

Independence Squares Board Meeting

January 27, 2020

Present: Dave Blatt, Tim Harper, Dick Michelin, George Rizer, Susan Turkel, Mike Rutkowski

Absent: Steve Demos, Leda Sportolari

Meeting was held at 30th Street Station.

Approval of Minutes - Susan

The November meeting minutes were approved.

We discussed the By-laws Committee item from the November minutes. Tim noted that the club's by-laws do not include a nondiscrimination clause, and suggested that this be brought up with the Committee so they could add one. We will pass this point along to Steve by way of these minutes.

Treasurer's Report – Dick

Dick presented his report for the income and expenses incurred in November and December. The group discussed it briefly.

Overall, the club is doing well. We had good income from the Glitter Ball, including \$595 from admissions and \$225 from the 50/50.

Caller Liaison Report - Mike

We discussed the Caller Liaison Report that Mike sent out before the meeting (see Appendix).

We talked about whether the Glitter Ball is outgrowing its venue at the Merion Friends Activity Building, and about whether we might investigate alternate spaces to hold some of our larger dance events.

A motion was proposed: *We will keep the Glitter Ball at Merion Friends for 2020. We would like to look for a larger location for the 2021 event, and will ask for volunteers to help with this effort.* The motion passed unanimously.

We discussed the need for lead time to schedule desirable callers, as some of them are already booked for dates two and three years into the future. We have already scheduled callers for June and December 2021. We agreed that our goal would be to have our dances scheduled two years out.

Action item: *The Caller Liaison Committee will propose a schedule of dates for dances for the next two years, and once that is approved by the board they'll begin to book callers.*

Publicity Chair Report – Dave

Dave reported that the new WordPress website is live, thanks to Ted. He requested that we click on links and report any problems or broken links to him.

We need to start posting blog entries to the website in order to keep the content dynamic. The Caller Liaison and other board members have the ability to post; everyone needs a bit of guidance on the nuts and bolts of this process.

Action item: *Susan will write instructions for creating blog posts, including the steps to schedule posts to be published automatically (e.g., Bar Night and Game Night posts could go up on a regular basis).*

The Yahoo Group, which we use for the email listserv, seems to be working as it should. (There are occasional glitches where some individuals seem not to receive some messages.)

We discussed the Facebook situation. Susan suggested that we continue to use the Facebook Page for announcing dances and events, as the functionality is better in terms of inviting guests, and the event postings look more professional by being hosted by Independence Squares instead of Susan Turkel. (We had agreed at our August 2019 board meeting to decommission the Page and focus our attention on the Group instead.)

A motion was proposed: *We rescind our prior decision to decommission the Independence Squares Facebook Page.* The motion passed unanimously.

Action item: *Susan will create a FB event on the Page for the Feb. 1 dance, and share it to the FB Group as well as to other clubs' pages/groups. After Feb. 1, she will create an event for the Feb. 29 dance (and so forth).*

We discussed the need for printed flyers for the upcoming dances. These will be put up on the website and printed out for distribution at Tuesday club nights and at other dances.

Action items:

- *Dave will ask Pearl to create flyers for the dances scheduled for February 29 (Betsy Gotta), April 18 (Ken Ritucci), and May 16 (John Marshall).*
- *Susan will create a list of the information that these flyers must include and will pass that along to Dave.*

We discussed some of the logistical and technical issues involved in testing the PayPal account, which will be used to accept online payments for our 2021 Fly-In.

Action item:

- *Dave will create and make public a test event (Independence Squares Knitting Circle) and will date it a couple of years into the future so that casual visitors to the IAGSDC website will not mistake it for an imminent event.*
- *He will send instructions to board members, with links to a site offering test credit card numbers*
- *Board members will “register” for the test event.*
- *Dave will evaluate the results and take down the test event from public view.*

Program Rep Reports

Neither program rep was able to attend the meeting. Below are some program rep notes from the MS/Plus rep, paraphrased from Steve’s email to the board on December 23.

- Eileen is taking attendance and sending motivational e-mails to the seven beginning Mainstream students.
- Leda is going to be the substitute liaison to the non-IS members who have been attending MS class and will begin taking the Plus class. Leda will at least keep an informal record of which students are coming to the Plus class.
- Steve will send out an e-mail to last year’s MS class shortly before January 7 with further encouragement to take Plus. He will cc Leda on the e-mail to our 2019 Mainstream graduates.

Iron Pigs LGBT Appreciation Night - Susan

Susan received a message via MeetUp from a representative of the Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs (a minor league baseball team associated with the Phillies) informing us that the team is hosting an LGBT Appreciation Night on July 16th. We discussed whether the club would promote this event to our members, and agreed that it would be fine to do so.

Action item: *Susan will email the representative and ask her to send us PDF flyers. We can put them out at club nights and dances.*

Navy Yard Demo/Presence – George

George told us about a local outreach opportunity for the club: the U.S. Navy’s EEO Pride Observance, which will take place during the workday one day during Pride month at the Navy base in Northeast Philadelphia. (He thinks it may be the third Thursday in June.)

We would offer a one-hour program for an audience of around 200 people, including both Navy members and civilian employees of the Defense Logistics Agency. This would be a great opportunity to recruit new dancers to the club, so we would want to bring information on our summer open houses and on the fall MS classes.

George envisions a program comprised of the following components:

- a presentation on what square dancing is, and on the history of LGBT square dancing
- a demonstration by a square of IS representatives, led by a live caller
- an opportunity for attendees to participate in an Open House-like dance event.

We would have to recruit a caller (possibly Zip, who is a military veteran herself) and at least a square's worth of volunteer dancers. Everyone agreed that this sounded like a great opportunity.

A motion was proposed: *The board authorizes George to propose an IS program for EEO Pride Observance at the Navy base this summer.* The motion passed unanimously.

George will bring this up in a meeting with the EEO Committee later this week.

In the context of recruitment, George noted that the club should also pay attention to opportunities for cross-cultural recruitment of new dancers.

Pride 2020

We discussed the possibility of participating in Philly Pride this summer, as we have in past years. We were unable to find detailed information online, but we think the parade and festival will be held on Sunday, June 14.

We agreed that we would like to participate in both the parade and the festival, assuming we can get enough people to volunteer. We will need to recruit a caller or callers, and a vehicle to carry our sound equipment.

We are aware that we haven't specifically recruited new members via Pride, but we think that it's important to keep our name out there and to be visible to the community.

Summer Program

We discussed various options for summer programming. In some years, we have offered a Mainstream class during summer, with mixed success. We have sometimes held workshops and dances on Tuesdays throughout the summer. In other years, we have held dances once or twice

per month on Saturdays and/or the occasional Tuesday, and monthly open houses on Tuesday nights.

We agreed that attendance would be too low for weekly workshops or classes during the summer, and that recruitment is a priority. Thus, we will offer a series of open houses on Tuesday nights. We already have weekend dances scheduled in June, July, and August.

Action item: Mike will put together a proposal for dates for open houses; after they're approved, the Caller Liaison Committee will hire callers.

Club Shirts for new class - Mike

We discussed the logistics associated with ordering IS shirts from our vendor. There is a fixed cost associated with setting up the machines to embroider our logo, so unless we order at least 12 items, each shirt would be more than \$100.

We have seven students who will be graduating in May; the club will subsidize their first shirts. We agreed that we will continue to offer a subsidy for existing members who wish to order a shirt for the first time. Those who have already taken advantage of the subsidy may order additional shirts at full price (probably \$45 for long-sleeved club shirts, and approximately \$32 for polo shirts).

Action item: Mike will make an announcement in order to gauge how many folks are interested in ordering IS shirts.

Next meeting

We discussed the schedule for the next meeting. Tim will be out of town from mid-February through ~March 4th, so there will not be a February meeting.

We discussed meeting right before the beginning of the Fly-In in Exton, at 3pm on Friday, March 27. This seemed feasible for everyone present. (Leda and Steve weren't present.)

Action item: *Tim will send an email to the board to see if the 3pm Friday March 27 date will work for everyone. If not, we'll try another Doodle poll for another date in March.*

Meeting adjourned: 8:40 pm

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – January 2020

The information below is accurate as of Thursday, January 23, 2020, and may not reflect any updates received after this report's preparation. Please note that all dances are at the Lutheran Church unless otherwise noted.

Dances Through December 2020

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place February 2020 through December 4, 2021.

Saturday, February 1, 2020 – Advanced/CI – Drew Allen 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Saturday, February 29, 2020 – Mainstream through Advanced – Betsy Gotta 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
For the Love of Sadie Hawkins and Chocolate!

Saturday, April 18, 2020 – Mainstream through Advanced – Ken Ritucci 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

Saturday, May 16, 2020 – John Marshall Double Header with Potluck

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Advanced through Challenge 1

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm Potluck

6:30 pm – 9:30 pm Mainstream through Plus with Advanced Star Tip

Saturday, June 6, 2020 – Mainstream through Plus – Zip Warmerdam 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Saturday, June 20, 2020 – Advanced through C1 with a C2 Star Tip – John Hawley 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
John will be using the club equipment and spending the night with a club member.

Saturday, July 18, 2020 – Plus and Advanced – Daryl Murphy 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, August 15, 2020 – Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
The dance will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek in Newark, Delaware, the same site as this past August.

Saturday, September 12, 2020 – Barry Clasper Double Header with Potluck

3:30 pm – 5:30 pm Advanced through Challenge 1 with C2 Star Tip

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Potluck

7:00 pm – 10:00 pm Mainstream through Plus with Advanced Star Tip

Saturday, October 3, 2020 – Mainstream through Advanced – Brian Jarvis 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, October 17, 2020 – Advanced through C1 – Geo Jedlicka 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, December 5, 2020 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm
The Merion Meeting House will once again be the site of the Glitter Ball with paperwork and checks to be finalized. (Thank you, Leda!)

Saturday, June 5, 2021 – Ken Ritucci Level and time to be determined when schedule is fuller.

Saturday, December 4, 2021 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Betsy Gotta 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm
The Merion Meeting House is the first choice as the site of the Glitter Ball 2021.

FYI Notes

- 1) The committee has hired callers for dancers through December of 2020. Two dances have been scheduled for 2021 already, but full scheduling for the rest of 2021 is just beginning. Linda and I will be putting together a tentative schedule that we will forward to the board for its review before the next board meeting so that we may begin contracting callers.
- 2) 2020 Fly-In Callers: Sandra Bryant, Todd Fellegly, Dayle Hodge March 27-29, 2020.
- 3) 2021 Fly-In Callers: Bill Harrison, Eric Henerlau, Kris Jensen March 12-14, 2021
- 4) 2022 Fly-In: Callers: Mike Kellogg, Chris Phillips, Anne Uebelacker March 25-27, 2022
- 5) Fall and Spring Classes –The Mainstream Workshop became a Plus class beginning January 7, 2020. All sessions will end on May 19, 2020. Substitute callers will be hired when either of them is unavailable. Betsy will be unavailable January 14, 2020 and April 7, 2020. Zip filled in for Betsy on January 14, 2020. Mark Franks will be filling in for Betsy on April 7. Joe Bradshaw will be out on February 4, 2020 and Zip will be filling in for him.
- 6) An item of note that requires no action on the board's part: While contacting callers for the 2022 Philadelphia Fly-in, one of the first choice callers for the event, Ted Lizotte, was unavailable due to already being booked for that weekend. Checking his schedule online, he was already booked into 2023 and 2024. This is noted here to remind the board that while it may seem that we are booking too far in advance, if we want to continue to bring in excellent callers to our dances and big events, two to three years out is not out of line. Our contracts do have clauses in them enabling us to cancel a dance well in advance with no penalty. The caller is afforded the same option.

Items of Concern for the Caller Liaison – To Be Discussed by the Board

- 1) Discussions were held with Mark Franks to replace Joe Bradshaw as a class caller in September 2020 as Joe is retiring and moving out of state. Mark has agreed to be one of the class callers based on the current fee structure in place.

Upcoming Callers

Please let me know of any callers that you would like to have call for our dances, and we will do our best to bring a variety of callers to our dance halls. Bigger name callers require more advance time to hire them as they are booked two and three years out.