**March 30, 2024 Draft**

**To: Twin Cities Friends Meeting**

**From: Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples Work Group**

**and Peace and Justice Committee**

**Re:** **Reparations/Compensation for TCFM Use of Indigenous Land**

**Background for this proposal:**

TCFM’s Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples (TRRIP) work group believes it is important to address the fact that our meeting house is located on land that was unjustly taken from Indigenous people. In June 2022, the Twin Cities Friends Meeting approved the following minute:

“Twin Cities Friends Meeting resides on the homelands of the Dakota and the extended territory of the Ojibwe and Ho-Chunk people. We acknowledge their stewardship and their continuing presence, and we strive to interrupt the legacy of injustice towards Indigenous people through truth-telling, opportunities for healing, and collaborative action.”

The TRRIP work group has engaged members and attenders of TCFM in various actions consistent with this minute, including lobbying for legislation to establish a commission regarding Indian boarding schools, funding programs of Interfaith Action targeted to the Indian community, delivering fresh food and other requested items to Native Elders, attendance at various public events sponsored by Indigenous organizations and working to learn about and preserve sacred sites.

TRRIP now proposes that TCFM include in its annual budget a payment in the spirit of *reparations for our presence on land* *that was unjustly taken from Indigenous people.* We recommend working with the Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ITLF).

The **Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILTF)** is a national, community-based organization serving American Indian nations and people in the recovery and control of their rightful homeland. It is based in Little Canada, Minnesota. Two members of our meeting (Gail Lewellan and Howard Vogel) have been aware and supportive of their activities, projects and leadership for several decades.

ILTF accepts contributions from organizations and individuals to its Beyond Land Acknowledgement fund to support its grantmaking and program initiatives, such as land restoration projects described at the following link:

<https://iltf.org/special-initiatives/land-recovery/>

**Guidance for choosing an amount:**

The amount chosen should be enough for TCFM to contribute meaningfully to ILTF. The amount should constitute a proportion of the meeting’s budget that is not trivial.

Our TCFM property at 1725 Grand Avenue is estimated by Ramsey County to be valued at $1,058,000. If TCFM were not tax exempt, our payment of real estate taxes based on a national average, would be about $10,500 per year. Based upon the higher Ramsey County rate, the annual assessment would be closer to $15,000.

TCFM’s 2024 budget currently includes $5000 to organizations that serve Native people ($1500 to Department of Indian Works and $3500 to Loaves and Fishes). These funds serve important social service needs but do not act to reconstitute a land base or tribal sovereignty.

TRRIP would like to see the combined total of TCFM and individual contributions towards native land restoration and social services meet or exceed the $10,500 per year that we would pay in taxes to a sovereign government if not exempt. We propose to reach this goal in the following way:

1. Continue the $5000 annual budget for social services;
2. Add a $2000 annual contribution for a period of three years from TCFM to the Indian Land Tenure Foundation for land restoration to tribes;
3. Encourage individuals to make individual contributions directly to ILTF or another Native-led organization that collectively total $3500.

($5000 + $2000 + $3500 = $10,500.)

1. TRRIP requests that individual donors help TRRIP keep a tally of the amount contributed by individuals to Native-led organizations. This could be through an email or call to Gail Lewellan or by an anonymous note left in with the office coordinator. TRRIP will keep a tally of the amounts committed to use in evaluating the progress towards our goal and will keep names confidential.
2. Evaluate this action three years after it is initiated to determine whether the Meeting is led to continue it or change.

**Proposed Minute:**

**Twin Cities Friends Meeting will make an annual payment to the Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILTF) in the amount of $2000 as a regular budget item for the next three years. Evaluation of this action will occur after that period. In addition, we encourage TCFM members to donate directly to ILTF or another Native-led organization (rather than through TCFM) an additional personal amount according to how they are led. We strive to match the amount that TCFM would pay to a local government entity in real estate taxes if it were not tax exempt ($10,500) counting current $5000 social program spending, individual contributions towards native land restoration and this new $2000 payment. TRRIP and TCFM will consciously evaluate the $2000 annual payment every three years and adjust our actions as we are led.**

We recognize that no amount of money can fully compensate for the loss of land and life, the relocation and the cultural disruption experienced by Native people. TCFM will continue its efforts to influence legislation, promote land restoration, and join in activities in partnership with Native people.