

Quaker Earthcare Witness Continuing Counsel Committee
Minutes of Conference Call
2009 November 06

Present: Dick Grossman, Mary Jo Klingel, Hollister Knowlton, Susan Swanstrom, Roy Treadway, Rod Zwirner, and Ruah Swennerfelt (*ex officio*). Roy Taylor joined us toward the end of the call.

Beginning of conference call

We started with a moment of silence as we joined the conference call. We spent some time figuring how to use Skype for our call, with uncertainties of internet connections. Midway through the call, we had to add Dick by a hybrid phone call.

Dick led us in a reading from Niels Bohr: "Some things are so serious that you have to laugh at them." We approved the agenda with one addition.

Hollister Knowlton's Article in *Friends Journal*

CCC Minute 2009.11.01 Continuing Counsel Committee expressed our appreciation of Hollister Knowlton's article in the 2009 November *Friends Journal*, "Living in Right Relationship: How does the Spirit Call Us?"

Approval of 2009 October Continuing Counsel Committee (CCC) Minutes

CCC Minute 2009.11.02 Continuing Counsel Committee approved the Minutes of our 2009 October Continuing Counsel Committee meetings in Bellingham, Washington.

Status of our Finances

While Ruah is working on the FY 2009 year-end financial statements, she anticipates that QEW will have a \$12,000 loss (that is, income minus expenses). Hopefully the appeal letter, due in the mail on November 10, will bring in funds to help improve our balance. The funds from the appeal letter will be applied to the FY 2010 budget, and will not alleviate the FY 2009 deficit. The Bellingham Steering Committee (SC) Meetings lost about \$2,500. We would have broken even if 10 more SC members had attended the meetings in Bellingham. Although we received a \$2,000 grant for publications, the \$20,000 grant submitted to the New Visions Foundation was not approved due to lack of funds, but we were encouraged to resubmit the grant proposal in February.

Clerk of the Finance Committee

The newly approved clerk of the Finance Committee, Barbara Williamson, has not responded to communications regarding the Finance Committee. The Nominating Committee approached others on the committee to be Clerk, but no one accepted. **The CCC asked Rod, Hollister, Ruah, and Dick to discuss possible next steps, including asking Barbara if she would prefer to be an interim clerk until the April meetings or to resign as Clerk of the Finance Committee. In the mean time, for the Finance Committee, Treasurer David Ciscel will be asked to participate in the CCC and its conference calls.**

Common Reading Experience

To unify QEW, Dick suggested that the entire Steering Committee be invited to read *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy* by Peter Brown and Geoffrey Carver. Rather than going in different directions, we could use this book as a common experience in Chicago for all of SC and others involved with QEW. An

announcement could be put in *BeFriending Creation* and discussed by email or possibly by using QEW.ORG on NING. Such a common reading might help us focus on the Spirit. **Roy Treadway and Hollister will develop a plan by email or phone. Roy Treadway will give a suggestion of what to read in *Right Relationship* and how to focus. Hollister will make the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting study guide available for us.**

CCC approvals for sign-ons

CCC Minute 2009.11.03 Continuing Counsel Committee approved by email signing on 1) a letter asking for strengthening the Boxer-Kerry Climate Change Bill in Senate (from FCNL) and 2) a Maryknoll statement to Senator Wyden to support a bill that could do a lot to end excessive speculation in carbon markets.

Hollister will check to be sure our signing on has been registered for both.

Purpose of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Staff Transition

Dick raised the question of the purpose of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Staff Transition. CCC reiterated that the Committee is to look at the broad range of structural issues about various possible arrangements of the general secretary and bookkeeper positions as outlined in the Steering Committee Minutes from 2009 October. What are we going to offer for pay and benefits? What qualifications of candidates do we seek? What is the structure of the position or positions? The *Ad Hoc* Committee's responsibilities are broader than a search committee, which could be handled by the Personnel Committee, has the two members of the Personnel Committee on it, and benefits from the experience of all the members on the Committee. **A preliminary report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Staff Transition on the structure of the possible position or positions should be made by the April SC meetings with the expectation that a general secretary and possibly a bookkeeper be hired by the 2010 October annual meetings in Houston.**

CCC Minute 2009.11.04 Continuing Counsel Committee approved Hollister and Dick discussing how to proceed with the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Staff Transition so that its work can move forward.

Composition of the Continuing Counsel Committee (CCC)

When the CCC was first established, to keep numbers of persons on the CCC small for conference calls, only the officers and Clerks of Nominating, Finance, Outreach, and Spiritual Nurturance Committees were on the CCC. Although the Publications Committee Clerk was thought at first to be represented by the Outreach Committee Clerk, because that was not the case, the Publications Committee Clerk was added to the CCC in 2008 Fall. **Since the Personnel Committee is only involved with paid staff, we reaffirmed our original understanding that it can be represented through the Finance Committee, and we agreed to keep the CCC its current size.**

Committee, Project, and Working Groups Conference Calls

Ruah will remind Clerks to have two or three conference calls before the 2010 April 22 Chicago SC meetings. Work done in advance reduces considerably how much we have to do at the SC meetings.

Attendance of Steering Committee Members at the 2009 Fall Steering Committee Meetings in Bellingham

We discussed that 23 members of the Steering Committee did not come to the SC Meetings in Bellingham. Reasons included conflicts in schedule (such as, attending a wedding, going to a memorial service, and having a baby) as well as financial challenges. There is no reason to believe it is due to a lack of interest. We should

remind SC representatives that their job description includes coming to at least one SC meeting a year. **Should we require the representatives to come to both meetings each year?** We noted that some yearly meetings reimburse travel for only one meeting.

We wondered if the 23 Friends who did not attend the meeting could be asked to contribute something toward the deficit. This will not help our finances for FY 2009, but might help in the future. Ruah said Friends used to be asked to contribute the money they saved. While not all contributed, many did.

CCC Minute 2009.11.05 Continuing Counsel Committee approved Ruah and Mary Jo preparing a draft letter for consideration of an appeal to be sent to members of SC not attending the Bellingham meetings.

CCC Meeting in January

Recently CCC has held a face-to face meeting in Washington DC in January, but that is expensive for each of us and adds to our carbon footprint. Our use of Skype for today's conference call with an option for a mute makes this call feel calmer than a phone conference call. We seem to have more time to reflect on issues and responses when Skype is used. Without the usual visual cues in face-to-face meetings, we need to be sure all persons are heard. Since we would miss the personal time around meetings, not meeting face-to-face should be considered an experiment. **We will set the date for Skype conference call in January by email.**

CCC Minute 2009.11.06 Continuing Counsel Committee approved holding the next CCC meeting in January by Skype, possibly calling for up to eight hours with breaks, to allow for more reflection.

Further Seasoning of Future Annual Steering Committee Meetings

During the Steering Committee Meetings in 2009 October at Bellingham, WA, the Outreach Committee proposed that QEW hold its annual face-to-face meetings, alternating between a national meeting every two years in a central location near public transportation in a natural setting and, in between, hold regional QEW meetings, which would be linked electronically. QEW is currently obligated to meet in Chicago 2010 April 22-25 and in Houston 2010 October 28-31, but we are not yet obligated to meet in Chicago the Spring of 2011. There seems to be a consensus that the Cenacle in Chicago works well, but some wonder if it has enough nature.

At some length the CCC considered the value of having regional meetings every other year. Dick, who lives near Durango, CO, felt finding enough others in QEW nearby to have a regional meeting would be difficult. While holding regional meetings presumably would reduce the distance of travel to the meetings, regional meetings might have more of us coming by cars rather than by public transportation, thus not necessarily resulting in less carbon emitted. We wondered how regional meetings would work. **As an alternative to regional meetings, QEW might hold a meeting in Chicago one year and a meeting at a national site with nature in the alternative year.** Since the Outreach Committee does not see taking on seasoning this proposal, CCC will process the proposal further.

CCC Minute 2009.11.07 Continuing Counsel Committee approved the following:

- 1. Dick will come up with several scenarios for how this proposal can be carried out;**
- 2. Dick will ask each committee and working group what the implications of holding regional meetings every other year are for them;**
- 3. Roy, Hollister, and maybe Mary Jo will suggest a possible grouping of yearly meetings for each region; and**
- 4. We will keep open looking at how we hold our future meetings in all possible ways.**

New QEW Website

Ruah and Louis have been reviewing all the detailed pages of the new QEW Website to be sure that all links work and are making some other suggested changes. Moving in and then back out of pages still needs work. The form to order books from the QEW bookstore does not retain personal information. The new QEW website is in the final stages of review. **When the QEW website is ready, hopefully by the end of the year, the CCC and others can test it.**

Future of QEW.ORG on NING

Several persons found using QEW.ORG more difficult to use than the list serves and felt QEW.ORG had few advantages. The benefits are that one can have discussions on the same site, and all can participate in all committees. In that sense, it is more open. We have to start using it to see if it works. **We agreed to keep QEW.ORG, and committees and working groups can use it when and if they want to.**

QEW presence at the FGC Gathering

QEW has had a Earthcare Center at the FGC Gathering for over 20 years. It takes a lot of time as well as money, such as the renting of a van, shipping materials, two staff persons, and overnight stays on the way to and from the gathering. Although it cost around \$2,500 to \$2,600 in 2009, the Center provides a huge outreach, influencing many people and changing lives. Since few SC members – Ruah, Louis, and Hollister regularly – attend now, the Center is stressful on the few there. We wondered why few QEW people go to the Gathering now and noted that no one from QEW was on the planning committee of the Gathering. If QEW continues with the Center, we need to consider alternatives to staffing it. FGC does welcome the Earthcare Center. Since Ruah, Louis, and Hollister hope to present workshops at the Gathering in 2010 and the Earthcare Center has been budgeted by QEW in 2010, QEW can host the Center in 2010. **We agreed to reconsider the issue during our next conference call.**

2009 December Conference Call

By Doodle we will schedule a one hour call in December by Skype (partly to work out the problems of using Skype). In addition to reviewing the many issues we considered in this call, we will also address the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Purpose for QEW.

Close of Call

After more than two hours, we closed our time together.

Roy C. Treadway
Recording Clerk