

Allocation of Administrative and Development Costs

Over the years that current members have served on the Stewardship and Finance Committee, they have heard occasional questions about what our programs “really cost.” These questions are usually based on the knowledge that our administrative staff provide important support services to our programs: Camping, Youth Programs, Annual Session, Women’s Retreat, and Spiritual Formation. Form 990, which not for profit organizations must file annually with the IRS, already allocates administrative support costs to program support, but at the level to total program costs.

This is the first question the Budget Subcommittee is taking on because it is potentially the most complex, and also the most controversial. If we decide to go forward with this, the approach must be one which is widely seen as accurate and fair, and not as favoring any one program over another.

At this point, the Budget Subcommittee has as many questions as it has answers: Can we expand on the allocations already done for Form 990 to take them to the level of individual programs? Would this add useful information? Can we do it reliably without taking staff time away from their regular work? If we had this information, how would we use it? Would knowing the full costs of our programs make the Yearly Meeting more comfortable with how we are spending our resources, or would it lead to more concerns?

The Budget Subcommittee has just begun work on the budget format, with the goal of providing a basic overview for those who need a general understanding, but additional detail available for those who want more information than is currently included. Once the Subcommittee gets a bit farther with this work, a sample format will be posted here and comments will be invited.