

**Tampa Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**

**Minutes
8 Ninth Month 2024**

Meeting Clerk began the gathering with silent worship.

Clerks

Nil Wilkins Meeting Clerk
Cynde Mercer Interim Recording Clerk

Attendees

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Chris Hugues | Cynde Mercer (Zoom) | Cecilia Yocum |
| Steve Kinney | Elizabeth Mitchell | |
| Dustin Lemke | Nil Wilkins | |

Action Items

Elizabeth Mitchell and Cecilia Yocum asked that Friends consider a minute on military use of tax dollars. Meeting approves. The minute will be posted on our web site and forwarded to FCNL and SEYM.

Minute One, Ninth Month 2024

As Quakers, we believe Peace is an essential precondition for healthy Life. We believe a healthy peaceful life is a birthright of ALL humans. Our government should support conditions of Peace and Justice throughout the world wherever and whenever possible. We strongly register our disagreement with the military use of our tax dollars to support one side in current conflicts thereby perpetuating their prolongation.

We particularly object to the unconditional release of funds and armaments to Israel in the light of Israel's 2024 bombardment of Palestinian citizens, destruction of Infrastructure and exclusion of humanitarian aid. There can be no Peace in that region under this policy.

They also presented a letter (Appendix A) to local representatives on Gaza to be mailed and/or hand delivered along with an FCNL handout ([Call for an Immediate Ceasefire, De-escalation, and Humanitarian Access in Gaza | Friends Committee On National Legislation \(fctl.org\)](#)) in meetings with staff. Meeting approves.

Cynde Mercer suggested meeting have a presence at Tampa Bay Veg Fest on Saturday, November 2 from 11am to 5 pm, <https://www.tampabayvegfest.com/>. Meeting approves. Chris Hugues will register and look into acquiring a tent, Cynde Mercer will create a hand bill.

Witness: Book donations for Prison Book Program and local library. New or gently used books may be left in one of the donation bins in our lobby. For more information contact Nil Wilkins.

Witness: FCNL Advocacy Team call: [September 2024 National Call: Mandy Smithberger, National Security Advisor for Sen. Elizabeth Warren \(youtube.com\)](#)

Witness: November and December Food drives for Feeding Tampa Bay. Leave food donations in bin on lobby.

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Dustin Lemke reported that Ministry and Counsel continues to meet and support the spiritual life of meeting. Adult first day program continues. In the works are a Getting to Know You and Friendly Dinners.

Chris Hugues reported that treatment for drywood termites in the cottage is being scheduled. Jennifer Perello's request to use the meetinghouse for a micro-school (Fortitude Academy) is moving forward. According to Florida statutes, if a school has less than six students over 13 years old, there are no additional requirements for the school. A formalized agreement is in the works. Committee of the Whole is continuing to meet each month on Zoom and all are invited to attend.

Cecilia Yocum reported that SEYM is again offering CAPP training for anyone working with youth. Meeting should consider creating a space for parents and children to attend meeting for worship in the worship space.

Our next meeting for business will be in December.

Treasurer's Report

Chris Hugues presented the treasurer's report. Income exceeded budget and expenses were on budget for first quarter. Expenses are expected to significantly increase for second quarter due to annual expenses coming due. Our reserves are intact but our funds available for expenditures are lower than what they should be. Meeting accepts the report.

Minutes

Minutes for sixth month 2024 were approved as submitted.

Upcoming Events and Meeting Calendar

Sunday (First Day), September 15, at 11:30 am, Potluck at the meetinghouse.

Sunday (First Day), September 22, at 11:40 am - Lois Price, of First United Church of Tampa, will discuss ways we can work together on shared concerns.

Wednesday (Fourth Day), September 25, at 7 pm, Committee of the Whole, Zoom only. The first part of the meeting will be a time for Friends to have a spiritual check in and then worship/worship share on the SEYM Worship and Ministry Committee query of the week: *What is my present leading, whether large or small, in which I am following the promptings of the Spirit? Am I able to discern work that is spiritually authentic and grounded in God?*

Sunday (First Day), September 29, at 11:40 am, Getting to Know You - hybrid, same Zoom link as our Meeting for Worship – Learn more about one of our members.

Meeting ended with closing worship.

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Appendix A

Draft Letter to Representatives

Dear _____,

The Tampa Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) would like to express our urgent and powerful feeling of distress at the position our government is taking regarding Israel/Palestine.

We would like to see the U.S. use its influence to bring about a cessation of hostilities, including withholding military funds. The 20 billion U.S. taxpayer dollars dedicated to providing munitions to Israel by 2026 as has been reported is one source of funds that could be paused until a permanent ceasefire and settlement is reached (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/us-approves-20-billion-israel-weapons-sale-israel-rcna166524>).

Please sign Ceasefire Resolution HR786, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-resolution/786>.

We urge your consideration of this matter and your wise action to enable peace and justice in the region to create ongoing stability which will be to the greater good of all participants.