

**Present:** Tim Harper, Leda Sportolari, George Rizor, Dick Michelin, Dave Blatt, Stephen Demos, Mike Rutkowski (Mike represented the Caller Liaison Committee.)

**Absent:** Susan Turkel (Steve recorded these minutes in Susan's absence.)

Meeting was via teleconference on March 15, 2020 starting at 6 PM.

### **Suspension of Independence Squares Classes**

Lou Partridge notified the board prior the meeting that the church where we hold classes has closed its doors for the next two weeks. Tim entered a proposal that we announce that classes are canceled. We discussed options for when to resume classes and how to compensate the club callers. The board expressed its resolve that the club callers be fairly compensated for classes that are not held with the understanding that they will work in the summer in place of lost classes if that becomes a possibility and if/when it fits into their schedules. Dave stressed that it is important that in the announcement to our dancers about the cancellation of classes we let them know that the board is consulting regularly to assess the developing coronavirus situation. After the discussion, Tim made a motion that the board accept the following proposal:

*Tuesday night classes and workshops are suspended until further notice, effective immediately 15 March, 2020. The board will monitor recommendations from local health officials and will announce via social media, email and the club website when it is deemed safe for us to resume activities. We will continue to pay our callers their negotiated fees (\$XXX per night) through the end of their current contracts (through 19 May 2020) regardless of when/if we resume dancing. We will ask Lou to negotiate with the church terms for canceling our use of their space.*

The board voted and the proposal was approved unanimously.

### **Cancellation of the Independence Squares Fly-in for 2020**

The board members and committee members discussed local, state and federal mandates and recommendations to suspend group activities above a certain size. We agreed that we could not go ahead with the fly-in. We discussed whether the coronavirus epidemic constituted an "act of God" and whether we wanted to invoke such a clause when we talk with the three callers hired for our 2020 fly-in. We decided that all three callers are part of our square-dancing family. They have looked out for us in the past and we want to look for out for them. Mike reported that he understood that one of the three callers, Sandie Bryant, would receive a full refund from the airline on which she booked her travel to the fly-in. We trust the Caller Liaison Committee to work out an understanding that is amicable to all parties. After the discussion, Tim made the following motion:

*The 2020 Independence Squares fly-in scheduled for March 27-29 is canceled. We authorize our caller liaison committee to negotiate with the callers regarding*

*payment of their calling fees up to the full negotiated calling fee. We will reimburse Sandie for any transportation costs she is unable to recover from the airline. We authorize the fly-in committee to automatically roll over registrations to 2021 or to offer refunds of registration fees to dancers who request a refund. Dancers who wish to designate their 2020 registration as a donation to the club will be entered into the raffle of the 23-inch Samsung T.V. We authorize the fly-in committee to negotiate with the Clarion regarding terms for canceling our use of their space.*

The board voted and the proposal was approved unanimously.

[Since the board meeting, the Clarion Hotel has responded to our notice of cancellation very flexibly. It appears that Independence Squares will not incur any penalty for canceling.]

### **Upcoming Club Dances**

The board members decided to cancel our April 18 club dance on the recommendation of the Caller Liaison Committee. We will wait and see about dances beyond that. Mike believes that all the callers of upcoming dances will work with the Caller Liaison Committee amicably to reach new arrangements if/when these dances are canceled.

We also talked about the possibility of making our August 15, 2020 dance in Delaware a bigger deal than usual that might include a raffling of baskets, a dinner and/or an option for an overnight stay.

### **Summer 2020 Open House Dances**

The board authorized the Caller Liaison Committee to ask Mark Franks, Howard Richman and Zip Warmerdam about their willingness to call for one of our three open house dances each with the knowledge that the dance may be canceled and, if so, the caller would not be paid.

### **Next Meeting of the Board**

The board meeting that was to take place on March 27 is canceled. Tim will figure out when board members are available for another board meeting via conference call hopefully in the next three weeks.

### **Class Schedule for 2020-2021**

Steve suggested that we formally announce that Mark Franks and Betsy Gotta are our club callers / dance instructors for 2020-2021. Tim said that he wanted to wait until we know what classes each will be teaching.

The board members asked the Caller Liaison Committee to touch base with Betsy and Mark about classes that they think would be good matches for them to teach and good matches for our club's needs.

### **Notice to Dancers about the Cancellations**

Before the meeting was adjourned Tim e-mailed us a potential notice to go out to Independence Squares dancers. An additional slightly more detailed notice will go out to all dancers registered for the 2020 fly-in.

[After the meeting with the agreement of the board, the following notice was distributed via e-mail, the club website and our Facebook page:

*Dear Members and Friends of Independence Squares,*

*As the Covid19 outbreak continues to impact all of us in the Delaware Valley, the Independence Squares board is canceling all club activities until further notice. This includes our Tuesday night classes/workshop, as well as our fly-in scheduled for March 27-29, 2020. Suspension of our Tuesday activities is effective immediately as our regular dance venue is closing for the next two weeks. Although disappointing, we believe that this is an appropriate decision since the health and safety of our dancers, callers and extended family are our main priority.*

*Please contact our fly-in registrar if you wish to arrange a refund of your fly-in registration. If we do not hear from you, we will automatically roll over your registration to 2021, i.e. no action on your part is needed if you wish to rollover your registration to next year. If you would like to make your registration a donation to our club (not tax deductible, I'm afraid) please let us know and, as thanks, we will enter you into our raffle for a 43-inch Samsung UHD TV.*

*At present, we do not know when we will resume dancing, but please be assured that the IS board will continue to monitor the situation and we will announce by e-mail, social media, and posting on our website when we believe it is appropriate to resume our dancing activities. We will miss all of you, but in the meantime, please take advantage of your time off. Read a book, watch T.V., play games, learn to knit, do some early spring weeding. Above all, please be safe.*

*Virtual Yellow Rocks,*

*Independence Squares Board of Directors]*

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm