

# **Minutes of EMEYF Annual Meeting 2022**

## **AM 01. Opening Minute.**

We are gathered here in Quaker House Brussels for our Annual Meeting. On this beautiful autumn weekend in November, we have come together to worship, discuss business and grow our sense of community. For the first time in 3 years, we are able to hold Annual Meeting in person again, and we are grateful to be seeing each other. Twelve adults and four children will spend the weekend together for our gathering: Paul, Noah, Ronja and Frieda Schock, Lisette Nijboer, Marcie Winstanley, Lena Hofmaier, George Thurley, Pete Doubtfire, Evan Welkin, Lynda Berry, Mieke van Opheusden, Paula Christophersen, Kirsten and Ellie Stuhr and Lina Mliyh. Other Friends plan to join us online for some hybrid aspects of our gathering. We have also heard the joyful news that Lisette Nijboer is pregnant and soon another child will be welcomed to our community. We have received loving greetings from Michael Eccles from EMES, Helga Tempel and Anna Hielscher, both from German Yearly Meeting.

## **AM 02. Gathering Elders**

We appoint Evan Welkin, Mieke van Opheusden and Kirsten Stuhr as our Gathering Elders, with Kirsten joining us online. We ask the Elders to support Nominations Committee in their endeavour of filling the roles, and to lead epilogue. We remind the community that we are all each others Elders during Annual Meeting, and we can look to each other for support.

## **AM 03. Nominations Committee**

We appoint Paula Christophersen, George Thurley and Pete Doubtfire as our Nominations Committee. We ask them to bring forward names for the roles of Elder, Gatherings Coordinator, UK Treasurer, one or two Trustees and an additional member for the 2023 Spring Gathering planning committee. We ask the community to bring any names to the Nominations Committee to help them in this search.

## **AM 04. 2023 Budget**

We have heard from our Treasurer, Pete Doubtfire, about our expected expenditure and income over the next year. We have heard that some of the costs are necessarily estimates and that we will focus our efforts on building relationships with potential funders over the coming year, while being mindful of the pressures that the cost-of-living crisis brings to both meetings and individuals.

We are expected to have a shortfall of approximately 4000 euros. Part of this shortfall is due to the Living Archives Project, for which 1000 euros is earmarked from funds provided by EMES in earlier years. At present our reserves are higher than our expected annual expenditure, so we are able to afford this cost while we wait to see how the uncertainties of the current global financial situation may resolve or stabilise in 2023. During discussion of the budget we heard ideas about how to 'put the 'fun' in 'fundraising'" and we ask our clerks to communicate with our fundraising treasurer to share these ideas. We thank Pete for his work on the budget and the presentation he gave us.

## **AM 05. Spring Gathering Presentation of Location and Theme**

We have heard from our gatherings coordinator Paul Schock that Spring Gathering Planning Committee has discerned a location and theme for 2023. Spring Gathering will take place between 8th and 16th of April at Quaker House, Congenie in the South of France.

The theme will be 'Rekindling the Light', exploring ways that our community can reconnect in friendship, contact with nature, sharing our faith and what community means to us following the huge changes we experienced during the pandemic. We reminded those present in our business session that Nominations Committee is seeking an additional member for 2023 Spring Gathering Planning Committee. We ask our community to bring forward names of Friends, who may be inspired by the theme or location, to our Nominations Committee. We thank Paul for bringing us this presentation and we thank Planning Committee for the work they are doing together.

## **AM 06. QCEA report**

As our EMEYF representatives to the Quaker Council for European Affairs, Paula Christophersen, George Thurley and Marcie Winstanley were present at QCEA General Assembly earlier this month. They told us about the recent changes going on at QCEA, the benefits of having multiple EMEYF representatives at the same time and the way QCEA handles their hybrid meetings. After turbulent times in the world and at QCEA, the staff are now trying to refocus on their work on Peace, Human Rights and related policy areas, including a possible restructuring of those programmes as the topics are so interconnected.

We reflected and heard questions about the strategy and themes of QCEA's work and about how the outcomes of the lessons learned process were implemented, especially in promoting wellbeing and strengthening relationships between staff, General Assembly and Executive Committee. We are reminded that there are multiple ways to get involved in QCEA, and that our representatives will give the community more detailed information using our online meetings, the 'Jitsi-Tuesdays'. We thank our representatives for their presentation and information about QCEA's current work.

## **AM 07. Nominations Return**

Our Nominations Committee has been working hard over the weekend to try and find new roleholders. We appoint Camille Soetaert as an additional Planning Committee member, to plan Spring Gathering 2023 along with Vitek Springorum, Saskia Zijerveld and Emmie Touwen.

We appoint Paula Christophersen as our new Elder until Annual Meeting 2025, to serve alongside Liam Brighton. We hereby release Lena Hofmaier of her service and thank her. We appoint Evan Welkin and Kirsten Stuhr as non-CC Trustees, to serve for a period of three years until Annual Meeting 2025.

We haven't been able to find a UK Treasurer yet for a handover period from now until Spring Gathering 2023. Pete has graciously offered to make time for a handover period after Spring Gathering, to allow for a new Treasurer to be found until then. The meeting asks CC to reach out to British young Friends, not only with the intention of finding a new Treasurer but also to reconnect after the pandemic.

We haven't been able to find a Gatherings Coordinator yet, but Paul has offered to stay on as part of Planning Committee as long as need be for replacement to be found, which could be, due to the nature of the role, between now and Spring Gathering. The meeting asks CC to appoint a Gatherings Coordinator, if a name is found between gatherings. We release Paul of his role on CC and thank him for his service. We thank Pete, George and Paula for their work on Nominations Committee.

## **AM 08. Willy and Penn update**

We received a short update on the current going ons at our online magazine Willy and Penn. The current team are not quite in a place where they can operate at full capacity.

We have heard that currently content for Willy and Penn comes from the community. The editors are there for making it look pretty and streamlining, not for content.