

MIDCOAST FRIENDS MEETING FOR BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

Eleven Friends gathered in silent worship before Clerk Guy Marsden opened the session. The **MINUTES** of the June Meeting for Business were approved.

SUE ROCKWOOD reported on a range of issues related to her meeting responsibilities. She asked for sign-ups to provide soup for coming events. She noted that a book group has been meeting regularly at the Meeting House and invited anyone interested to lead a forthcoming gathering devoted to health concerns. The local **INDIVISIBLE** group will offer a training session in de-escalation practices on Saturday. A future meeting may be held at the Meeting House.

The local Food Pantry will again provide special Thanksgiving baskets as a fund-raiser and welcomes volunteers to help with this project. The Diaper Bank shed in our parking area has had an infestation of carpenter ants. A spray will be applied around the foundation. Amanda said that she would help with the Diaper Bank.

Sue asked if a speaker might be assigned to make a brief presentation during our first-of-the-months simple soup lunches. She also wondered whether the time had come to re-surface the Social Room floor.

FINANCE Bruce Rockwood reported on the annual appeal letter sent to meeting members to solicit contributions. Enclosing a return envelope has resulted in a higher response. Recent work on the Meeting House was funded in part by a loan of \$7,000 from Quarterly Meeting. Another approach may be made to the Obadiah Brown Fund to cover this debt. Otherwise our Savings Account will be called upon. Its current balance is \$205,000. The water tank for the heating system broke and was replaced at a cost of \$325.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS Guy Marsden reported on his many activities in maintenance of the Meeting House. He discovered water in the basement from the broken 4 gallon water heater and replaced it at his own expense. He replaced many light bulbs with LED's, put a handle on one of the side deck doors, replaced the expansion water tank for the heater but had Midcoast Energy install it, installed a new roof gutter above the front steps, and installed 19 plastic caps on the posts all around the building.

Guy regularly collects trash and recyclables from the Meeting House. Poison ivy has grown along the edge of the back yard near the playground. A suitable spray will be applied in the spring to reduce chances that children at play could be infected. A warning sign will also be posted.

Deep appreciation was expressed for Guy's skilled and dedicated service

HOSPITALITY Bruce and Suzy need assistance in setting up each Sunday for tea and coffee after meeting for worship. Sign-ups were encouraged. Two Friends indicated a willingness to join in this effort,

Discussion followed as to whether to renew a PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE. The prior version of this committee was folded into the Midcoast Outreach and Peace Committee under Sue Rockwood's leadership. The MOPC committee has not met recently.

Concern was raised that we should be more timely and persistent in speaking publicly to the

pressing issues of these troubled times. We should create more times when we talk together to share our understanding of the current domestic and inter-national crises. How do we “speak truth to power” as a community? Some individuals in the meeting are quite active but our shared voice is muted.

After vigorous discussion it was decided not to renew a separate Peace and Social Concerns Committee but to seek more effective collaboration under the MOPC model for expressing the meeting’s view on current issues. On special concerns an ad hoc working group may emerge. If in doubt, major statements should be brought to the Meeting for Conduct of Business for review and approval.

GAZA STATEMENT Prior to this Business Meeting a text had been sent out on e-mail to all meeting members for their consideration. It was a document that was prepared by the American Friends Service Committee entitled: **“Quakers discern genocide is occurring in Gaza and urge courageous action.”**

The document reviewed the history of Quaker work on the Israel/Palestine conflict and Quaker humanitarian aid to Palestinians. The severity of recent Israeli attacks and denial of effective aid led to a **“religious conviction to speak truth as we see it. We believe with moral clarity, and in line with the definition of the crime of genocide, that the current actions in Gaza perpetrated by the Israeli government constitute genocide.”**

After documentation of conditions affecting Palestinians in Gaza a number of action responses to the crisis are listed including specific commitments by Quaker signatories as listed involving major organizations and many local Quaker meetings.

There was only brief discussion before full **approval** of the text and its intentions was given.

Jim Matlack, Recording Clerk