

BYM Interim Meeting, January 31, 2026
By Zoom

I2026-1 Opening. Friends gathered into an extended period of open worship at 12:30 pm. Clerk Tom Webb ("T-Dubbs") opened the business meeting by reading the Baltimore Yearly Meeting land acknowledgement, honoring the indigenous people and cultures, past and present, of our geographic region. He introduced Marcy Seitel, Adelphi, and Beth Haw, Williamsburg, who will serve as process observers. Their charge is to attend to how we conduct our business today, listening carefully for actions or words that are hurtful or dismissive. The clerk will call on them periodically to speak to anything they have observed that seems to be inconsistent with our anti-racist declaration.

Tom Webb reminded us that discernment based in worship requires that we listen to each other tenderly, attend to the welfare of the whole community, and release whatever messages we share to the body as a whole. He read the anti-racist queries that will guide us in our discernment today. He spoke of how we are engaged in a journey together that requires us to be patient with ourselves and each other as we seek to become a truly anti-racist faith community.

He read the letter of apology he wrote after November Interim Meeting expressing regret for the harm that was done, and acknowledging his own failure to notice it promptly and address it adequately.

Friends,

At our last Interim Meeting in November, several Friends of Color spoke out about racial harms that were occurring in that meeting, and about a pattern of ongoing disregard for their concerns that they have been experiencing. They also Noticed that in this particular instance Friends had been informed that concerns raised at a prior session would be addressed, and that they did not find the information presented to the Meeting adequately showed this. Further, these Friends observed (not incorrectly) that when Friends of Color brought this Noticing to the Meeting that White Friends minimized their concerns in pursuit of a decision on the item in question.

This is a pattern of behavior that is contrary to our declaration of intent to become an anti-racist faith community. As a community we have come together to declare the deconstruction of white supremacy in our practices a priority, but we have regularly let this priority fall by the wayside in the service of expediency. Our Friends of Color repeatedly put their trust in us to stand with them; we cannot betray that simply because it inconveniences us.

And so, I offer an apology to our Friends of Color; both those who were present and those who have been harmed in the past. Part of the harm that occurred in November was certainly my own fault. I allowed a decision to proceed to the floor without ensuring that those concerns which Friends had expressed were explicitly addressed in released documents. When our Friends of Color spoke in Meeting to Notice this harm I did not call us away from the agenda to allow it to be healed. It was immediately clear that we would not be able to reach unity while this harm was unaddressed, but instead of calling our attention to that and ending the discussion on the floor, I allowed our Friends of Color to be further harmed as they listened to Friends, impatient for the matter to be decided, express their own concerns in some cases without acknowledging their wounds. I allowed the worship to end hours before we shook hands at the rise of Meeting.

It is my responsibility as your clerk to do everything I can to make our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business safe spaces for Friends to share the messages the Spirit lifts up. It is not enough for me to read the anti-racism queries at the start of Meeting. I am not satisfied that this is enough to keep White Friends (like myself) from falling into the familiar patterns of White Supremacy as we saw this past November.

Today, in an effort to prevent us from wounding our Friends further, we will be changing some things about the way Meeting is run. We have some Friends who have taken it upon themselves to be process observers and Noticers, to recognize and name the effects that our discernment has upon others. We **will** be pausing our discernment to address wounds that occur in Meeting. In the future, I will be encouraging committees bringing decisions to the floor to spend at least one session working with process observers to be sure that we are considering how the **way** we make decisions has just as much potential to harm our Friends as the decisions themselves.

The process of becoming an anti-racist faith community will be a long one. Declaring that we wish to become anti-racist is only the first step of many.

—Tom Webb (T-Dubbs)

12026-2 Second Reading of the 2026 Budget. Treasurer Terence McCormally, Herndon, presented the report. He noted that an enormous amount of thought and effort has gone into preparing this budget proposal, and that he had brought with him a detailed slide. The slide show, “2026 Budget Powerpoint for Jan. 31,” is attached. What he proposed to begin with, however, was a one-page summary that might be easier to understand. He reviewed the summary, inserted below. He described the goals that establish the foundation of the budget proposal, the challenges it seeks to address, and remaining issues that have yet to be resolved. The central innovation in this budget is that the finances and expenses of camp and non-camp activities are separated out. This will require clarifying the proper use of restricted and non-restricted reserves, and determining how shared administrative responsibilities, such as fundraising, will be handled.

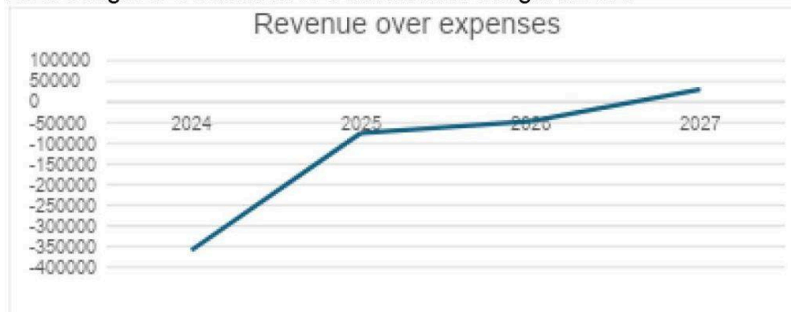
Terrence McCormally explained that the camping program suffered a drastic shortfall in revenue in 2024, which affected the entire Yearly Meeting. The camping program has mounted an impressive comeback, but it is still expected to experience a \$47,000 shortfall in 2026. Trustees have affirmed that BYM reserves are adequate to cover this deficit if needed. The 2026 budget proposed here is expected to serve as a bridge to a fully balanced budget in 2027. He noted that the general Yearly Meeting budget will be brought to annual session for approval, but that the camping budget will not be finalized until the fall.

One Page Summary of 2026 BYM Budget

What Are The Goals For the 2026 Budget		
Continue the Programs and Spending for the Non Camp Work of BYM Unchanged	Provide for BYM Camps With Necessary Changes Towards a Sustainable Camp Program	Continue to enact our values: Be a responsible employer, continue anti-racism work
Examples: Annual Session, Spiritual Formation, Youth Programs, Anti Racism Work, Educational Grants, Services to Monthly Meetings (Faith and Practice, Intervisitation, Directory, Web Site)	Examples: Right Sizing of Staff More Effective Camper Recruitment Creative Camp Programming Realistic Revenue Projections Refinements of Sliding Scale	Examples: Cost of Living Increases Full Benefits Managing Staff Reductions Responsibly Fund Anti racism Activities

New paradigms for the budget process

- Clearly Separate Camp and Non Camp Revenue and Expenditures
- Clarify Releases from Temporarily Restricted Reserves
- Transparency about use of unrestricted reserves to meet expected deficit in 2026
- Depreciation is represented "below the line". It's still in the full budget and audit documents
- 2026 budget is a transition to a sustainable budget in 2027



- The 2027 Camp Budget will most likely not be available for approval at Annual Session

The Bottom Line			
Total Including Fund Releases	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
BYM Non Camp Income	\$929,749	\$942,780	\$977,055
BYM Non Camp Expenses	\$971,665	\$926,752	\$961,954
Revenue Over Expenses			\$15,101
BYM Camp Income	\$1,749,952	\$1,739,266	\$1,773,500
BYM Camp Expenses	\$2,106,064	\$1,814,360	\$1,820,500
Revenue over expenses			-\$47,000
Trustees have authorized use of \$47,000 to balance 2026 revenues and expenses			

Problems that remain

- Camp property funds are projected to be adequate to meet the essential maintenance for 2026, but are far short of what is needed beyond that
- Camp Governance must change to sustain a vigorous sustainable camping program
- That lets BYM focus on other service areas - our anti racism work (including reparations), more intervisitation, services for monthly meetings, and emerging needs

In response to questions, Terence McCormally explained the difference between restricted and unrestricted reserves, and described the staff reductions that may be needed in the camping program. He explained that layoffs are an especially sensitive issue in BYM, because individuals employed by churches, including both the camp and non-camp staff of BYM, are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

Friends thanked Terence McCormally for his clear and very helpful explanation of the proposed budget. The 2026 Budget was APPROVED as presented.

Terence McCormally noted that quite a few meetings have not yet paid their 2025 apportionment. This may be due in part to the fact that the Stewardship and Finance Committee does not at present have a clerk, and may have been less active than usual in sending out reminders. The Yearly Meeting needs an active and effective Stewardship and Finance Committee. Friends are urged to consider what they can do to address this problem.

12026-3 Camp Governance Study Group Report. Katie Bliss, Frederick, introduced the report. She spoke of the hurt that was done when the Study Group brought their proposal to November Interim Meeting without adequate preparation, and described their efforts to repair the damage through improved outreach and communication.

Betsy Roush, Sandy Spring, spoke of the mission of the BYM camping program, its enormous value to the Yearly Meeting, and the desire of Friends to maintain a close connection between the Yearly Meeting and the camps. She explained how the current governance system spreads decision-making authority among many different bodies. The goal of the Camp Governance Study Group was to design a governance structure that would define responsibilities and authority clearly to improve decision making and long-term planning.

Greg Tobin, Frederick, described the alternative models the study group considered, and their decision to recommend that the camping program be organized as a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), which would be a wholly owned subsidiary of BYM. He explained the relationship between BYM and the camps under this new system.

Rich Thayer, Baltimore-Stony Run, a member of Trustees, explained how the new LLC would function. The BYM Nominating Committee would be responsible for nominating the Board. Once in place, the Board would hire an Executive Director, develop policy for the camping program, and make all programmatic decisions. BYM Trustees would retain legal responsibility for the LLC. BYM and the LLC Board would work together to ensure that the spiritual mission of the camping program is preserved.

Arthur Boyd, Baltimore-Stony Run, reviewed next steps. If the proposal is approved, the LLC Board will be nominated at March Interim Meeting. The Board will begin organizing immediately, with the intention of hiring an Executive Director in the Fall of 2026. The existing Camping Program and Camp Property Committees would continue to function until the Executive Director is in place. The Camp Governance Study Group asks that it remain operational until Interim Meeting in March, to assist the Nominating Committee. It has compiled a substantial list of Friends who have expressed an interest in serving on the Board of the new LLC. Arthur Boyd proposed that Interim Meeting approve the following minute: "BYM approves the formation of BYM Quaker Camps LLC to manage the camps."

The slide show that formed the basis for these presentations, "Camp Governance Study Group [Report]," is attached.

During discussion, Friends noted that the proposal does not directly address diversity concerns, and that our commitment to fostering racial equity and other kinds of diversity should be made explicit. A Friend noted that committing ourselves to approving nominations to the LLC Board at March Interim Meeting would preclude the possibility of a second reading, which would normally be required. It was suggested that Nominating Committee might distribute the proposed slate with brief biographical sketches in advance. Friends agreed that appointment of the LLC Board is a critical step, and that it is very important that the Board be diverse enough to reflect our commitments and aspirations.

Marcy Seitel, as observer, made the general observation that asking people if they agree, but not if they disagree, makes it appear that agreement is expected. She also spoke of how complicated and how important our considerations of diversity issues can be.

A Friend asked if a delay in nominating the LLC Board would disrupt insurance coverage for the camping program. General Secretary Sarah Gillooly assured us that the camping program is insured for the coming season, and that creation of the LLC will not affect those arrangements.

Friends thanked the Study Group for the enormous amount of work that went into developing this proposal. In response to continuing concern about how to ensure that the Board is adequately diverse, Friends agreed that it would be rightly ordered to arrange for a second reading of the nominations. Friends agreed that Nominating Committee will be asked to bring a proposed slate to Interim Meeting in March. The second reading would occur at a called Interim Meeting in April. With this understanding, Friends APPROVED the formation of BYM Quaker Camps LLC to manage the BYM camping program.

12026-4 Closing. The meeting closed with a period of worship at 3:35 pm. Clerk Tom Webb announced that March Interim Meeting is scheduled for March 21 at Patapsco Friends Meeting. Friends should submit any requests to have items included in the agenda by February 13.

Attachments

Attachment I2026-2

2026 Budget PowerPoint for Jan. 31

[[Available here.](#) PowerPoint Presentations will be printed as JPGs in 2026 Yearbook.]