

Report of the Communications Committee to New York Quarterly Meeting 4/21/2019

During the past quarter the Communications Committee has focused primarily on getting the new website at <https://nycquakers.org> to function well. We have requested many changes from the contracting agency, Intracommunities Inc. (ICI), as we refined the menu structures and established procedures for posting new material onto the site. While there is still much work to be done we have made considerable progress.

We have identified that there are two quite separate functions that the website needs to provide: one offering a “seeker-friendly” public face to visitors using the site to find out about NYQM or about Quakerism, or Quakers in New York City; and the other simultaneously providing a sort of intranet for the Friends of the Quarter that enables communication and provides information and access to important past and current documents for the conduct of Quarterly business.

We have been using in-house QM office staff to provide updates to the NYQM Facebook page with links to other Facebook pages with current information and events.

We are in the final stage of having a single consolidated database of email names and addresses, including all of the individual Monthly Meeting lists as well as the QM’s own master list. At present we are able to send email “blasts” to nearly a thousand unique email addresses. This effort will be tested and refined during the coming Quarter, as we establish the technology for the separate Monthly Meetings to be able to maintain their distinct lists within the consolidated database, and use it for their own communications as they wish.

We are currently in the process of establishing a clear “mission statement” to guide an action plan for expanding and developing both our public-facing and our internal community-facing capabilities. We are reviewing our relationship with ICI as we evaluate technology options for long term support and maintenance of our website and other Internet-based activities.

We expect to be hiring a part time “webmaster” position to provide in-house updating and management of the website and related online services, more technical than the QM office staff can provide. We hope to hire a Quaker from the Quarter if possible, to ensure staff familiarity with Quaker language, Quaker process and our organizational structures, to avoid the “lost in translation” concerns that made our early versions of the website less helpful than we envisioned. We ask Friends in the Monthly Meetings to encourage any member or attender with web skills looking for an extra few hours of work a week at good pay, to contact us by talking to our clerk, Ann Kjellberg, or through emailing the NYQM office at info@nycquakers.org.

We expect during the upcoming Quarter to bring a budget request to Audit and Budget for inclusion as a committee line item in the QM annual budget.

In Friendship,
Dave Britton, Morningside MM
recorder for the Committee