COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

I. Purpose

Assists communication among members and attenders, and between BFM and outside world by doing the following:

- Produce, edit, and distribute an 8-12-page periodic newsletter, both electronically and as hard copy. Suggest and solicit articles for the newsletter.
- Maintain mailing lists for the newsletter and meeting announcements and accept, edit, and publish items using the list.
- Maintain and improve the Burlington Friends website.

II. Responsibilities

- For the Newsletter:
  - Solicit materials for each newsletter by announcing upcoming deadlines and suggesting appropriate submissions and style/content guidelines, and by asking individuals who may have attended or presented Meeting-related programs or events to write timely articles and take photos for the newsletter.
  - Attend Meeting-related programs and events and take photos and notes for possible editor-written articles if others are not available to report on those programs and events.
  - Edit submitted materials for length, style, and appropriate content; consult with authors as needed about significant changes.
  - Maintain a mailing list of individuals and organizations who wish to receive the BFM newsletter.
  - Send copies of each newsletter to the Meeting clerk (for the YM archives) and to the Website Manager (for posting on the website).
  - Upgrade publishing and Internet software as needed.
  - Acquire additional skills and tools, as needed, to continue serving the needs and expectations of the Meeting.
  - Submit a timely budget request to ensure that newsletter-related expenses are covered by the Meeting rather than paid for out-of-pocket.
  - Collaborate with other committees and their clerks to assist in printing and updating of other Meeting publications, such as introductory pamphlets.
- For the Website:
  - Maintain an awareness and understanding of website management, development, and technology, including the use of "Dreamweaver," the software currently used for our website, and managing the relationship between BFM and Pair Networks, the web-services provider that hosts our site.
  - Update the "Events" page whenever new events are scheduled, remove past events as they become more remote, and make other changes in the site to ensure it describes the meeting as it actually is, for example updating committee job descriptions and clerks. This sometimes requires pro-active solicitation, *e.g.*, at the meetings of the Clerk's Committee, and it always requires editing.

- o Maintain proper forwarding for outside e-mail address of the form "@burlingtonquakers.org." Using such addresses instead of publishing the personal e-mail addresses of meeting officers and committee clerks helps reduce the amount of spam they receive and allows those outside the meeting to use a consistent e-mail address as officers and clerks change.
  - o Maintain relationships with web managers for other Quaker sites, particularly those in NEYM, to share ideas and questions.
  - o Keeping working to continue a lively, helpful website in the face of rapidly changing technology. For example, our current website does not work well when viewed on a smart phone or small tablet, and it should.
  - o Submit a timely budget request to ensure that website-related expenses are covered by the Meeting rather than paid for out-of-pocket.

III. Number of Members
- Currently this committee consists solely of the newsletter editor (Louis Cox) and the web manager (Bill Williams). This limits the scope and size of meeting publications and how often they are issued and updated. Ideally, the committee would have additional reporters and assistants as well as an advisor who could provide periodic guidance and feedback on content and style of the newsletter and website.

IV. Desirable Qualifications
- Good editing and writing skills.
- Familiarity with relevant software including Dream Weaver and website-maintenance software (for the web), Mail Chimp (for the newsletter), and appropriate word-processing and newsletter-production software. Enough familiarity with information technology to be aware changes in the IT world that might affect BFM's information gathering, publishing, and distribution activities.
- Sufficient understanding of Quakerism/Religious Society of Friends and of Burlington Friends Meeting—its programs, traditions, members, attenders, *etc.*—to know what is appropriate and relevant for publication on the web and/or in the newsletter.
- Ability to interview people and gather relevant information for articles.
- Ability to maintain up-to-date distribution lists for newsletters and other Meeting publications.

V. Time Commitment
- As of now, the committee does not meet formally, but its two members communicate frequently.
- The time commitment for the newsletter and mailing list, plus having a "reporter hat" on at different Meeting functions, amounts to about four hours a month.
- Maintaining the web typically takes about 2 hours per week for routine changes, such as updating the "events" page. It can easily take ten times that long for major changes, such as changing page formats, adding entirely new pages, or adding or removing pictures.

VI. Last revised: 13 January 2018.