

SC6.23.3: AYM Nominations Committee Report to YM23, regarding new structure for AYM finances

- a) Standing Committee hears of the following proposal about a new structure with respect to AYM Finances, brought by Nominations Committee:

Four Quakers have offered to work together to provide a new Treasurer and advisory team:

- Jonathan Benyei (CRQ)
- Judy Henderson (NSWRM)
- Lee Harradine (SANTRM)
- Candace Barron (NSWRM)

This group has extensive experience in finance and organisational management:

- Jonathan Benyei in community and government sector management
- Judy Henderson in investment and senior NGO management
- Lee Harradine in accountancy & financial services
- Candace Barron in facilitation and organisational culture

The group is committed to working together, offering diversity of skills and regional meeting representation.

Importantly, they offer independence and an opportunity for a fresh new start, to support new national Quakers Australia governance.

The group would be prepared to take on this role from September 2023, allowing the existing committee to finalise the 2023-24 Budget and handover to the new group.

Recognising the difficulties endured by the acting Treasurer and Finance Committee over many months, the new group wishes to formally assume the role as a new Finance Committee as a new entity from 1 October 2023. This will allow time to arrange police checks, handover and new banking, reporting transition formalities. Independence, transparency and accountability will be assured by the incoming group.

While a fresh start is a critical factor in the group agreeing to take on the role, they would of course be grateful if they are able to ask questions of the outgoing Treasurer and outgoing Finance Committee as and if required after 1 October. The group will also expect to continue productive liaison with RM Treasurers.

If this offer is accepted, Jonathan Benyei will lay-down co-Clerkship of Canberra & Region Quakers and would agree to be Treasurer.

- b) Bev Polzin reported the following to Standing Committee:

Some thoughts about the matter of a new YM Treasurer.

Previously in this report, it was mentioned that Roger Sawkins, with the support of Finance Committee, offered to be the Acting AYM Treasurer until YM 2024, or until another AYM Treasurer could be found.

Nominations Committee had already become very discouraged about finding a new Treasurer – asking 12 different, very competent Friends, over time. We then sent the revised role description, which described the additional professional assistance that was being offered to make the Treasurer’s task less formidable, to all the Regional Meetings, asking for ‘expressions of interest’ for the position. There was no response to this.

We felt really 'stuck' as the YM Nominations Committee. It was during very difficult time for the AYM Finance Committee that Roger made the generous offer to be the 'Acting' Treasurer' until YM2024 or until another Treasurer could be found.

Yesterday afternoon, we received the document which we now hope will be circulated more widely. Each member of YM Nominations Committee, received it yesterday and we sought to arrange a meeting to consider how this matter could be taken forward in right-ordering.

In terms of 'proper process', several of the AYM Nominations Committee wondered whether this is a matter for Nominations committee at all. It was suggested that such an offer could, in the first instance, go to a Regional Meeting of one of the four Friends involved for RM agreement, and proceed from there.

Others of us felt that we had received a document, carefully thought through, which answered a question of how to deal with the matter of a new YM Treasurer, in a new and imaginative way. This answered the primary need which had been asked of us as YM Nominations Committee.

There was no question for any us about the suitability of the names of the Friends suggested.

We would like to ask how Standing Committee wish to consider this offer of a 'Treasurer and Advisory Team' to take over on October 1, 2023.

Standing Committee receives the offer from the four Friends Jonathan Benyei, Judy Henderson, Lee Harradine and Candace Barron and accepts it with thanks.

We ask that the practicalities of the offer are negotiated between the suggested new Advisory team, the AYM Acting Treasurer and the AYM Finance Committee, so that a detailed formal proposal may be brought to YM23 by the new Advisory team.

We are grateful that Roger Sawkins has offered to continue to be available for consultation after the handover to assist the new team, if it is appointed.

We acknowledge the faithful service of the AYM Acting Treasurer and the AYM Finance Committee in what has been a prolonged and challenging situation.