

PRESIDING CLERK - JOB DESCRIPTION
As approved by Nominating Committee, April 18, 2015

QUALIFICATIONS:

The Presiding Clerk of PYM should be a seasoned Friend, spiritually grounded, able to preside over a large group, and be able to work easily with others. Good institutional memory of PYM is desirable, including attendance at some recent annual sessions. He/she must be a member of a constituent Monthly Meeting. Familiarity with *Faith and Practice* and other Quaker literature is needed.

The Clerk should be able to comprehend readily, evaluate rightly, and state clearly concerns brought for consideration and items of business brought for action. He/she must have the ability to gather the sense of the Meeting, including to discern when unity has gathered the meeting together and when it has not.

The Clerk should be able and willing to make decisions on behalf of Yearly Meeting when immediate action is required and when an appropriate committee is not available to consider carefully and make a recommendation. In such cases the Clerk will consult with seasoned Friends in the yearly meeting, including officers and clerks of committees as the Clerk sees appropriate.

Computer access and competency are nearly essential.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Clerk bears primary responsibility for the work of the Yearly Meeting, including the plenary sessions. He/she prepares the agenda and sets the time and place for items, sensing the importance or urgency and possible time requirements of the items. The Clerk coordinates the business between annual sessions, involving the Assistant to the Clerk and others as appropriate.

The Clerk is responsible for minutes of all meetings for business; minutes are prepared by the Recording Clerks. The Clerk is an ex-officio member of all committees of the Yearly Meeting and should attend at least some of the meetings of Ministry and Oversight Committee. The Clerk keeps close enough to the work of the committees to be aware of business which may come before the yearly meeting, discerning whether it is appropriate for Yearly Meeting action.

The Clerk, in conjunction with Nominating Committee, keeps attuned to any committees which are not functioning well so that action may be taken to strengthen them. There is much preparation work, especially between Representative Committee meeting and the annual summer session.

The term of office is one year; however, clerks are usually asked to serve for three consecutive terms. It is assumed that, in accepting appointment as Presiding Clerk, that person would envisage being able to serve more than one term.

TASKS:

- Composes the Call to Yearly Meeting prior to annual session, and, with the Assistant to the Clerk, sees to its timely distribution.
- Prepares the agenda for plenary sessions and for Representative Committee, setting the time and place for items on the agenda, and sensing the importance and/or urgency of the items.
- Presides at plenary sessions at the annual sessions and at Representative Committee meeting.
- In consultation with Ministry and Oversight Committee, the Clerk has the responsibility for deciding on:
 - The theme, if any, for the Yearly Meeting annual session.
 - The overall schedule for the annual session.
 - The selection of keynote speaker(s), if any, for the annual session.
- Oversees the minutes of the yearly meeting's plenary sessions (drafted by the Recording Clerks) and takes final responsibility for their accuracy and completeness.
- Is responsible for final sign-off on the completed minutes of both annual session and Representative Committee. May require a special effort to see that the minutes are finalized for distribution in a timely manner.
- Follows through on notification of tasks assigned by the yearly meeting, ensuring that the instructions of the Yearly Meeting are carried out. (Is ultimately responsible that instructions/actions are carried out.)
- At the request of, and in consultation with, the clerk of Nominating Committee, may appoint Friends to fill critical officer, committee or other vacancies between annual sessions and Representative Committee meetings.
- Signs all official papers and minutes.
- Is available to meet with the Ministry and Oversight Committee as needed during the year and with other committees and individuals on an as-needed basis.
- Is available throughout the year to respond to concerns that require a Yearly Meeting response, whether raised by individuals, Monthly Meetings, Quarterly Meetings, or from outside the yearly meeting. May require contact with or referral to other officers of the yearly meeting or with clerks of committees.
- The Clerk is also responsible for the following tasks, which may be delegated:
 - Forwarding the PYM Epistles to Yearly Meetings throughout the world.
 - Selecting the location of any Representative Committee meeting which is not concurrent with yearly meeting sessions.
 - Receiving correspondence to PYM and distributing as appropriate.
 - Verifying that Representatives to PYM from each Monthly Meeting are appointed.

TIME EXPECTATIONS AND TIMELINES:

Can expect 8-12 hours of activity per week in the quiet months of the year in addition to preparation time for the annual session, Representative Committee, and time attending committee meetings, e.g., with Ministry and Oversight, as well as full time at the annual session and Representative Committee meeting.

The Clerk will find activity increases as Winter begins. Preparations must be made for Representative Committee. There should be communication with officers, committees, and meetings so all know their roles as well as when, where, and what is to be considered at Representative Committee.

Before Summer begins, the Clerk will again be communicating about preparations for annual sessions, distributing draft schedules and agenda, and making sure committees and officers are handling their responsibilities for the annual session. It is helpful to give guidance to Recording Clerks, Reading Clerk, and Assistant to the Clerk so that the “clerks at the table” can work smoothly together at annual sessions and support each other in their roles.

Follow-up to annual session requires particular attention to finalizing the minutes for distribution, assuring that assignments to individuals and committees are clear and being carried out, and distribution of the Epistle to all other Yearly Meetings is completed.