

QUAKER BUSINESS MEETING PROCEDURES

1. Meetings for business are held in a spirit of worship, but this does not mean that they are overly solemn or devoid of humor.
2. Meetings begin with a period of silent worship.
3. Frequently a query is read to bring the group together in addressing a common issue and establishing a sense of unity at the start.
4. An agenda provides an orderly process for doing business.
5. The role of the clerk is to serve as a facilitator.
6. When a matter is introduced for discussion, 'The issues at hand should be clearly defined and stated. 'Care must be taken to assure that every person who wishes to contribute has an opportunity to do so. The belief in God in everyone means that every contribution must be heard with equal concern. Individuals, including the clerk, should take care not to dominate the discussion. Time may be taken to consider an issue in silence.
7. As a matter is discussed, the 'hard shell of egocentricity' begins to dissolve and Truth emerges as the group becomes united in recognition of its presence. When the group arrives at a point of consensus, the clerk states what appears to be the 'sense of the meeting', and the group either concurs or works to state that 'sense' more accurately.
8. On rare occasions when a member of the group, having stated his/her concerns, is not comfortable with the 'sense of the meeting' he or she may choose to 'step aside' so that the business of the meeting may go forward.
9. A minute is prepared based on the sense of the meeting, and this becomes a part of the record.
10. Business meetings are generally concluded with a final moment of silence.