



## **FFA Board Meeting Minutes**

**5/11/2024**

### **Newtown Meetinghouse**

Attending: Susan Hoskins(Executive Director), Emily Sandusky, Joan Malin, Lisa Ogletree, Nikki Mosgrove, Eric Andrews, Beth Hudson Keller, Jim Whitely, Tyler Hoff, Lucy Vandenberg (guest resource), Tucker Manchanda(recording)

### **Retreat- Strategic Discernment**

Meeting began at 10:15 am with a moment of silence and brief introductions.

Prior to this meeting the question was posed: What are the questions we need to be asking ourselves and each other? Members wrote down 4-5 of their answers on post-it notes. The exact answers are recorded [here](#).

The questions can be summarized as exploring one of six areas: Quaker vs. Non-Quaker Orgs, Legacy Grants, Capital, Innovation, Impact, and the Grant making process. The Quaker question was listed by several people so became the focus.

### **Quaker vs. Non-Quaker Orgs**

FFA is rooted in continuing revelation. We originally funded wealthy lifecare communities, then changed to funding other Quakers aging in place, then to include an equity element, and now focusing again on Quaker organizations. Do not want to lose equity priority if focus on Quaker organizations? Perhaps the next step is looking at orgs that exemplify Quaker values rather than call them non-Quaker. Discernment and definition must come from whole board, not just Executive Director.

Why give to non-Quaker organizations? Quaker wealth has issues around its origins. Many Quaker organizations serve a wealthier population. There are few Quaker orgs run by BIPOC. Some white-run that serve BIPOC communities. FFA could look within Quarters or meetings to find projects that are run by BIPOC or serve BIPOC. Need to identify who the recipients are. Also need to be sure the programs focus on aging, since many partners are community centers. This is why we have reached beyond Quaker circles.

There is a difference between supporting “people who are Quaker”, “Quaker orgs”, “Quaker meetings”, and “Quaker values.” Many organizations were founded by Friends, but no longer have Quaker residents or staff. When an organization is asked to explain how they align with Quaker values, the response is forced and not helpful. Instead, FFA should try to figure out if /how the organization lives out Quaker values through the conversations. It is on us to do the work to determine this, not the grantee partner. Often see term “Quaker inspired”, but what does that mean? How can FFA decide what is Quaker? This conversation is being raised in several Quaker circles, reflecting changes in membership.

Are we comfortable supporting grants for general operating support, not specific programs? We have begun to explore this with NYYM, FSA and “legacy homes” which serve lower income residents. What do we expect for application and assessment? Still want some accountability but may find ways to simplify. It may be a burden for a small organization to propose new programs each year. Not ready to do with non-Quaker orgs yet; many of whom are multi-service organizations. What does this look like?

NYYM does not have assistance funds like PYM. Should we have a meeting with Kevin Lovelady, Steve Mohlke and the Aging Committee to look at the next chapter in this relationship? Ok with multi-year commitment (if can work out the accounting) but not forever, maybe 3-5 years. Continue annual report/conversation/video. Ask what they need. How can we deepen the relationship?

FSA will have a leadership change, may change activities; wait to see.

Legacy homes (Hickman, Kennett, Friends Village) are struggling, serve lower income, have some resident assistance funds. Don't want to fund major capital, but some program-related for Quaker organizations (ie FV wifi). Have old buildings, limited space for expansion, smaller census. May be able to provide support for consultants, other resources.

Equity grants- is organization meeting the needs identified by the community? What does the leadership (board and ED) look like? Are they part of the community? How did you identify the need, how do you engage the community? What is grassroots?

20 grant proposals was too many to go through in the last meeting. Several organizations came back after some time off. Susan continuing to explore 4-5<sup>th</sup> year tapering off with non-Quaker organizations. May not do this with Quaker organizations; to be decided individually. This discernment helps Susan decide which proposals to bring forward.

Do we support Quaker spiritual development? How do you measure ephemeral things? Maybe hear from participants? Who is identifying the problem? Could ask: How are you engaging the communities directly affected in your decision making? How do we deepen our

relationships with our grantee partners? The convening role has been an important FFA contribution beyond the grant.

**In summary:** FFA wants to continue long-term relationship with the “legacy organizations”, deepening relationship but simplifying process. Review every 3-5 years. Explore whether to do multi-year grants. At least provide same funding year over year for this period. Less writing, more conversations.

The board supports a greater focus on Quaker organizations, but because of our commitment to equity, FFA wants to continue to hear from community-based grassroots non-profit organizations that reflect our values. They may be handled differently; need to be alert to bias or inequity. FFA needs to do the work to determine how each organization aligns with values. All need to be involved in “deepening our relationships.”

It was helpful to have Lucy join us as a resource knowledgeable about how other grantmakers face similar questions. Important to remember that others are dealing with same questions, and that all our grants have value.

### **Recurring issues:**

#### **Innovation**

What is innovation? How do we right-size for FFA and for grantee partners? What is the balance between continuing a proven program and innovative approaches to ongoing problems? Innovation needs to be in response to a change (like new populations or new problems), not just for the sake of having something new. Innovation alone has little value.

#### **Impact**

What do we mean by impact? For whom? Right-size for FFA and organization. FFA seeks impact through its grant making. Some grants have direct impact on recipient, some have indirect (ie staff training).

#### **Multi-year/risk**

FFA has historically decided that they are willing to take on risk to a certain extent. FFA took on risk by funding the Montessori and Assisted Living in Place programs, they had promise but ran into state govt or leadership/workforce issues, slowing implementation. Not doing multi-year allows FFA to drop if not succeeding but leaves grantee partners uncertain about future. Need sufficient time for launch.

- Balance of repeat and new grantee partners.
- How do we deepen relationships with grantee partners?
- Balance of simplicity/not collecting what we don't need and getting enough information to make informed decisions.

- The board seems to like supporting a variety of proposals. We do have focus: aging, Quaker, equity, geographic limits. More than many grantmakers.
- Some grantmakers have board members reading some but not all proposals, then ranking with rubric. Hard to judge those you haven't read. Rubrics don't reflect the deeper understanding of the work.

### **Grantmaking Process**

The Executive Director used to circulate LOIs, but never got feedback from the board so the LOI was removed. In the current model, the Ex Director has a conversation with each organization before they submit, to have a LOI over the phone. FFA may go back to asking board members to individually sort orgs into "yes/maybe/no" buckets.

Applications and reports have been reduced in length. Can try using conversations or videos instead of reports.

Susan can screen proposals more rigorously. Denied applicants are listed in the ED report.

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:40 pm.

Actions steps identified by Susan:

1. Return to yes/no/maybe buckets when considering proposals.
2. All should be engaged in deepening relationships with grantee partners.
3. Conduct more rigorous screening in initial contact.
4. Find ways to assess what the Quaker community needs.
5. Seek Quaker and Quaker-adjacent BIPOC led programs.
6. Board work on defining and assessing "Values-Aligned".
7. Set up meeting with NYYM.
8. Work on defining how FFA will do general operating grants to legacy organizations.
9. Participate in discussions on defining Quaker organizations.
10. Continue discernment.

**FFA Annual Meeting**  
**5/11/2024**  
**Newtown Meetinghouse**

Meeting began with a moment of silence at 1:00 pm.

**Director Report**

Permission was **granted** to shred the records from Iron Mountain - which are mostly from McCutchen era.

The Executive Director received a call regarding leaving a bequest to FFA, through Everence. FFA can invite Mimi from Friends Fiduciary to present on how to accept legacy gifts- February?

The Executive Director received a grant request from [Friends Life Care Partners](#) for occupational therapy software. They are asking for \$1,700, normally handled as a discretionary grant but the Executive Director has a conflict of interest. If it works well, it will be included in their operating budget next year. The board **approved** the grant request.

Board members should sign up for mid-year conversations with grantee partners, so we know how to schedule the conversations.

Can submit expenses (photocopies of receipts) for attending this meeting before December 31st.

**Board Officers, Committees, and Classes**

- Officers were **approved**:  
President: James Whitely  
Vice-President: Beth Hudson Keller  
Treasurer: Eric Andrews  
Assistant Treasurer: Tyler Hoff  
Secretary: Conrad Person
  
- The Governance committee was **approved**.  
Lisa Ogletree(chair), Beth Hudson Keller, Nikki Mosgrove, Joan Malin, James Whitely(ex officio), Susan Hoskins(ex officio)
- The Finance Committee was **approved**.  
Eric Andrews(chair), Conrad Person, Tyler Hoff, Lisa Ogletree, Emily Sandusky, James Whitely(ex officio), Susan Hoskins(ex officio)
- Abigail is cycling off, and Jim shared a letter of appreciation for Abigail.

- Upcoming meeting dates were tentatively **approved**:  
 October 17th, 2024: 6-9pm, Grantmaking via Zoom  
 April 17th, 2025: 6-9pm, via Zoom  
 May 3rd, 2025: 10am-3pm, annual in-person meeting. This meeting is earlier than some members would like. Could consider June for the in-person meeting in the future.  
 October 16th, 2025: 6-9pm, via Zoom
- New officer descriptions were circulated prior to the meeting and **approved**.

Jim brought forward the name of a potential board member. Referred to Governance, need to identify what characteristics FFA is looking for. Open call for anyone that would make good candidates - let Lisa know if you know anyone.

### **Changes to the Bylaws**

Bylaw 9.6 (requiring FFA to report to NYYM) was removed from the bylaws. **Approval** was unanimously granted via email.

Bylaw 7.1 needs to be edited to require unanimous agreement to approve changes to the bylaws, and remove the requirement for 10 board members to agree. With Abigail leaving, the board will decrease to below 10 members until new people are appointed. The bylaw also requires NYYM to approve changes to this section of the bylaw, which should be removed.

- There is unity that advance notice and approval by all trustees, through any forum, is a requirement for any changes to the bylaws.
- It was concluded that Jim and Lisa will consult with Beth Yingling about how to navigate this change to the bylaws, both legal considerations and how to talk about with NYYM.

#### **Decision deferred.**

- This conversation can be resumed when there are 10 members on the board.

The Board and Director Self-Evaluation was circulated and completed.

Board members completed conflict of interest forms.

FFA made a new resolution at Truist bank to add Tyler Hoff to the bank account. The process is also underway at JP Morgan and Friends Fiduciary.

### **Executive Director Job Description**

The Executive Director's Job Description is important for annual Ex. Director evaluations. What kind of qualifications and background do you expect from the Ex. Director? This is an important part of succession planning.

The current Ex. Director believes this role could remain a part-time job, provided the successor looks at the big picture and plans carefully. Keeping the role in a part-time position means there is likely to be much more turnover, as people use this role to close out their careers. This job is difficult for people who are early in their careers, and it does not have much opportunity for advancement or change. Also they are not as seasoned in philanthropy, aging field or Quaker connections. The job description will be integrated into the ED evaluation and succession processes.

Changes in President, Treasurer and Executive Director are anticipated in the next 3 years or so.

Meeting minutes from the last board meeting were **approved**.

Meeting closed with a moment of silence at 3:00 pm.

Tucker Manchanda, recorder  
Susan Hoskins, Executive Director