

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION
Central Executive Committee
Videoconference Meeting
10-13 June 2021

CEC 21-8vc. Opening minute. As we are unable once again to hold our annual meeting in person due to the pandemic, we have gathered by videoconference for several hours on four successive days, beginning on 10 June 2021 at 11:30 am UK time.

Present:

Gretchen Castle (Philadelphia YM)	General Sec FWCC
Elizabeth Cazden (New England YM)	Assistant Clerk FWCC
Ronis Chapman (Australia YM)	Sec AWP Section
Michael Eccles (Britain YM)	Sec EMES
Jonathan Fletcher (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM)	Acting Clerk AWP Section
Myron Guachalla Montano (Bolivia Central YM)	Member at large
Simon C. Lamb (Ireland YM)	Clerk FWCC
Ethel Livermore (Britain YM)	Acting Clerk EMES
Hezron C. Masitsa (Nairobi YM)	Acting Sec Africa Section
Thule Mbete (Southern Africa YM)	Member at large
Robin Mohr (Philadelphia YM)	Sec Section of the Americas
Esther Mombo (Highlands YM)	Assistant Clerk FWCC
David Shiner (Illinois YM)	Clerk Section of the Americas
Peter Ullathorne (Britain YM)	Treasurer
Bainito Wamalwa (East Africa YM-North)	Clerk Africa Section

Invited:

Faith Biddle (Britain YM)	Communications Manager (10 June)
Susanna Mattingly (Britain YM)	Sustainability Officer (10 June)
Nancy Fee (Southern Africa YM)	IPC Co-clerk (12 June)

In our opening introductions, we have been invited to reflect on what makes us grateful to be Quakers. We have shared our gratitude for the world family of Friends, where we feel welcome regardless of differences of culture; for the constant reassurance of the guiding and consoling presence of the Holy Spirit; for the elders who have taught us and mentored us in the true message of Christ; for the invitation to discover and grow in Christian faith.

We have been led in a time of vocal and silent prayer. We pray for the courage to restore our relationships so that they truly reflect God's love and justice to all people, who are all created in God's image. We pray for comfort and healing for those in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble, and blessings on those who care for them. We remember with gratitude God's many gifts to us in creation, and ask for help in sharing the earth's resources with justice and peace. We are grateful for the technology that makes this meeting possible, and pray for wisdom and courage in our deliberations.

CEC 21-9vc. Review of past minutes.

We have reviewed and given final approval to two decisions reached by e-mail since our last meeting, which were circulated in advance and are appended to these minutes.

CEC 21-10vc. Consent Agenda. We have **received and accept** the following written reports, and thank the respective committees for their work: International Finance

Committee; Young Adult Friends Development Fund; International Nominations Committee; QUNO joint comments and New York Report; International Membership Applications Committee.

The International Membership Applications Committee has recommended that Julia Ryberg (Sweden YM) be named to IMAC for a term of service ending December 2024, and that Daniel Nteziyaremye (Rwanda YM) be named to IMAC for a term of service ending December 2023. We **approve** these names.

CEC 21-11vc. Section Reports. We have received written reports from each Section, and offered each Secretary and Clerk an opportunity for additional comments and responding to Friends' questions about their life and work over the past year.

Africa Section. The Covid pandemic has substantially limited the Section's activities, as in-person meetings have been rare. The Section has worked to expand the availability of technology and internet access, to enable communication via Zoom and telephone calls. Yearly Meeting gatherings have also been cancelled or severely limited to comply with government restrictions. Friends are grateful for the Covid relief support from Friends around the world, in collaboration with Friends Church Kenya and Friends United Meeting. The region faces dual challenges around vaccines: low availability, and misinformation that circulates widely.

The recent volcanic eruption and earthquakes at Mount Nyiragongo in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, has affected some Quaker families, who are displaced and living with family or in refugee camps. The Section is exploring ways to support these Friends and those who are hosting displaced persons. We note that this area is near Lake Kivu, Rwanda, where the CEC met in 2017.

Asia-West Pacific Section. The Section Committee has met regularly over the past year. A major task was writing a Strategic Plan, with participation from about fifteen individuals and meeting groups. They have formed a new Nominations Committee and adopted written guidelines about service to the Section.

The diversity of cultures within the Section, including recent immigration into the region, presents challenges and richness. The committee has representation from more countries than in the past, but there is more to be done. A major portion of the Section Secretary's work involves nurturing small groups and isolated Friends. Weekly online meeting for worship has enabled isolated Friends to participate, and has fostered creative connections across the Section. They have appreciated participating in World Office events, although the time zone differences have often made these challenging; it would be helpful to run sessions twice at different times. Friends in several parts of the Section have been challenged by political unrest.

The incoming Section Secretary is Adrian Glamorgan (Australia YM), a writer, photographer, and radio show host in Perth, western Australia. He and his wife have long been engaged in work against nuclear proliferation, including long-standing work with Friends in Japan. The Section is working to set up suitable support for him during this transition.

Europe & Middle East Section. This has been a big transition year for the Section, with changes in both clerks and Secretaries, and significant turnover on the Executive Committee. The departure of Julia Ryberg has led to re-envisioning the program of spiritual support. The Section has held virtual meetings in both 2020 and 2021, including many international visitors. It has hosted monthly online gatherings for Quaker Peace & Service workers, for 14 to 18 year-olds, and for role-holders, and is considering whether those should continue. A

gathering specifically for International members was held in July 2021. The Section has provided some funding to help Friends, including scattered International members, to gain technological access and skill. The Section has encouraging intervisitation for electronic meeting for worship, and has facilitated more regular virtual meetings for Friends in Spain, Italy, and Central Europe.

Section of the Americas. The Section's work has moved almost entirely online during the pandemic. The biannual Section meeting was held virtually over ten days in late March 2021, spaced over ten days, and attracted over 300 participants, more than twice as many as for any previous Section meeting and four times the number of Latin American Friends. The Traveling Ministry Corps (TMC), previously dedicated entirely to in-person visitation, instead planned and carried out a number of virtual events, including an online program for World Quaker Day in which more than 200 Friends participated. Latin American members of the Corps presented well-attended videoconferencing events including two Young Leaders Meetings, a Children's Congress, a Women's Congress, and a Gentlemen's Congress. The English-speaking members of the TMC also engaged Section meetings and members by virtual means. The Section is now reenvisioning the future of the program in light of these successes.

The Section received two outside grants of \$25,000 each from a Philadelphia-based Quaker fund. One enabled the Section to offer each member yearly meeting \$1,000 for technology upgrades; 25 grants of \$1,000 were provided to Friends from all parts of the Section. The second grant supports training videos for Section Representatives. Digital equality continues to be a challenge, and perhaps should be included in the global fundraising campaign.

The Secretary has just returned from a ten-week sabbatical, and is grateful for that break; she is now working in the office much of the time. The Section arranged for able coverage of the office and social media during her absence. The office is seeking a new Operations Manager, and is open to considering patterns of work that would not be based in the Philadelphia office.

CEC 21-12vc. General Secretary's Report. The General Secretary has spoken to her written report, which was circulated in advance. She is grateful for her nine years of service to FWCC and to Friends. The past year has been challenging and often difficult, but also full of new ideas and energy. The staff have been energetic, creative, committed, and innovative. The office (and indeed Friends House) has been completely closed since mid-March 2020, with staff working from home. To stay connected, they have held weekly all-staff meetings via Zoom, discussing work, enjoying a good laugh and exercising care for one another. They have sent flowers or fruit for each person's birthday. Two staff members had bouts of Covid, and one lost a dear family member.

Committees have met online, some (including the IPC) functioning very well while others struggle. The General Secretary has encouraged some, while allowing others to suspend their work where it did not seem needed or useful during the pandemic. As she prepares to turn the work over to a new person, she is excited by the new prospects for FWCC.

The General Secretary raised the question whether it would be sound to lay down the Staff Advisory Committee, which has been largely inactive in the past year or two. A number of Friends saw some value in maintaining the committee particularly through the upcoming staff transition. Questions were raised whether it needs to continue as a local committee made up of Friends close to the London office, or whether it can and should include representation from the global constituency. We have asked Michael Eccles, David Shiner, and Ethel

Livermore to consult with the staff and with the existing Staff Advisory Committee, review the committee's Terms of Reference, and bring us their recommendations as early as may be feasible.

We are, as always, grateful for Gretchen Castle's faithful service to FWCC, her leadership, and her ministry of hospitality and care for the other staff, especially during this challenging time.

CEC 21-13vc. Communications Report. We welcomed Faith Biddle, Communications Manager, who spoke to her written report on the Communications work over the past year. They have risen to the challenge of shifting to different ways of working, both internally within the office and externally with our constituents. The database is now more accessible from outside the office. The series of "Conversations" has been very well received; Gretchen Castle will present the final one later this month, and there will then be an evaluation process before discerning how to proceed. The website is being restructured and refreshed to be more usable both for our internal work and as an entry point for people who don't know much about us and sometimes even about Friends.

The CEC is delighted with the online programming that the staff has facilitated during the year, as well as with the more robust and visible social media presence.

CEC 21-14vc. Sustainability Programme Report. We welcomed Susanna Mattingly, Sustainability Officer, who spoke to her written report. Her major focus at present is preparing for the COP26 meeting scheduled for Glasgow, Scotland, UK, in November 2021, most likely in a hybrid in-person / online format. She is working closely with Lindsay Cook of QUNO-Geneva, the official Quaker representative to COP26. A penpal project has linked Friends in Britain with Friends in other parts of the world who share concerns for the climate crisis; a total of 75 Friends are participating in this network so far. FWCC has facilitated a Global Quaker Sustainability network to link the various Quaker agencies working on these issues for greater information sharing and collaborative work; it has met online about every two months, with email exchanges in between, and seems very productive. The office facilitated a series of Young Friends' online gatherings to build a global community of young Quakers interested in climate action, peace, and justice; it attracted some 165 Friends for some or all of the five sessions. The office is working with Woodbrooke to develop a program to be presented in November 2021 on building healthy foundations for sustainable Quaker activism and ways to prevent burnout. The General Secretary has been engaged in interfaith efforts to push the UK government and the global community toward stronger targets for reducing climate impact.

Susanna noted that the current grant funding her position will end on 30 November 2021. They have been working to secure additional grant funding, focussed on bringing in the voices of those most affected by the climate crisis. We are considering other ways of funding the position if that funding is not forthcoming. We will look at this further in our budget review later in this meeting.

The CEC is grateful for this work and for the engagement of so many Friends around the world.

[Day 2, 11 June]

CEC 21-15vc. Financial Reports. Treasurer Peter Ullathorne reviewed the financial reports for 2020, which are still subject to minor adjustments in consultation with the auditors. He noted that overall the organisation's finances look very good. In part this is because the

pandemic prevented us from doing much of the work we had planned, especially items involving travel and meetings, so expenditures were considerably under budget. There was also a positive gain on our investments, especially in the endowment and restricted funds. He noted the TIAA account that required much clarification in past years has been transferred and closed.

Given the healthy unrestricted surplus, the Treasurer recommends the following transfers from unrestricted to designated funds:

£ 15,000 to the World Plenary Fund

£ 5,000 to the Senior Staff Replacement Fund

£ 15,000 to be used for Communications improvements in FY 2021

£ 5,000 to a new Africa Strategic Support Fund

The International Finance Committee has reviewed these accounts and supports these recommendations. We approve the first three proposed transfers, and defer decision on the fourth to later in this session.

We accept the financial reports, subject to minor adjustments as may be required by the auditors. We authorize the Clerk to submit the final audited report to the Charities Commission as part of the Trustees' Report.

CEC 21-16vc. Budgets for 2021 and 2022. The Treasurer reviewed the budget for 2021 and proposed 2022. This budget assumes no in-person CEC meeting during calendar 2021, resuming in-person meetings in 2022. Both budgets contain contingency figures for funding the Sustainability work if grant funding cannot be secured. We are cautioned that the income from the Section of the Americas is likely to be lower than is shown here, based on the Section's own contribution income. Recognizing the many uncertainties in the global situation, we accept the 2021 and 2022 budgets as presented.

CEC 21-17vc. Africa Strategic Support Fund. We returned to consideration of the proposed Africa Strategic Support Fund, together with a proposal from the Africa Section for how an initial grant would be used. As background, we were reminded that some years ago, the annual grant to the Section was reduced significantly, to encourage the Section to raise more of the funds for its operations from sources within the Section. That has proven difficult, although World Quaker Day has been one helpful fundraising project. Fundraising within the Section depends on face-to-face contact, which the pandemic has cut to a minimum. Since at least 2012 the World Office grant has been flat-funded. Following conversations between the office and the Africa Section (including Treasurer Alex Saka as well as the Section Clerk), instead of increasing the annual unrestricted grant, this proposal would set up a support fund that the World Office budget would fund as feasible, and would be available for particular projects. This structure would give flexibility on both sides.

As an initial example, we have before us a specific proposal to purchase and support internet technology for the yearly meetings in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, DRC, and Pemba, totalling KS850,000 (about £ 5,000). A question was raised whether this type of project could attract trust funding outside of FWCC's budget; a similar program in the Section of the Americas this past year was grant-funded. We see this proposal as useful in the immediate situation, to provide help bridging the digital divide similar to what other Sections have done during the past year. We are less clear about the longer-term structure for providing support to the Section, and the division of decision-making between the Section and the World Office or CEC.

We approve transferring £ 5,000 from 2020 unrestricted funds to the proposed Africa Section project, leaving to the Treasurer and the World Office the details of how this is to be

shown in our accounts. We defer a decision on the long-term establishment of an Africa Strategic Support Fund for a later in-person CEC meeting.

CEC 21-18vc. Trustees' Report. We have reviewed a draft Trustees' Report (text sections) that was circulated in advance. We approve this report (subject to minor editing) for submission to the Charities Commission with the audited financial accounts.

CEC 21-19vc. Risk Register. We have reviewed an updated Risk Register that a small subcommittee has revised. This Risk Register is designed to help the CEC be aware of the level of risk and to anticipate and mitigate potential risks before they cause bigger problems. The subcommittee took into account the combined risks of the pandemic changing our ways of working, and the upcoming leadership transition. They tried to focus on items that require particular attention at this time. The Trustees' role is to set out the register; the responsibility for incorporating its suggestions into work planning is assigned by item to the General Secretary plus Clerk and/or Treasurer. We approve this update and hope to do at least a limited review at our annual meeting each year.

CEC 21-20vc. Global Fundraising Campaign. Gretchen Castle presented an update on the planned campaign. She urged all of us to pay attention to the timeline, and in particular, for Sections to fill out their information on fundraising goals. These can include projects for which funding is already being solicited within the Section. She hopes to prepare fundraising documents for distribution before she ends her service to FWCC. We accept this report and are glad to see the campaign moving forward.

CEC 21-21vc. Celebration of Service. Following the formal meeting, we regathered more informally with cups of tea to thank Ronis Chapman for her years of devoted service as Secretary to the AWPS and to the world community of Friends. We have particularly appreciated her pastoral care for members of the CEC, and her travel and relationship-building to connect the geographically dispersed Friends across the Section. As she ends her formal service to the Section, we wish her well in whatever she is called to next.

[Day 3, 12 June]

CEC 21-22vc. Memorial meeting for worship. As we regather for our third session, we remember with thanksgiving the following Friends, formerly active in FWCC, who have died during the past year. Some of these losses are due to Covid-19. We rejoice in the faithful witness of these and many others, and commend them to God's care. We also remember in our hearts the many Friends not named here, from all parts of the world, who have died from Covid-19 during the past fifteen months; all those who mourn them; and the local meetings and churches that are suffering loss of valued experience and wisdom.

Gladys Kang'ahi, EAYM-North
David Lumbasi, Malava YM
Francis Mwashu, EAYM Kaimosi
Raso Mwashu, EAYM Kaimosi
David Zarembka, Lugari YM
Gladys Kamonya, Lugari YM

Eliyap Eliyazer, Bhopal YM

Lilly Bhagirat, Mid-India YM
Bhaskar Sonkamble, General Conference of Friends in India (GCFI).
Keith Crook, Australia YM
Stefan Kashyap, Mid-India YM
Suleman Nanda Khada, Mid-India YM

Brenda Bailey, Britain YM
Barbara Bowman, Britain YM
Mogens Clausen, Denmark YM
Hansa Eichler, German YM
Jonathan Fryer, Britain YM
Jola Grabowska, International Member (Poland)
Emma E. Lamb, Ireland YM
Ulla Moltved, Denmark YM
Nigel R Pim, Ireland YM
Misha Roshchin, Moscow MM

Marie Kirk Hawkins, Ohio YM
Kenneth L. Carroll, Philadelphia YM
Claire Davis, Lake Erie YM
Carol Lamm, Southern Appalachian YM
Janice Lorraine (Defenbaugh) Miller, Intermountain YM
Ramón A. González-Longoria Escalona, Cuba YM

CEC 21-23vc. World Plenary Planning. We welcome Nancy Fee (Southern Africa YM), co-clerk with Bainito Wamalwa of the International Planning Committee, for today's session. She spoke to the IPC's written report and attached timeline and brought several recommendations for our review. The IPC met virtually in 29 April-2 May, and found it a blessed time.

Thuli Mbete, Clerk of the Local Arrangements Committee, reported on the work of the LAC over the past two years. She reminded us of the site visits made in November 2019, before the pandemic, which included Simon Lamb.

The IPC is concerned about the potential continued impact of the Covid pandemic; vaccinations remain unavailable in many places, and travel and large gatherings may remain difficult. We will need to monitor the situation closely, and remain flexible as conditions change. A smaller face-to-face gathering would present financial challenges.

Theme. The IPC proposes the following theme for the World Plenary Meeting: *Living the spirit of Ubuntu: responding with hope to God's call to cherish creation and one another.* We have heard that "ubuntu," a Zulu term, is a concept central to African Christian theologians. It is translated roughly "I am because you are; you are and therefore I am," a contrast with Descartes' phrase, "I think therefore I am." Our identity is formed in relationship and community. The committee has a list of Scriptural references and a quotation from George Fox that will accompany the theme in publicity materials. We approve this theme.

Site selection. As we have previously heard, during 2019 the Local Arrangements Committee and a Durban-based consultant, the Conference Company, identified a number of potential venues for the WPM. The Clerk of CEC, IPC co-clerk (Nancy), and LAC members made a site visit in November 2019 to two potential venues were identified, a private

secondary school near the airport with two hotels some 5 km (3 miles) away, and a family holiday centre on a beach south of the city, with some accommodations on site and a hotel next door. Each site has some advantages and some challenges. Precise cost figures are not yet available for either venue due to Covid-19 issues.

One additional potential complication is that one of the sites is historically associated with Afrikaans heritage. If this venue is chosen, there would need to be considerable pre-conference communication with the venue and with the Quaker community to allay concerns about this history. Meeting in South Africa will in any event require grappling with the history of colonialism, apartheid, and the anti-apartheid struggle which South African Friends were deeply engaged with. We note that issues of racism arise in many Quaker gatherings regardless of the venue, and we need to be prepared to address those.

Having had an opportunity to consider these factors, the CEC approves continued consideration of these two potential venues and empower the IPC to pursue negotiations with both venues. We look forward to receiving a clearer recommendation as early as feasible, including cost and budget estimates. We note that it will be important to firm up the venue and dates by October 2021, if at all possible, so that publicity can go out.

Dates. The IPC proposes that the dates for the World Plenary Meeting be set for June-July 2024, with the exact dates dependent on the availability of the venue we select. We confirm this general time-frame and look forward to receiving a specific proposal with the venue recommendation.

The IPC has given us a proposed timeline, which will be regularly updated and further developed. They plan to meet next on 7-10 October 2021. They will be working closely with the World Office to fill out the necessary working groups and task coordinators, further develop the timeline and workplan, and continue negotiations concerning the venues.

We thank the IPC and LAC for their work so far, and look forward to their further recommendations within the next several months.

CEC 21-24vc. General Secretary Search. Clerk Simon C. Lamb provided an update on the reopened search. The renewed application deadline was 4 June 2021. Twenty-nine applications were received, of which some are from non-Friends who saw the advertisement placed on a British charities website (as required by UK law). The Screening Committee has all these applications, and all applicants have been notified that their applications are received and advised of the timeline and process. About 8 are re-applications from people who were considered in the first round; the remainder are new. All four Sections are again represented in the applicant pool, including countries not represented in the first list. Some of these applications seem quite strong. The Search Committee expects to conduct final interviews between 13 and 16 July, and hopes to bring a recommendation to the CEC on 24 July.

The Search Committee plans to use a process similar to the first time. It was suggested that it may be useful to provide applicants with a more specific list of compensation elements (including benefits and assistance with relocation and visas), and to encourage applicants to consider seriously whether their personal situation would allow them to accept the job if offered. We ask the current General Secretary to draft an information sheet that can go to applicants regarding the compensation package and the practicalities of living in the London area.

Simon has requested some flexibility in negotiating the salary range. We note that cultures vary on when the salary figure is set for a particular hire or position. It is suggested that the negotiation with the final candidate could happen before the recommendation is

presented to the CEC. We authorize Simon, in close consultation with the Treasurer, to negotiate somewhat above the advertised range.

CEC 21-24vc. Closing worship. Hezron Masitsa has led us in a time of programmed worship to close this day's session. We have sung together (on mute), "What a friend we have in Jesus." The challenges and griefs from the pandemic have made this a difficult year and are still with us, in our families, in our local meetings and communities, and globally. The hymn reminds us that regardless of these circumstances, we have access to God's comfort and hope, if we only remember to take our burdens to God in prayer. We are grateful for what we have received and continue to receive.

[Day 4, 13 June]

CEC 21-25vc. Opening devotional. In our opening devotional time for our final session, we have reflected on two quotations:

Discovering more joy does not, I'm sorry to say, save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily, too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreak without being broken.

(from the Dalai Lama and Bishop Desmond Tutu, *The Book of Joy* (2016))

So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. . . . Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete. (John 16:22, 24)

We are grateful for all the blessings and joys we share, and especially for the joy of God's presence among us. We are joyful like an overflowing fountain, even in the midst of hardships.

CEC 21-26vc. Policies Review. At our 2019 meeting, we recognized the need for review and revision of a number of our governance and staff policies, plus some new policies we would do well to put in place. These include existing policies on Equal Employment, Sustainability, Travel Policy, Alone Office & Remote Working, Data Protection, and Crisis Benevolence Support, and new policies on Conflict of Interest, Safeguarding (including discrimination, sexual harassment, and the World Plenary Meeting). The General Secretary requested a Policies Working Group to assist the staff with this project. We name Bainito Wamalwa, Ronis Chapman, David Shiner, and Hezron Masitsa as a working group, and hope they can report to the CEC in November/December 2021.

CEC 21-27vc. Long Term Planning. The General Secretary further recommends that we set up a Long-Term Discernment Working Group to consider working practices, strategic thinking, and post-Covid learning. This would replace the Strategy Working Group, which has been entirely a UK-based group, as this work could benefit from a more global perspective. We name Robin Mohr, Simon C. Lamb (ex officio), Bainito Wamalwa, Jonathan Fletcher, and Michael Eccles to this task, and hope they will bring recommendations to the June 2022 CEC meeting for further discernment.

CEC 21-28vc. World Quaker Day Themes. After some discussion, we set the WQD 2021 theme as *Resilience and hope: Drawing strength from our Quaker faith*. We suggest that the 2022 theme be linked to the Global Fundraising Campaign, and the 2023 theme be the theme of the World Plenary Meeting, to support participation and fund-raising for that meeting.

CEC 21-29vc. Upcoming CEC meeting dates. We confirm our scheduled meeting on 24 July 2021, at a time to be determined. Although we had hoped for an in-person meeting in November-December 2021, budget constraints, continued Covid travel restrictions, and unequal vaccine access have made this unwise. Instead, we set virtual meetings for 6 November 2021 and 26 March 2022. We look forward to a longer in-person meeting in June 2022 (conditions permitting), most likely in Nairobi, Kenya. We tentatively set dates of 7 to 12 June, 2022, with arrivals on 6 June and the meeting ending by 6 pm on 12 June, with departures late that evening or on 13 June as flight schedules permit. We would then envision a 2023 in-person meeting in South Africa, with the International Planning Committee.

CEC 21-30vc. Past minutes. We have given final approval to the minutes of our March 27, 2021 virtual meeting, following editing and discernment.

CEC 21-31vc. Historical Injustice & Sustainability. The General Secretary has spoken to a proposal she and the Sustainability Officer have prepared in order to seek outside funding for the work on historical injustice, especially around racial diversity and colonialism, including hiring an outside consultant to help the organisation with this work. We note that the Global Fundraising proposal includes funding for a longer-term staff position. This work could involve staffing in each Section; staff or consultants familiar with the issues in one area of the world may not know the entire global situation. We should envision what it would take to do this work well. We believe there are Friends in many parts of the world who would gladly contribute to this undertaking. We also note that some of the work, especially with respect to World Office staffing, includes issues unique to London, the local situation in the UK and specifically in Britain YM. It may be useful to partner with the work Britain YM is already doing in this area. We are aware that this would be a second programme area; while historically we have said that “the World Office does not do program,” we have found that the Sustainability programming has been a highly productive way to engage with Friends around the world. Although we remain reluctant to take on broad substantive programming, we see this as a second area that we are called to take on. Our focus should be on what is feasible between now and the World Plenary; it is not realistic to expect a quick resolution to patterns that have developed and taken root over at least 500 years.

Following this discussion, we approve the World Office proceeding as proposed in seeking funding for the immediate project. We ask that the wording of the Global Fundraising goals be reviewed to ensure that this concern is adequately incorporated. We also ask that the Long-Term Discernment Working Group incorporate this concern into the matters they will bring forward to us in June 2022.

CEC 21-32vc. Closing. We closed these sessions with open worship, intending to meet next on 24 July 2021, God willing.

Simon C. Lamb, Clerk
Esther Mombo, Asst. Clerk
Elizabeth Cazden, Asst./Minuting Clerk

Attachment:

CEC 21-6e. QUNO-Geneva MoU. We have received an inquiry from Colm Ó Cuanacháin (Britain YM), member of the governing committee of the QUNO-Geneva Office, whether FWCC would agree to amend the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FWCC, Britain YM, and QUNO on governance of that office to permit hiring a Director who is not a member of the Society of Friends. This would alter the current MoU approved in 2012. There is some urgency in the request, as QUNO-Geneva is beginning the search process for a new Director.

In e-mail correspondence, a number of CEC members expressed considerable hesitation about this proposal, and about trying to discern such a policy change without time for careful in-person discernment. The Clerk has communicated to Colm Ó Cuanacháin that we are unable to unite with this change to the MoU. (emails, April 2021; ratified June 10, 2021.)

CEC 21-7e. General Secretary Search. We have been notified that the person to whom we offered the General Secretary position has found it impossible to accept due to family considerations. The Search Committee offered some flexibility on the timing of relocating to London (working remote for the interim), but the candidate did not find that sufficient to overcome the difficulties. Accordingly, the Search Committee recommends reopening and readvertising the search process, with the previous candidates welcome to reapply. All members of the Screening and Search Committees have indicated their willingness to continue serving in those roles. The office has prepared a new timeline for our consideration, and is prepared to promptly circulate this news through multiple channels both in the UK and worldwide.

The CEC approves this way of proceeding and the revised timeline, looking towards a CEC meeting on 24 July 2021 to consider a new recommendation. (emails April 2021; ratified 10 June 2021.)