

# IS Meeting Minutes

## November 16, 2020

Present: Dave Blatt, Steve Demos, Tim Harper, Dick Michelin, George Rizor, Susan Turkel; Caller Liaison Mike Rutkowski (guests: Ron, Vinney, Kevin, Jose, Will H.)

Absent: Leda Sportolari

This meeting was held via teleconference (Zoom).

### Approval of Minutes from 10/6/2020 – Susan

The minutes were approved unanimously.

### Treasurer's Report - Dick

We discussed the report covering the month of October. Income for the month consisted of tips for Betsy for our first virtual square dance workshop. Expenses included Fly-in refunds, caller fees, and payment for our Zoom account.

There was a brief discussion of the club's status. Apparently, we are a **not-for-profit**; we do not qualify for **non-profit** status.

We are in the process of collecting membership dues via PayPal; the links are on the club website under *About Us*. Dues will need to be received by December 7 (the day before the Annual Meeting) in order to be listed and verified to participate in the election of the new board. To date, we have received dues for 14 people. These receipts will be reflected in the Treasurer's Report for November, which will be submitted to the board in December. Dick is keeping track of each member's payment for voting verification.

### Caller Liaison Committee Report - Mike

See the Caller Liaison report, attached at the end of these minutes. The only dances planned at this point are Betsy's virtual square dance workshop scheduled for November 17, this year's Glitter Ball (virtual, with Dayle calling, on December 5) and the Glitter Ball in December of 2021.

Since we cannot predict when we'll be able to dance again in person, we will need to decide whether to host any additional virtual square dance workshops or events. We agreed that this question will be addressed next year, with the earliest workshop to be scheduled in January if we decide to host another one.

### Social/Game Nights - all

We do not have any socials or game nights specifically planned yet for 2021. We agreed that we would likely continue hosting socials on the second Tuesday of each month, and game nights on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.

We came up with a tentative schedule for the beginning of the year:

- January 12 – Dave will host. Theme: catch-up, social, brainstorming session for future socials, and a chance to meet the new board. We'll vote for a winning suggestion for a future social theme, and the winner will get a prize. Ron agreed to take charge of finding a prize.
- February – Steve will host. Theme TBD; possibly the winning theme suggested during the January social.
- March – Dave will host. Theme: Joke night.

### Annual Meeting - All

The club will hold its annual membership meeting on Tuesday, December 8, six months after the expected mid-June date. This meeting will be held via Zoom. We discussed several points related to this meeting.

#### *Tentative annual meeting agenda*

President's Report - Tim

Treasurer's Report - Dick

Fly-in Report – Mary Kay

Proposed Changes to By-Laws – Tim; open for discussion

Election of 2020-2021 Board of Directors – Dave T is in charge of elections

Volunteer of the Year Award – Dave B

Incoming President's Address – George (will send out written comments ahead of meeting)

#### *Notice of board meeting*

Susan will send out the notice announcing the meeting by Nov. 23. This notice will include the Zoom link, the agenda, the list of candidates for board office, an invitation for people to nominate themselves, and the text of proposed by-laws changes. It will also give instructions on how to renew one's membership, with the deadline for doing so.

#### *Who can be a member?*

We discussed some options. We could decide ahead of time to accept anyone who says they have completed mainstream and is willing to pay dues, or we could assess individuals on a case by case basis. (The by-laws say that 2/3 of board has to approve new members.)

A motion was proposed: *Ahead of December meeting proactively we vote in anyone who says they've finished MS, conditional on club receiving membership dues.* The motion was approved unanimously.

#### *Text for website regarding dues payment*

The website currently says:

**Renew your membership for \$5 to cover December 2020 through June 2021**

Your renewed membership allows you to vote in the December 8 Annual Meeting. The money helps cover ongoing expenses like insurance as we weather the pandemic.

We agreed to add the following text: "Just as a reminder, membership is open to all dancers who have completed MS." In addition, the headline will say "join or renew" as we may have some new members. Dave made these changes during the meeting.

**Action item:** Steve will send Dick the list of 6 students who have not completed Mainstream and thus are not eligible to join.

We will announce the annual meeting and the dues requirement at all upcoming events and via email.

## Recruitment Committee Report (postponed from October)- George

The recently-formed Recruitment Committee shared their draft mission statement with the board. A lively discussion ensued.

These are some of the takeaways from the conversation:

- The members of the committee feel that this cultural moment invites introspection and a self-check among all organizations. How welcoming are we to diversity and difference? What assumptions do we have? What impression do we give regarding our openness? What can we do differently or better?
- Our club has thought about these issues for many years, and has engaged in recruitment efforts before by reaching out to Black groups, Latinx groups, college students, and more.
- Square dancing is new/different/foreign to many people and many cultural groups. The fact that we require participation in ongoing classes and that one can't become an official member of our club until they "graduate" is inherently unwelcoming. It's important that we radiate the message that we're having fun and that we want folks to join and have a good time.
- We need to emphasize the fact that our kind of square dancing is NOT a couples' activity.
- We should not downplay or de-emphasize the LGBTQIA+ aspect of our club. We welcome everyone as they are, and we all retain our differences.
- All of our flyers, website, etc. should include a statement indicating that we are open and welcoming and that we value diversity.
- The recruitment committee is thinking about which local organizations we might reach out to. At this point, since we aren't dancing, we're in retention mode. However, we can ramp up planning for our recruitment efforts, so we're ready to hit the ground running when we're ready to start recruiting.
- We might consider organizing a joint fundraiser event with other groups that share some of our goals and interests. These shared interests include having a healthy, active lifestyle, bringing community together, and having fun. We could provide a caller, split the profits with the partner group, and raise awareness of square dancing and of our club. We could start making these contacts now.
- In terms of information gathering, Bob and Norma have agreed to talk with former, current, and prospective members of the club, spouses of club members, and others, targeting people outside our majority demographic of older white gay men. They'd like to engage with these folks on topics such as: How do you perceive us? Are we welcoming? How could we be more welcoming?

The Recruitment Committee will need to appoint a new chair, as George will not be able to continue as chair when he takes over as IS President in December.

## New Business

Tim thanked the current board for hanging in there past the end of our originally-scheduled terms.

We discussed whether there will be a transition meeting of members of the outgoing and incoming board members in December. We tentatively agreed that this meeting might take place on December 15, depending on the availability of all involved.

Adjourned: 8:58 pm

## Caller Liaison Report

### Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – November 2020

The information below is accurate as of Saturday, November 14, 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.

#### Opening Discussions for Board

- 1) Betsy Gotta held a successful workshop on Tuesday, October 20, 2020. It was well received by all the attendees: 26 IS members/friends and 13 others (not including Betsy and myself, I was on another Zoom meeting while watching this one). This was an introduction to virtual square dancing for the Mainstream and Plus programs. Another workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

The necessity of hosting the virtual workshops needs to be looked at as there are virtual opportunities every day of the week for people to attend and to work on their skills. Do we want to continue doing virtual workshops or dances? This is simply a question, not a comment as to the pros and cons of holding them.

If the board decides to host the virtual workshops, the committee recommends the use of the tip jar for the workshops. This would lessen the financial impact on the club and the caller would receive at a minimum the base amount agreed to.

No additional contracts or promises have been made to any caller regarding the holding of workshops or classes, virtual or live, other than the one scheduled for November 17, 2020.

#### Dances Through December 2021

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

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 Virtual Workshop Mainstream and Plus – Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm

Saturday, December 5, 2020 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm Mainstream and Plus

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm Social Time

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Advanced and C1

The Merion Meeting House was notified about the cancellation for this year and tentatively scheduled for the Glitter Ball 2021. Thank you, Leda, for taking care of this.

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) 2022 Fly-In: Callers: Mike Kellogg, Chris Phillips, Anne Uebelacker March 25-27, 2022

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

- 1) Discussions were held with Mark Franks and Betsy Gotta are aware that no live classes are planned for this fall. They understand that once dancing begins again, workshops will be held at the various levels with the completion of the Mainstream class being on the agenda. No contracts have been signed pending the resolution as to what classes or workshops will be held in the fall or spring.
- 2) **The Lutheran Church is still closed, so no concerns there other than the club's onsite storage is there.** The church is not renting out their space currently, so nothing to worry about unless the club begins dancing before the church is reopened. This may be more of an FYI but is something that the board should be aware of for future planning.

### **Upcoming Dances and Callers**

No dances have been scheduled for 2021 other than the Glitter Ball in December 2021. If we are not dancing at that point, there are much larger issues to deal with besides who to hire as a caller.