

Peace and Social Order Committee

Revised Proposal to Annual Session 2020, 7/14/2020

Based on collective feedback from both open committee meetings and numerous emails, Peace and Social Order has revised our Proposal as follows:

Annual session historical context: It has been shown that use of plenary time to discuss wording of minutes related to social witness (Minutes) is not the best use of annual session plenary time. Minutes approved by those in attendance at annual session, did not necessarily represent all of PacYM due to those who were not present. Some felt that approved Minutes were insufficient and that further commitment of action was needed.

Part of what PSO is taking into account is the diminished capacity of many monthly meetings within PacYM. Many don't have a PSO committee, let alone participate in all of the structured levels of QM and PacYM. We appreciate the adaptations that many monthly meetings have taken, such as letter writing or financial assistance, rather than the social justice actions that many incorporated into their lives for decades when they were younger. Yet, there is an established sense that we should do things the way they were designed when Quakerism was flourishing in PacYM without taking into account the diminished state of some meetings and worship groups.

Current societal context: Friends, we live in a time of extreme transition. Obviously the last few years we have witnessed the rise of the use of narrative to demonize people, normalize violence, and justify immoral policy making even though these patterns have always plagued our nation. In response, we encourage Friends to make our voice of conscience more visible in the public sphere. Minutes* are one way our voice of conscience can be made public. They are also a way in which we can express our ideals, witness and narrate the struggles of our time, and can hold ourselves more accountable. Providing hope and moral vision is never to be underestimated.

Therefore, PSO proposes that for a trial period of two years, PacYM adopt the system for circulating and supporting Monthly Meeting Minutes described below.

At the end of this period, we propose that PSO review this system for revision or continued usage.

PSO proposes to no longer bring Minutes to AS for discernment.

1. Minutes may be initiated by any Monthly Meeting, by a major Quaker organization (e.g., FCNL, FCLCA, AFSC), or PacYM committee or affinity group.**
2. A Minute initiated by a Monthly Meeting will be brought to PSO, which will distribute it to all Monthly Meetings within PYM. In the event a minute is initiated by a major Quaker organization or other PYM committee or affinity group and is relevant to the work of PSO, PSO will also support the distribution of these minutes to Monthly Meetings. Monthly meetings may then discern whether to approve the minute as is, or approve a minute of their own."

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3. If the minute is approved, we ask that all Monthly Meetings:
 - a) send letters to the editor and other local news sources and take concrete actions in the world to amplify the message and expand public awareness
 - b) reflect on and take actions realigning our own personal thinking and Quaker patterns and structures purposefully integrating the ideals of our minutes.
 - c) let PSO know what actions they have taken, so that we can track the movement of the Spirit among us. PSO will post on the PacYM website all approved minutes.

*Different types of Minutes are defined in Faith & Practice.

**This is a living document and is meant to be inclusive. This document is not intended to exclude any Quaker collective which desires to offer a minute for insight and discernment.

Thank you on behalf of the PSO committee, Shannon Frediani, Linnea Hanson, Zae Illo, Betty Guthrie and Brian Johnston.