

## **Recording Clerk Job Description**

**September 2017**

The duties of the recording clerk are to:

- 1) Sit at the clerks' table and take minutes during Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.
- 2) Participate in the clerks' team meeting prior to Meeting for Business.
- 3) Prepare the Minutes for the Newsletter and the Meeting Archives

Each of these duties is described further below.

### **Sitting at Clerks Table and Taking Minutes**

- Circulate a clipboard with paper to gather names of all who attended.
- Take notes on the Meeting for business and fashion them into minutes that, at a minimum, clearly minute all formal decision of the Meeting. Help the presiding clerk by ensuring that a clear decision has been made and is documented. Individual recording clerks have some discretion in the length of the minutes. Minutes can be as brief as "John Doe, convener of X committee presented the attached report. Friends accepted the report." Or "Suzy Doe presented the attached minute. Friends APPROVED the minute." It is common in Madison to summarize highlights of a report or minute; using language from the report or minute can aid that process. During a lengthy discussion, one again has the choice how much to capture in the official minutes; a transcript is not necessary or even useful, what is most important is to capture any decisions, some of the spirit of the discussion, and how the clerk has summarized the sense of the Meeting. Either handwritten or typed minutes are fine.
- Support and consult with the Presiding Clerk as he or she seeks to discern the sense of the Meeting.
- Use the agenda headings to structure the Minutes. Note the names of those presenting reports or speaking in their role as committee convener. Other Friends should generally not be identified by name (omitting names can help Friends deliver their message and then let go of it). Clearly note the date of the meeting, the names of the presiding and recording clerk; it also can be useful to note the times of opening and closing.
- After an agenda item is complete, check to make sure the notes are coherent and legible (and if necessary, ask the presiding clerk to review a complex decision) and then read back the minute. Receive suggestions for edits from members of the Meeting with good grace.

### **Participating in the clerks' team meeting.**

- Worshipfully consider agenda items that will be presented at MFB.
- Collect electronic copies of written reports (and work with the presiding clerk to determine how to store and distribute to assistant clerks; one option is to post on the clerks' team section of the web site; another option is to email among clerks' team; store on your own computer, and then post final reports with minutes as described below).

## **Preparing the Minutes for the Newsletter and the Meeting Archives**

- Type up minutes (or make light edits to minutes typed during the Meeting).
- The common practice in Madison is to list those in attendance; it also is nice to note the number of Friends for inclusion in the Minutes.
- Share a draft with the presiding clerk (and the newsletter editor also can play a useful role in review) and make revisions as needed.
- Forward the final copy to the newsletter editor before the deadline (10<sup>th</sup> of month). The newsletter editor also needs Word versions of the written reports.
- Archive the minutes. Prior to July 2014, this involved hard copy in a 3-ring binder; Since July 2016, this involves posting on the Meeting website.
- Archive the written reports that are attachments to the minutes. The current practice is to create one Word file that has the minutes and the reports as attachments.

### **Some skills or strengths which may be useful to a recording clerk:**

- ability to sit and be grounded and discern the work of the Divine and to assist the Presiding Clerk in discerning the sense of the Meeting,
- being able to listen deeply to what is spoken in Meeting for Business, and capture in writing some of the essence of what Friends share
- basic knowledge of Quaker process, and
- familiarity with Madison Monthly Meeting