

To: Dave Ek, General Arrangements Clerk, NPYM Annual Session 2018  
Lucretia Humphrey, Presiding Clerk, NPYM Annual Session 2018  
Nora Percival, NPYM Secretary

From: Angie Alexander, Annual Session Recording Clerk

Date: October 17, 2018

Subject: Annual Session Recording Clerk's Report

This report covers my four years (two terms, 2015 through 2018) as Recording Clerk for Annual Session and for the Annual Session Planning Committee. I did not submit any reports in previous years.

The content of this report reflects what I learned as I served in this role. It may be old news to members who have served as recording clerks before, but I hope this content will be helpful to those who are doing this job for the first time. I have also included a few comments about keeping the minutes for the planning committee meetings.

Two people were very important to me as mentors: Ann Stever and Pablo Stanfield.

### **General Information**

#### **Minutes of Record Compared to Minutes of Action**

An important distinction that I learned is the designation "Minutes of Record" as different from "Minutes of Action." Minutes of Record simply state that we met, sang, listened to a report, or did a planned activity led by the Friend-in-Residence, the Presiding Clerk, or a group of Friends. At this type of plenary session, no decisions are made. Reports might be followed by questions or comments that should be noted.

Minutes of Action record what occurred in plenary sessions during which corporate action is taken--decisions made. Examples of such decisions are approval of budgets or nominations, unity concerning a policy decision, change in content of our *Faith and Practice*, or adoption of recommendations for actions concerning an important social issue. The action minute must accurately express the unity that developed and is written in consultation with the Presiding Clerk. Although changes in policy or encouragement to actions are submitted in written form and are to be attached to the minutes, any amendments or corrections must be noted.

It is especially important, in my opinion, to note issues that are raised during discussion of proposed actions, for reference both during subsequent decision sessions and for historical purposes. These need not be direct quotations but should be very close to the gist of what was said. If the topic under consideration is a heated one, it may be necessary to consult with any Friend who has spoken at length to be sure the notes are accurate. (An example occurred during the threshing session in 2017 concerning inclusivity.) Notes about issues raised in threshing sessions are important for reference during decision-making. There is no need to give the names of Friends who spoke during discussions.

#### **Practical Aspects of Recording During Annual Session**

A copy of each day's minutes should be posted in a readily accessible place by the next morning. This often means editing and seeing to printing late on the day the minutes were drafted. Printing can be done in the NPYM on-site office from files saved on a USB drive. The Physical Arrangements Clerk can arrange a place for posting. Drafts also should be placed on the Annual Session website and clearly marked that they are drafts (not yet accepted or approved). I found it most useful to spend some time editing very soon after the close of each plenary session while the elements of the session were still relatively fresh in my memory.

Directly typing the minutes into my laptop computer during each session saved considerable time afterwards. (I had never done this before but found it relatively easy to do.) I only took handwritten notes when the session was not information-dense, e. g., during the session led by Junior Friends in the 2018 for minutes of record.

Soon after the end of annual session, the drafts should be reviewed and edited for final copy (grammar, punctuation, sentence clarity). The final copies are sent to the NPYM Secretary, who will forward them on to the NPYM Webmaster for posting.

Some Presiding Clerks prefer to have draft copies, as attachments to email messages, later the same day of each plenary session. This seems to be good practice.

It is likely that the Recording Clerk will miss some or all small group worship sessions or interest group sessions. This is one reason why there is a fee waiver!

### **Annual Session Planning Committee Meetings**

Although a few of the Annual Session Planning Committee Meetings were site visits at the universities at which the annual session was to be held, most of these meetings were conducted by conference call. It was not difficult for me to learn to recognize the members' voices, so I could keep track of which person agreed to each specific task that arose. I did not keep track of who said what during discussions. The minutes were usually a combination of minutes of record and action minutes. My practice was to take notes by hand and type an organized version soon after the meeting. The committee meetings were less apt to adhere tightly to the agenda.

It seemed important and was welcomed by the committee members to note who was to do specific tasks and by when. That also makes it important to publish these minutes to the committee members within a few days after each meeting.

### **Additional Note**

The job description for this position says that the Recording Clerk should be the person to send copies of the annual session minutes to all monthly meetings and worship groups. I did not do this. The final minutes were sent to the NPYM Secretary, as noted above. It is not clear to me how this should be handled. Are we relying too much on the clerks of monthly meetings and worship groups to take the initiative themselves for consulting the minutes after they are published on the NPYM website? I believe the NPYM Secretary lets people on the contact list know when the minutes are available. The job description also lists others who are to receive copies, including the Clerk of the Coordinating Committee.