

## Western Friend Board of Directors

### Orientation Materials

Updated 6.2024

Welcome to the Board of Directors of the Friends Bulletin Corporation, aka Western Friend!

This document is here to help orient you to the basic mission of Western Friend and the Board of Directors.

#### **The bottom line about your role:**

The board sets strategic direction for *Western Friend* and oversees the financial health of Friends Bulletin Corporation. Editorial content is the responsibility of the Editor. Board members actively engage with Friends throughout the three yearly meetings to incorporate wisdom from many Friends when setting direction for *Western Friend*. In addition to work to ensure the organization's health, Western Friend board members serve Western Friend through outreach in the Quaker community in the form of phone calls and visitations to increase knowledge and readership of Western Friend. Board members also strive to raise money for the organization through outreach efforts.

The Board meets six times each year, three weekend meetings with three shorter meetings in between. We meet in person up to two times a year, rotating among different regions within the three yearly meetings. All other meetings are on line.

#### **About Western Friend:**

Western Friend is published by the Friends Bulletin Corporation, an independent 501(c)3 non-profit corporation established jointly by Pacific, North Pacific and Intermountain Yearly Meetings. While Western Friend is the official publication of these three Yearly Meetings, the opinions expressed within the magazine and on this website are those of the authors, not of the Meetings.

Our mission is to build practical and spiritual connections among Friends *in the west* in print, online and face-to-face. We accomplish this by:

- Publishing a magazine, *Western Friend*, six times a year.
- Offering Friends everywhere a limited selection of content from our print magazine (and more!) on our website, [WesternFriend.org](http://WesternFriend.org).
- Partnering with other Quaker organizations, such as [Ben Lomond Quaker Center](#) and [Friends Fiduciary Corporation](#), to develop workshops and programs designed to meet the specific needs of Friends in the west.

- Hosting local speaker events in conjunction with our board meetings, held three times a year and rotating through the territories of the three Yearly Meetings we serve.

*Western Friend* is directed by the Board of Directors of Friends Bulletin Corporation. The board is composed of three members each from Pacific, North Pacific, and Intermountain Yearly Meetings.

### **History of Western Friend**

Originally founded in 1929 by Howard and Anna Brinton, Western Friend was known as Friends Bulletin for the better part of eighty years. At the time, Pacific Yearly Meeting stretched from eastern Colorado and New Mexico, west to Hawaii and north to Washington and Montana. Friends Bulletin was- and remains- a valuable means for these far-flung Friends to stay in touch with one another. Even after Intermountain Yearly Meeting (CO, NM, AZ and UT) and North Pacific Yearly Meeting (WA, OR, ID, MT) split off from PYM in the mid-1970's, Friends in the West continued to place a premium on maintaining their connections with one another. Over the decades, it grew from a single-sheet, black-and-white broadside focused on announcements of births, deaths, and upcoming events, to the full-fledged color magazine featuring articles by and about Friends in the West, known since 2008 as Western Friend. This website and additional programs such as workshops and speaker events serve to further our mission of building practical and spiritual connections between Friends in the West in print, online, and face to face.

### **Who is Western Friend?**

Western Friend has one employee, its Editor, who contracts with other folks from time to time. Directors of the organization (that's you!) are encouraged to represent Western Friend in their local and regional meetings, other Quaker events, and online through social media.

### **Get to Know the Western Friend Web site!**

The web site of Western Friend is a rich place where you can find everything from archived articles to information about our next board gathering. Please familiarize yourself with the web site. There are pages for book sales, archived and current featured articles, as well as online meeting spaces.

### **Board documents on WesternFriend.org**

Scrolling to the bottom of the page on the "About Us" page will bring you to our public and password protected board documents. This is where you will enter travel information for board meetings, and where agendas and board documents will be placed for easy access. You may obtain your password by contacting the Editor.

## Board Duties

### Meetings

The Board of Directors holds three weekend-long board meetings (up to two will be in person) as well as three short board meetings remotely in between. Board members take turns coordinating and hosting the in-person meetings, which can include communication with monthly meetings, planning food and events, and arranging hospitality. The cost of travel to the in-person meetings can be reimbursed by your yearly meeting.

### Responsibilities

Directors' responsibilities, as laid out by Western's Friend's policies and procedures adopted in 2018, are as follows. Please see the full document in your Board Orientation folder for a more detailed list of board duties, including committee work.

#### DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Attend all six meetings each year.
2. Read each issue of *Western Friend*, and maintain familiarity with other programs of the organization.
3. Participate in fundraising activities and make a personal financial contribution to the organization.
4. Bring energy and commitment to serve on board committees and/or as an officer.
5. Be familiar with the Policies and Procedures and other documents that are maintained on the board member section of the website.
6. Participate in an annual board self-evaluation.
7. Work with the executive director/editor and other directors from their own yearly meetings to maintain regular contact with the meetings and worships groups in their YM to:
  - a. inform Friends about the vision, goals and accomplishments of Western Friend
  - b. share information about the magazine, online resources and special projects
  - c. encourage subscriptions, clarifying subscription pricing as needed
  - d. encourage contributions
  - e. thank Friends for their subscriptions and contributions
  - f. seek feedback on recent issues
  - g. seek Friends' suggestions and story ideas for future publications
8. Represent Western Friend at regional and yearly meeting gatherings as feasible or needed. When appropriate, report to annual sessions and share Western Friend's activities, challenges, and vision.

9. Communicate with the nominating committee of their yearly meeting about the needs of the board and suggestions for appointments.
10. Provide the executive director/editor with a short biographical sketch of their background, skills, interests, and abilities for posting on the public website.
11. Maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding personnel matters.
12. Avoid the reality and appearance of any conflict of interest in their service as a member of the board.
13. Submit written receipts for all in-kind contributions (such as food purchased for in person board meetings or outreach travel) to the executive director/editor so that accurate costs can be estimated.
14. Submit travel reimbursement requests to one's own yearly meeting; contact the yearly meeting's current treasurer for policies and reimbursement forms.
15. Perform other tasks as needed for the effective management and development of the corporation and its programs.
16. Provide a copy of any letters, emails or reports written on behalf of the corporation to the executive director/editor for the permanent records file.

## **Western Friend Board of Directors – Twelve-Month Overview of Work** (Updated 6.2024)

Western Friend operates on a fiscal year that runs from October 1, 20XX to September 30, 20YY.

The board of directors holds three regularly scheduled weekend-long meetings each year: fall, winter, and spring. No more than two of these meetings will be held in person. The spring meeting is designated as the annual meeting of the corporation. Typically, the fall board meeting is in-person to welcome new board members. These weekend-long meetings run midday Friday through midday Sunday. For in-person meetings, the host monthly meeting provides the board with a place to meet and with hospitality. Typically, on the Saturday evening during these board meetings, members of the host meeting and members of the Western Friend board share in a potluck dinner (organized by the host meeting) and a "program" (organized by a Western Friend board member) together.

A time is reserved during each weekend-long meeting for the board to meet in executive session without the presence of staff or non-board-members.

The board also holds three short meetings by videoconference each year before each weekend-long meetings. Additional "called meetings" may be held at times and places determined by the board of directors.

Typically, the board's Finance Committee meets monthly by phone and/or videoconference. Other board committees (Governance Committee, Development and Outreach, Special Projects Committee(s)) meet as needed.

**The following board activities are required and/or are typical each year:****October 20XX**

- Rarely, the Fall Board Meeting occurs in early October. Typically, the Fall Board meeting occurs in late September.

**November 20XX**

- By the end of November (no later than December 1), the board clerk or another board member designated as the “evaluation coordinator” asks the Editor/E.D. to complete “Part One” of a Performance Appraisal Report form and to complete this task January 1.

**December 20XX**

- By the end of December (no later than January 1), the Editor/E.D. fills out the self-evaluation portions of the Editor/E.D. Performance Appraisal Report form and returns it to the board clerk / evaluation coordinator.

**January 20YY**

- Very early January: The board clerk / evaluation coordinator shares the Editor’s self-evaluation with all directors and requests confidential but not anonymous feedback from all directors on “Part Two” of the evaluation form.
- By January 12: All directors complete their responses to “Part Two” of the Editor’s Performance Appraisal form and submit those to the Policies and Procedures Committee / Evaluation Coordinator.
- Before the Winter Board Meeting, the Policies and Procedures Committee / Evaluation Coordinator compiles all board responses to the Editor Appraisal and produces a summary for discussion at the Winter Board Meeting
- WINTER BOARD MEETING, weekend-long, late January: The central task of this meeting is to attend to the editor / executive director’s performance appraisal for the prior fiscal year.
  - Editor/E.D. Performance Appraisal is discussed, finalized and signed by editor / executive director and board clerk.
- By the end of Winter Board Meeting, the board will decide where and how they will meet for Spring Board Meeting. One board member will have volunteered to “honcho” an in-person meeting for the board which will ideally be held in the Fall. With support from the Governance Committee, this job involves identifying

a hospitality coordinator in the upcoming host meeting and then working with that individual in a timely manner to assure that logistics for the in-person meeting are in place.

### **February 20YY**

- Rarely, the Winter Board Meeting occurs in early February.
- In February and March, board members should begin discussing anticipated board vacancies with Nominating Committee members from the three yearly meetings, with an eye toward nominations during upcoming annual sessions.

### **March 20YY**

- As a first step in the board's annual self-evaluation, the clerk (or designated director) requests input from all directors and the executive director/editor about the current operation of the board, to be provided to the clerk of the board a designated evaluation coordinator by the end of March (no later than April 1).

### **April 20YY**

- The clerk (or designated director) collects the input from board members about board operations, compiles it into a written report, and distributes that report to all directors before the Spring Board Meeting.
- Rarely, the Spring Board Meeting occurs in late April. Typically, the Spring Board meeting occurs in early May.

### **May 20YY**

- **SPRING BOARD MEETING**, weekend-long, early-May: The central tasks of this meeting are to attend to the board self-evaluation, the corporation's report to yearly meetings, and the selection of officers.
- This board meeting is designated as the board's "Annual Meeting" in the corporation's bylaws.
- **Board self-evaluation:** the board reviews the Board Self-Evaluation Report that has been compiled and seeks to identify concrete ways it can improve its effectiveness.
- **Selection of board officers**
  - The statutory officers are a president (clerk), secretary (recording clerk), and treasurer.
  - Officer terms last one year.

- Preferably, the board clerk is someone who plans to continue board service for at least one year beyond their term(s) as clerk.
- Board officers' terms commence at the rise of the Spring Board Meeting.
- The spring board meeting is the final weekend-long board meeting for out-going board members. Board member responsibilities continue until until new members begin service at the fall face to face meeting.
- By the end of Spring Board Meeting, the board will decide where and how it will meet for the Fall Board Meeting. Ideally the Fall Board Meeting will be in-person. One board member will have volunteered to "honcho" an in-person, weekend-long board meeting. This job involves identifying a hospitality coordinator in the upcoming host meeting and then working with that individual in a timely manner to assure that logistics are in place.

### **June 20YY**

- Intermountain Yearly Meeting Annual Session is typically in June.
  - New board member(s) from IMYM nominated and approved.

### **July 20YY**

- Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session is typically in July.
  - New board member(s) from PYM nominated and approved.
- North Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session is typically in July.
  - New board member(s) from NPYM nominated and approved.

### **August 20YY**

### **September 20YY**

- FALL BOARD MEETING, preferably face-to-face, late September. The central tasks of this meeting are to attend to the following year's budget, the editor / executive director's work plan for the following year, and review the Policies and Procedures document for possible revisions needed.
- The fall meeting is the first weekend-long board meeting that new, in-coming board members are expected to attend.
- The board conducts an orientation / refresher session for new / continuing board members during this meeting.
- By the end of Fall Board Meeting, the board will decide how and where it will meet in for the Winter Board Meeting.