

Executive Director report June 2025

Please check out our website. There are new photos in the slide show, and a new Donate button. Give it a test run with a modest donation!

Meetings attended:

--Meeting the Moment with Trust Based Philanthropy. TBP is creating peer groups to help grant makers work together to "meet the moment." They expect organizations to aspire to the practices as best they can, and to support each other.

--Rutgers Hub for Aging—Update on Age Friendly Communities, Livestrong NJ, Multisector Plan on Aging. All are moving forward with state support.

--CNJG Funder Collaboration on Immigration in NJ. Presentations, plan to create local Hubs, Know Your Rights trainings.

--NJAAW conference. Great presentation on Aging While Black. We don't all experience aging the same way. It focused on the impact of an accumulation of years and injustices; the need to honor elders (noun) from elderly (pejorative adjective); create community spaces and engage elders in making their visions become real; move from acknowledgement to action; intersectionality and intergenerational; can I be my authentic self in this space? I am my ancestors' wildest dream. When Black issues are addressed, everyone benefits.

The lunch panel was on feeding America and the benefit of forming coalitions. The afternoon session was on the unique challenges of solo aging. There was a lot of promotion of the Multi-Sector Plan on Aging for NJ. Only the convener, 1 other and I attended the pre-conference on a senior center director association.

--Ralston Foundation asked me to be on their funders panel on June 12; the audience will be grantees. Our Philadelphia grantees have been invited.

--CNJG conference tomorrow

News: Kendal at Lexington has named Adam Day as its next CEO, effective June 2. He is a 2017 graduate of the FSA Leadership Institute and former Director of Facility Operations and Strategic Development at Foxdale Village.

There have been many articles and zoom meetings focused on what philanthropy should do now. You may recall that Trust Based Philanthropy urged organizations to sign on to the Meet the Moment pledge (they have clarified that it is not necessary to pledge to meet all the points), or you read about the Gates Foundation deciding to spend out over 20 years. This article in Philanthropy Today is a good summary of the conversation.

https://www.philanthropy.com/article/philanthropy-opens-the-vault-payouts-are-surg-ing-in-response-to-trump?utm_source=lterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=campaign_13431981_nl_Philanthropy-Today_date_20250505&sra=true

During the weekend of November 8-9, 2025, KinderSmile Foundation and Mercer Street Friends will be partnering with RAM, Remote Area Medical, for a grand two day event to service Trenton and Mercer County! Along with hundreds of volunteers, we will provide FREE dentures, dental screenings, oral health education, vision exams, eyewear, and endless community resources! Please share the volunteer registration link (<https://volunteer.ramusa.org/>) with other members of your team or network who may wish to volunteer.

Grants- We will discuss:

ARTZ Philly- has connected with QVS and is hoping for support from FFA to help pay the stipend. They would likely return in the Fall cycle after taking their year sabbatical anyway. A fellow has already been selected. I propose some funding just for this year since I introduced them.

JFCS-Abramson Center gave me more information on their proposed dementia caregiver program.

Proposal from Twilight Wish- the proposal arrived in January and I neglected to include it in the April meeting. While it is a novel idea, I am ambivalent about recommending it.

JFCS Monmouth Co. This is another one that I missed including last meeting. I am also ambivalent about recommending it, as it seems little different from a volunteer visitor program and is not a new program.

I received an inquiry from Yoga4Seniors, offering yoga classes in parks and senior centers in Phila. It is a small, Black-led program, which primarily wants to pay the director's salary. Guidestar is a bit confusing. I am inclined to say No.

Meeting with School of the Spirit this week-they want general operating support. Also had a preliminary conversation with Sheila (PYM) about updating the pamphlets and website. Amputee Aid wants to start a presence in Philly.

Ohio Senior Living Foundation, Kingdom Financial Group Fdn, and 1 other organization turned away.

Reflections on Strategic Goals 2020-2024

Every year at the time of the annual meeting, I try to reflect on the past year and the progress made toward the organization's strategic goals and then to present some queries and objectives that might stimulate discussion of the future in the meeting. I hope you do too.

Achievements in 2024-5:

- Executive Director job description written and approved.
- Simplified and shortened the application and reporting requirements to the minimum that board members need for proper discernment.
- Began to update bylaws.
- Board did a lot of work on visioning and clarifying last spring, which I found very helpful in guiding my work and our discernment, an ongoing process, especially as more of the early discernment is on me.
 - Made a stronger commitment to ongoing support of Quaker organizations, especially legacy homes serving a lower income population.
 - Made simplified GOS grants to the legacy homes, only asking that they state a request for funding and give a brief report at year-end.
 - Continue practice of awarding 1 year grants. Feedback is that this annual review process benefits the organization as well as FFA. Also enables ending if there are changes in the organization or program.
 - More screening done in initial call, reducing number approved for application.
 - Discerned that FFA resources are not sufficient to seek requests from NYC and State, but exceptions can be made. Geographic focus is NJ-Philadelphia area. Note that each state serves aging adults differently.
 - Discerned that grass roots community-based organizations should have a mechanism in place for community/participant input for identifying needs and evaluating programs.

- Expect each grantee partner to have a written non-discrimination policy that applies to participants and employees.
- Implemented a “three year then sabbatical” practice for non-Quaker grantee partners
- Defined “impact” as whether the grant is making a difference for the organization and its community. Would they be able to do the same thing without the grant? Also looked at whether the project has a direct impact on aging adults (music program) or indirect (staff training), desiring that there be a clear connection to recipients.
- Defined “innovation” as a new approach to an old or new problem. Began to explore the value of providing ongoing funding for a proven program vs focusing on new ideas for addressing new or old problems.
- Defined a “right sized” grant as one to a small grass-roots organization where the size of the grant can make a discernable difference. Exploring whether a \$5M organization budget cap feels right.
- Ok to have some risk for bold ideas
- Like having a range of subject areas. This creates the challenge of mastering understanding of several aging issues.

Objectives For 2025-26

- Orientation of new officers
- Orientation of new board members
- Discern how we are called to respond to the Federal funding cuts. Does FFA need to change any practices? (Increase pay-out, emergency funding, priorities, ...) or Wait + See. Understand flow of funds, State budgets. Get creative!
- Meet with NYYM (bylaws changes, check-in)
- Deepen relationships with grantee partners and the communities they serve. Get feedback on processes and relationships.
- Explore whether there are grantee partner capacity building needs that FFA can help with such as D&O insurance, CEO self-care, strategic plan, or technology.
- Define what “values-aligned” means in FFA grantmaking.
- How does FFA evaluate proposals? Is it equitable? Do we need a rubric? How to assess whether aligned with FFA values?
- Should we dig deeper in a single area, such as exploring what aging Quakers need to stay engaged. I envision the board first defining what the question is, then everyone using their networks to explore responses and possible strategies.
- Continue to explore AI- where can it be useful to FFA, what are the dangers? Expect to get proposals for using AI. Ziegler quarterly report identifies 4 factors for success using AI: availability of high quality data, endless possible solutions, clear objectives, ability to adapt to ever-changing systems.
- Are you as board members getting enough information to make informed decisions?

Summary of 2020-2024 Strategic Implementation Plan

- 1- Define impact: see above.
- 2- Innovation Fund: no longer need for separate category. See above.
- 3- Large grants: stopped being a priority as more proposals came in. Board seems to prefer more \$25-30K grants.

- 4- Seek new grantees: conferences, relationships and word of mouth have all contributed. Collaborations continue to be popular (but raise a question when one partner is stronger than the other). Some grantors are looking at ways to offer coaching and capacity building, which we could consider.
- 5- Policies & Practices: are in better alignment with social justice and trust-based practices. We have shifted power from the grantor to the grantee, trusting that they know better what they need. We have also made a longer-term commitment to the legacy homes.
- 6- Continuing Trust-based philanthropy. Philanthropy now undergoing shift in response to Federal funding and the threat of loss of non-profit status. TBP playing big role.
- 7- How long to support grantee partners- pattern of 3 years for non-Quakers, ongoing for most Quaker.
- 8- It appears that most of the strategic objectives identified in 2020 have been met or discontinued. I recommend engaging in identifying a new set of priorities for 2026-2030 once the new officers and members have settled in and the world feels less unpredictable.

I want to spend time learning more about the main focus areas we address (see included spreadsheet).

Susan Hoskins, Executive Director