington and Nottingham Quarterly meetings. All are interested in learning new ways to grow and sustain their meetings. A number of other ideas occurred to me as I listened: 1) Could BYM assemble teams of volunteers to assist local meetings with projects to maintain graveyards and meeting houses? 2) Could BYM provide traveling presiding clerks on occasion as needed for local meetings that do not have clerks? 3) What could BYM do to assist local meetings in the care and management of their historic meeting houses and graveyards in perpetuity? 4) How can BYM attend to the spiritual well-being of small local meetings operating under the often overwhelming burdens of property management?
- 7) The need for Spirit-based, long-range planning has been urgently clear to me since I started in this role as General Secretary almost three years ago. Providing "Spirit-led, strategic leadership" is in the first line of the GS job description. However, finding the time to begin organizing such a collective discernment has been difficult.

Who are we called to become as a spiritual community over the next ten years? What are our top goals and priorities as a faith community? What are the key challenges we face, and where are our key opportunities in these times? How can we best advance our priorities and achieve our goals, starting from where we are today? Developing a clearer sense of BYM's long-range mission, priorities, and goals is essential for guiding the development of our budget, our apportionment and fundraising, our camping program and facilities planning, and the overall work of the Yearly Meeting. With the support and encouragement of the Supervisory Committee, I have begun to gather ideas and experience together. I would welcome and will be seeking your input in the months ahead.

In the meantime, the staff and I continue to devote attention to the seasonal cycle of annual activities that support BYM's many missions and activities.

- 1) The camping program still has room for more campers at all camps this summer (and for more volunteers and a few staff positions, too!). Please tell your friends and neighbors. Camping Program Manager Jane Megginson is pulling together the myriad details that need attention before camp starts at the end of June. She has also been working with the new director of Opequon Quaker Camp, Sean Hickey, as he transitions into this new role. She has also been working with Jesse Miller at Catoctin who will be flying solo as director this summer, as co-director Dyresha Harris will be on temporary leave this season.
- 2) After helping to organize three successful and productive Family Camp Weekends this spring, Camp Property Manager David Hunter is now pressing contractors to finish buildings and repairs at the camps as soon as possible. This includes new showers and renovated restrooms at Opequon and new cabins at Catoctin and Shiloh (one each). Resident Camp Caretakers Jesse Miller (Catoctin) and Mike Reed (Shiloh) are also playing essential roles in getting the camps ready. Prep for camping season for David also includes getting all of our camp vehicles serviced and inspected, re-certifying and testing all bus drivers, finding licensed bus drivers for each camp, and updating insurance.
- 3) The auditor's annual site visit occurred the first week of April and proceeded in good order. Comptroller Margo Lehman has been providing additional supplemental information throughout this quarter to assist the auditor. She is now delighted to be training new Bookkeeping Assistant Harriet Dugan, who we anticipate will be a great help for our accounting and financial reporting.
- 4) Wayne Finegar has been working with the Program Committee to organize and produce Annual Session. This included producing the Annual Session edition of *Interchange*. He has also been supporting the Faith and Practice Committee in the electronic indexing and production of reprints of BYM's current approved 1988 *Faith and Practice* and the 2013 *Resource for Faith and Practice*. All of this he does, in addition to administering office operations and computer systems. Administrative Assistant Laura Butler provides support to Wayne with data entry, phone reception, handling registration inquiries for various programs, and processing mail and receivables.