

**YEARLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN BRITAIN**

**AT THE YEARLY MEETING
HELD IN LONDON AT FRIENDS HOUSE
26 - 29 May 2006**

Minute 24: Constitutional issues – central nominations

Minute 35 of Yearly Meeting 2005 asked our Agenda Committee to arrange for the proposals in paragraphs 66 and 67 of the RECAST report to be implemented at Yearly Meeting this year. We were not clear at that stage whether to accept the recommendation from RECAST that all central appointments should be made by Yearly Meeting. Our *Quaker faith & practice* Drafting Group has consulted widely and recommends that the volume of appointments would be better handled if it were divided between Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings (as the representative meeting), so that appointment of Trustees, Quaker Stewardship Committee, other Yearly Meeting committees and Yearly Meeting representatives on our Agenda Committee continues to be carried out by Yearly Meeting, while appointment of central and other standing committees, on behalf of Yearly Meeting, and Meeting for Sufferings' representatives on Agenda Committee continues to be carried out by Meeting for Sufferings or its successor.

We also agree that all members of the Yearly Meeting Nominations Group (other than the Convenor) should be appointed from the floor of Yearly Meeting in session. Since the nominating group will not have to work during Yearly Meeting, we hope that their appointment might be done over a longer period during the Yearly Meeting rather than entirely at its first session. This will give more opportunity for those Friends named to reflect on their willingness to serve and the meeting more time to reflect on their suitability and the appropriate balance in the nominated group. We agree that the size of the Nominating Group should be 6-8 Friends.

We agree to the proposed amendments to *Quaker faith & practice* which would implement these changes, as printed on pages 63-65 of the "Constitutional Issues" Supplement to *Documents in advance*, with the exception of "Trustees for centrally managed work" in the second paragraph which should read "Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees" and "for centrally managed work" at item c) of 6.19 which should be deleted, so this just reads "Trustees"; and 6.22 first paragraph which will read: The group consists of six to eight Friends appointed in a Yearly Meeting session each year; a convenor nominated by the previous Nominating Group and the remainder on nomination from the body of the meeting".

We agree that the appropriate means of appointing the clerks of Meeting for Sufferings should be reviewed along with the review of the size of Meeting for Sufferings for the 2009-11 triennium. We have been reminded that all our nominations committees need our prayerful support, as they carry out their very responsible tasks on our behalf.

The full text of the amended sections of *Quaker faith & practice* follows:

Committee on Clerks

6.19 The Committee on Clerks is responsible for considering the short, medium and long term clerkship needs of the Yearly Meeting.

The Committee on Clerks acts as the nominating body for clerks of Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and Summer Gatherings. It brings forward

- a. to Yearly Meeting, annually, names of a Friend to serve as clerk and two Friends to serve as assistant clerks of Yearly Meeting;
- b. to Meeting for Sufferings, annually, names of Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerk of Meeting for Sufferings;
- c. to Yearly Meeting, annually, names of Friends to serve as clerk and assistant clerk of the Trustees;
- d. to Yearly Meeting, two years before each Summer Gathering, names of Friends to serve as clerks of the Summer Gathering.

The Committee on Clerks consists of 13 members, including a clerk appointed by the committee from within its number. One-third of the members other than the clerk will retire annually at the rise of Yearly Meeting, and are eligible for reappointment. These Friends shall serve for no more than six continuous years. The clerk is appointed for a three-year period and may serve for a maximum of nine continuous years on the committee.

Central Nominations Committee

6.21 The Central Nominations Committee is a standing committee appointed by Yearly Meeting (see 6.22) to bring forward names for service as required both by Yearly Meeting in session and by Meeting for Sufferings. It consists of twenty-seven members, with one third of the members retiring annually at the rise of Yearly Meeting and not eligible for immediate reappointment. The clerk and assistant clerk are appointed by the committee from within its number and may serve a further year beyond the initial appointment period.

The Central Nominations Committee brings forward names to each Yearly Meeting for the following appointments.

- a. Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee: three Friends to serve for three years (6.18).
- b. Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee; two Friends to serve during the period of Yearly Meeting (6.20).
- c. Epistle Drafting Committee: five to seven Friends to serve during the period of Yearly Meeting, including one to act as convener (6.22).
- d. Yearly Meeting Elders as required by the Yearly Meeting.
- e. Yearly Meeting Overseers as required by the Yearly Meeting.
- f. Yearly Meeting Accessibility and Support Group: numbers required by the terms of reference (which may be obtained on application to the Recording Clerk).

- g. Yearly Meeting Publications Group for *Quaker faith & practice*: one Friend to serve for three years.
- h. Quaker Stewardship Committee: three Friends to serve for three years (14.29);
- i. Trustees: five Friends to serve for three years (new cross reference).

When due or required, it also brings in names of Friends to serve on the Summer Gathering Planning Committee (6.25), on ad hoc groups or for any other appointments requested by Yearly Meeting.

When interim appointments to any of these bodies are required, Central Nominations Committee may bring forward names to Meeting for Sufferings, which acts on behalf of Yearly Meeting.

The committee works closely with each body on which vacancies arise in order to clarify the requirements, which may include the need for representatives from other bodies. The Central Nominations Committee acts for Meeting for Sufferings, in bringing forward names for appointments of Meeting for Sufferings representatives to Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee (6.18); for appointments to the central committees, standing committees and Trusts appointed by Meeting of Sufferings (8.03 – 8.10; 8.14 -8.20); and as representatives to various bodies, for service on ad hoc groups or for any other appointments requested by Meeting for Sufferings (8.15).

Yearly Meeting Nominating Group

6.22 Nominations for appointment to the Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks are made by the Yearly Meeting Nominating Group. The group consists of six to eight Friends appointed in a Yearly Meeting session each year; a convenor nominated by the previous Nominating Group and the remainder on nomination from the body of the meeting. The group meets and consults as necessary during the period up to the next Yearly Meeting, including with the Central Nominations Committee and the Committee on Clerks, to enable it to bring nominations to that Yearly Meeting, as follows:

- a. annually, four Friends to serve on the Committee on Clerks for a three-year period from the rise of the Yearly Meeting (6.19).
- b. annually, nine Friends to serve on the Central Nominations Committee for a three-year period from the rise of the Yearly Meeting (6.21).
- c. Friends to fill casual vacancies on these two bodies.
- d. one Friend to serve as convenor of the next Yearly Meeting Nominating Group.

MARTIN WARD, *Clerk*