

## Albuquerque Monthly Meeting Preparation for October 9, 2011 Discussion

### **Summary of IMYM Structure and Stewardship Recommendations For Monthly Meeting Comments**

As approved by IMYM, the Clerk is herewith forwarding to member Monthly Meetings for their seasoning, comments, and suggestions this document summarizing the proposals of the Structure Task Group and the Stewardship Task Group following their work over the past year. The charge to the Task Groups and a summary of this work, a projected time line, the proposals in their entirety and an organizational chart are posted on the website ([www.imym.org](http://www.imym.org)).

The Clerk, who does not ask meetings to reach unity about the suggested points, will collate all of these responses so that the proposals with any revisions and a sense of all the meetings can come before Continuing Committee in January. If that Committee approves, the proposals would come before the Yearly Meeting in June for adoption. Implementation would occur following the rise of meeting in 2013, and the new committees would be responsible for the annual gathering in 2014. Two of the Stewardship recommendations were passed by the Yearly Meeting in June. Three of the recommendations are sent to the monthly meetings for input.

Please make these proposals widely known to members and attenders and schedule discussions to help with the seasoning. Sara Keeney and Sharon Gross will send your October 9 comments to the Clerk of Intermountain Yearly Meeting, Claire Leonard at PO Box 727, Reserve, NM 87830 or [coleonard@gilanet.com](mailto:coleonard@gilanet.com).

#### **Structure**

The Structure Task Group was formed to consider the committee structure and lines of reporting within the Yearly Meeting. These were its goals: 1) to involve the monthly meetings more deeply in the work of IMYM; 2) to eliminate some of the redundancy in committee work; 3) to provide more substantial support to the Clerk throughout the year; 4) to find a way to bring group discernment to decisions which need to be made between annual sessions; 5) to come to a clearer sense of who is responsible for various arrangements at the annual session, for selecting themes and speakers, and for creating a gathering that more fully meets everyone's needs.

The Task Group has developed a proposal that eliminates the Executive Committee (essentially an evaluation and planning committee) and replaces Continuing Committee with a Representatives Committee to interact with Monthly Meetings throughout the year. Responsibility for the annual session would lie with an Arrangements Committee composed of several subcommittees. The Yearly Meeting would also have a Service Committee as well as a Clerk's Support Committee.

#### **Stewardship**

The report of the Stewardship Task Group is posted on the website. IMYM has already approved recommendations 1 and 5. Commentary on the remaining three is requested.

### **Recommendation**

**The Yearly Meeting should continue to appoint the current number of representatives to Western Friend (3) and Friends Peace Teams (1). FWCC, FCNL, AFSC, and FGC should be limited to no more than 3 representatives. These representatives should be at large rather than representing the regions. Rather than simply attempting to fill all positions, the Yearly Meeting should instead appoint only representatives who feel a real leading to serve, leaving representative positions vacant if no one with such a leading can be found.**

This recommendation has two parts: The first is a limit in the number of representatives and the second is to make all representatives at-large. The number of representatives to most of these organizations is set by the organization and not by the yearly meeting. The representatives have two functions—one is to conduct the business of the organization, and the second is to bring ideas to and from IMYM Friends and the organization. Limiting the number and making all representatives at-large would change current IMYM practice regarding FWCC, FCNL and AFSC representatives, not other representatives. Concerns about these recommendations include: The regional meetings are further eroded by making the representatives be at-large. If we are affiliated, we have a responsibility to participate in the governance and activities of the organization, and it is not clear to what extent this can be done with fewer representatives. The current FCNL representatives believe that retaining six regionally-selected FCNL representatives is essential for an effective voice. On the other hand, some Friends feel that the recommendation addresses their concern that representatives do not provide feedback to the yearly meeting in a meaningful way nor ask for input to take to the national forums.

IMYM spends approximately 25 to 30 percent of its general operating budget (i.e. assessments paid to IMYM by monthly meetings) on representative travel. Some Friends question value received.

**Recommendation: To fund the growing need for financial aid to attend Annual Gathering, the Yearly Meeting should provide financial aid from the general fund by increasing Monthly Meeting assessments rather than increasing the cost of attending the Annual Gathering.**

Currently the yearly meeting has two separate “pots” of money. The general budget is supported almost exclusively by assessments (for 2012 \$40/ adult member of the monthly meeting) and the annual gathering budget is intended to be supported by those who attend the annual gathering. Currently the following financial assistance is available: 1) monthly meeting scholarships, 2) a general budget line item of \$1700 for financial aid, 3) individual Friend’s donations, and 4) a portion of annual gathering fees to cover room and board for some IMYM officers and committee people who spend almost their entire time at annual gathering working on behalf of the yearly meeting. As more and more attendees need financial aid, the cost to those who can pay in full goes up. This recommendation would allow more financial aid to come from the general budget rather than inexorably increasing the cost of the gathering. The rationale is

that those who attend are doing the business of the entire yearly meeting, not just their own business.

**Recommendation: The Yearly Meeting's operating budget is entirely funded by assessments from Monthly Meetings, and the Yearly Meeting is not organized to manage or oversee projects. In almost all cases, financial support for specific causes and donations to other organizations should continue to be a Monthly Meeting responsibility. However, the Yearly Meeting should also provide an orderly way—preferably with full involvement by Monthly Meetings—for discerning whether the Yearly Meeting should support a specific concern or make a donation to another organization. If approved, these concerns or donations should be funded for just one year, with the understanding that the Yearly Meeting does not normally support ongoing projects or donations. Additional funding, if any, should be approved only after an evaluation and only for a year at a time.**

The recommendation reflects the fact that when the yearly meeting was established, it clearly stated that it would not donate to other organizations or support specific causes. This was felt to be best handled at a monthly meeting level. We have not, historically, donated to AFSC, FWCC, or FCNL on behalf of Yearly Meeting. We do make a donation to FGC and Friends Peace Teams and are part of the ongoing support for *Western Friend*, (jointly with NPYM and PYM). Our unique position on the border with Mexico led IMYM to donate to AFSC to support a specific immigration related project, and to FCNL to support a staff person (intern at present) to work on border issues as well as to Dougla Prieta Trabajan, a non-Quaker project. Our donations to FGC, Friends Peace Teams and Western Friend are not the subject of this recommendation; rather this recommendation relates to specific causes, such as the AFSC and FCNL border initiatives and Dougla Prieta Trabajan. The Task Group felt that discerning how our funds could be best used was something better done by monthly meetings that could become informed about a project or group rather than placing many competing imperatives before the Yearly Meeting. One of the concerns about specific projects is oversight and accountability. Our budgeting process, of necessity projecting fairly far into the future, does not lend itself well to evaluating and overseeing ongoing projects, and continuing something from year to year without adequate oversight does not seem to be a good practice.