

## Canadian Friends Services Committee (CFSC) - Information for Prospective Board Members

*Prepared by Sheila Havard, Clerk of CFSC Nominating Committee*

**CFSC, the service arm of Canadian Quakers:** CFSC is a standing committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting, the national body of Friends. It is thus at the heart of Canadian “Quakerdom” and Committee membership brings rich rewards. Service can seed lasting friendships with Friends from coast-to-coast. Sometimes being an activist can seem a lonely, uphill slog and so it is inspiring to learn about the leadings of other Friends across the country.

**Three program committees:** In addition to serving on the board (which addresses broad issues like policy, finance, nominations, etc.), CFSC members serve on one of three program committees, the names of which are self-explanatory:

- Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities
- Quakers Fostering Justice
- Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee

These program committee names give some idea of the wide range of undertakings in which CFSC engages, from grassroots development, peace-building, Indigenous rights concerns, and criminal justice issues to education in the Quaker and wider community on all these matters.

**Expectations:** After familiarizing themselves with current CFSC activities and concerns, CFSC members attend two Board Meetings (a.k.a. General Meetings) a year in the spring and fall, which run from Friday morning through to Sunday lunchtime<sup>1</sup>. In the interim, program committee work continues (including assigned tasks, email and conference call decisions, etc.), a commitment that averages 4 hours a month (though more if in positions of greater responsibility). Members act as ambassadors for CFSC with Friends locally and further afield – one more chance to form bonds with other Friends!

**Nomination procedure:** Friends with a leading to serve on CFSC may be identified by their Monthly Meetings or any Yearly Meeting Committee (including CFSC). Each spring, proposed names are forwarded to Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) Nominating Committee, which brings a slate of candidates for consideration and approval, first, to the Delegates’ Meeting, and then to CYM business meeting during CYM’s annual sessions in August. Most newly appointed members therefore attend their first CFSC Board Meeting in late October. At this time they receive orientation support and buddying and discern which program committee is the best “fit” for them. CFSC members are also asked to consider serving on one administrative committee.

**Resources:** CFSC recommends that prospective members familiarize themselves with the organization and the role of members before offering to serve. The CFSC website – [www.quakerservice.ca](http://www.quakerservice.ca) - provides a wealth of information about CFSC’s vision, values and mission, its history, partnerships and the range of issues being addressed. The “New Member Orientation Package” is available at <http://quakerservice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/2012-Member-Orientation.pdf>. The Policy Manual, which includes a description of members’ responsibilities and a link to email the Clerk (currently Lesley Robertson) can be found at <http://quakerservice.ca/contact-us/board/>.

Furthermore, the “CFSC Liaison” appointed by CFSC to your Monthly Meeting may be able to answer questions or point you in the right direction (ex. a CFSC member in your Meeting, or to the CFSC Clerk, who is always available to answer questions).

**Still questioning?** Some publications offer valuable insight into a wide range of CFSC undertakings. *Quaker Concern* is available by mail or email and the monthly *E-newsletter* provides brief summaries of activities and a large number of relevant links. To subscribe, send an email to [cfsc@quakerservice.ca](mailto:cfsc@quakerservice.ca)

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<sup>1</sup> The board meetings (which run Friday – Sunday) follow a formula: first weekend in March and last weekend in October, unless it falls on Halloween. In this case, it’s held the weekend before.