

DRAFT
Durham Monthly Meeting of Friends Business Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2025
Ellen Bennett — Recording Clerk

Durham Monthly Meeting of Friends met for the conduct of business on Sunday, September 21, 2025, with eleven people in attendance at the Meetinghouse and two by Zoom.

1. Meeting Opening

Ingrid Chalufour, serving as clerk *pro-tem*, opened the meeting with an excerpt from Amanda Gorman's poem *The Hill We Climb*, written for President Biden's inauguration, January 20, 2025:

This is the era of just redemption.
We feared it at its inception.
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs
Of such a terrifying hour.
But within it we've found the power
To author a new chapter,
To offer hope and laughter to ourselves.

So while once we asked: How could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
Now we assert: How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?

We will not march back to what was,
But move to what shall be:
A country that is bruised but whole,
Benevolent but bold,
Fierce and free.

We will not be turned around,
Or interrupted by intimidation,
Because we know our inaction and inertia
Will be the inheritance of the next generation.
Our blunders become their burdens.
But one thing is certain:
If we merge mercy with might, and might with right,
Then love becomes our legacy,
And change, our children's birthright.

So let us leave behind a country better than the one we were left.
With every breath from our bronze-pounded chests,
We will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.

We will rise from the gold-limned hills of the West!
We will rise from the windswept Northeast, where our forefathers first realized
revolution!
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the Midwestern states!
We will rise from the sunbaked South!

We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover,
In every known nook of our nation,
In every corner called our country,
Our people, diverse and dutiful.
We'll emerge, battered but beautiful.

When day comes, we step out of the shade,
Aflame and unafraid.
The new dawn blooms as we free it,
For there is always light,
If only we're brave enough to see it,
If only we're brave enough to be it.

2. Approval of Clerk and Recording Clerk, *pro-tem*.

The Meeting approved Ingrid Chalufour as clerk *pro-tem* for today's meeting.
The Meeting approved Sarah Sprogell as recording clerk *pro-tem* for today's
meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes of July 2025

The Meeting approved the Minutes of the July 20, 2025 Business Meeting

4. Finance Committee Report — Nancy Marstaller

Nancy reviewed the attached written and numerical reports for the first and second quarters of the year. She highlighted that our income is higher than usual for this time of year because of a large financial gift received at the beginning of the year, and a large interest payment when a CD was cashed in. On the expense side, Peace and Social Concerns' spending is high but is balanced by a grant from Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund and a donation from the Meeting Care Coordinator funds. Legal fees to resolve the Babcock estate have been an unexpected expense. Despite the over-budget items, however, we continue to be in good financial shape at this point in the year.

A suggestion was made that we encourage and promote weekly giving and direct deposit giving.

5. Trustees Report — Sarah Sprogell

Please see the written report for a summary of recent work done at the meetinghouse to replace our bulkhead and the meeting sign at the corner. It was suggested that we include a history of the “Quaker” star added to the sign, for those who are not familiar with it.

Trustees request the Meeting’s approval to spend up to an additional \$10,000 for legal expenses that may be necessary to carry out the probate work needed to resolve the Babcock estate. A detailed report of the history and progress of this effort is attached. The next hearing date is October 22, 2025. There was a suggestion to consider mediation if that is appropriate.

Friends approved the request spend up to an additional \$10,000.

This brings the total amount approved thus far to \$20,000.

6. Ministry and Counsel — Renee Cote

M&C recommends that we ask Falmouth Quarterly Meeting to address our concerns about the current environment of cruelty being expressed towards immigrants and other targeted groups in our communities.

Friends approved this recommendation.

Meeting for worship on Nov. 2 will be a Meeting for Grieving. It will be a time to remember those who have passed away this year as well as other heartfelt losses.

M&C is planning an adult-hour series of Quaker instruction called Quaker Way, to be offered at 9:30am two Sundays a month, from November through March. There was a sense of gratitude and appreciation for this opportunity.

7. Peace & Social Concerns — Ingrid Chalufour

Ingrid reviewed the attached report of updates and activities including the October 4 movie night for World Quaker Day/DMMF 250th Anniversary, the Social Justice Book Project work at Kate Furbish Elementary School in Brunswick, and a teacher training conference focusing on Wabanaki curriculum being planned for January 2026. Please see the report for details.

8. Woman’s Society — Dorothy Curtis

Women’s Society would like to hold a silent auction in November.

The Meeting heartily approved.

9. Other business

The Town of Durham request for help with parade and/or other activities to celebrate the US 250th anniversary in 2026 – carry-over from July Monthly Meeting:

We did not reach unity on this request, and it was suggested that further discussion with a larger group of Friends would be beneficial. Leslie Manning will reach out to Durham to gather more information.

10. Maker Café Update —Kim Bolshaw

There was a knitting group at the September Makers session with an excellent instructor and 10 knitters. Many non-knitters also came for the conversation, meal and music. About half of those in attendance were not associated with the Meeting. Jenny, who bought the parsonage a few years ago, came for the first time, and also came to meeting for worship today! The music and food were enjoyed by all. Donations covered our expenses with \$72 to spare.

11. Meeting Closing

Business Meeting was adjourned with appreciation for everyone's input and the beautiful fall day.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Sprogell, recording clerk *pro-tem*.

Attachments: