

CLERKS RETREAT – September 27, 2008 – Jennifer Leeman, Matt Drake

“The basis upon which we hold our meetings for business – be they committee, monthly, or yearly meetings – is that this is God’s world . . . and that it is possible for us to ascertain God’s will for us in this world.”

Thomas A. Brown, “When Friends Attend to Business,” Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Publication (undated)

“Each monthly meeting appoints a clerk, a treasurer, and a recorder, and usually a recording clerk. . . . All other delegated functions are normally entrusted to committees rather than individuals. . . . Members are expected to serve on committees of the monthly meeting. . . . Acceptance of appointment is a commitment to be diligent, loving, and responsive in carrying out the committee’s functions.”

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 1972

Roles of the committee clerk in the committee:

- Begin and end the meeting with worship.
- Welcome everyone. Help build community with a brief time of sharing or other process.
- Set/confirm the agenda. Consider top priorities first. Stick to the agenda.
- Clerk the meeting. Serve as the facilitator. Encourage input. Encourage the best thinking. Help the committee look for God’s leadings.
- Share your own information. Give own opinion if no one else has made that point. Make suggestions
- Gather “the sense of the meeting.” Put words to it. State it clearly.
- State the details for carrying out the decision. Who is going to do what/how/when/ and report back to the committee? Someone writes it down for the minutes.
- Other roles in the committee meeting?

Suggestions, especially at the start of the committee year:

- Read the June Meeting for Business minutes. Contact/email/phone, confirm, and welcome your committee members.
 - set a date, time and place when all committee members can attend.
 - contact Nominating if you find you need more members.
- Establish a regular committee meeting day, time and place.
 - make sure as many members as possible can attend.
 - check to see if childcare needs must be met
 - set a meeting time when members are fresh and awake
 - inform the Meeting clerk as to your committee’s meeting time, place, and date
- Check the committee description in the Directory.
 - share with members
 - review the description. Update as needed. (If change is needed, check with Meeting Clerk to see if change should come before Meeting for Business. Unless urgent, consider suggesting the change when you make your annual report and, if approved, email the change to Publications and Records.

- Orient new (and old?) committee members.
 - share past minutes
 - share copies of last annual report
 - have current members describe your committee's purposes and activities
- Organize support within the committee for its work.
 - name a committee recorder/secretary
 - email/mail committee minutes to members (and to Meeting Clerk) prior to next meeting
 - remind members of next meeting . . . a week before (and again two days before?)
 - use subcommittees and short-term ad-hoc committees to accomplish tasks
 - encourage leadership from all members
- Gain an overall view of the year.
 - committee year is the same as the Meeting's fiscal year, July 1 to June 30
 - review committee responsibilities and tasks over the year
 - establish/re-establish with the Meeting clerk the month of your annual report to Monthly Meeting
 - plan to submit your committee's budget request for next year to the Finance Committee by March/April
 - plan to send names of committee members &/or the need for new members for next year to Nominations Committee by March/April
- Other suggestions?

Suggestions for the committee clerk for throughout the year:

- Send a draft agenda to committee members prior to meetings and ask for their comments and additions.
- See that the meeting minutes are distributed prior to the next meeting.
- Keep track of committee expenses via monthly Treasurer reports.
- Sign off on committee expenses before sending to the Treasurer (or putting in the Treasurer's box in the library).
- Alert the Treasurer if major expenses are coming up in the next 2-3 weeks.
- Attend Monthly & Quarterly Meetings (or at least one person from your committee) so that you can keep up on what's happening; read the Meeting minutes.
- Will a committee decision affect another/other committees? If so, please alert the other committee(s) clerk(s).
- Setting the date for a committee meeting or event to take place in the meetinghouse or schoolhouse? Check the calendar on the side of the mailboxes in the library and John Hite beforehand to avoid conflicts.
- Be aware and, when appropriate, utilize all the Meeting's communications channels: announcements by the closer after Meeting for Worship, email news@chapelhillfriends.org, Meeting newsletter, notices posted in the foyer.
- Have a committee report, decision, Business Meeting announcement, concern? Inform the Meeting clerk at least 4 days before the meeting date.
- Other suggestions?