

IS Board Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2021

Present: George Rizer, Norma Beard, Dick Michelin, Will Hamp, Dave Blatt, Steve Demos, Ron Rumble, Guest: Tim Harper, Chris Deephouse

This meeting was held via teleconference (Zoom).

Approval of Minutes from 3/24/2021 – Will
The Post Office box is resolved.
The minutes were approved as corrected, unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - Dick

The bank has processed the signature cards.
The report was accepted as amended.

Caller Liaison Report - Mike

The workshops are going well. Discussion regarding scheduling upcoming workshops.

Motion: Authorize the caller liaison committee to schedule virtual dances for the third Tuesdays in June and July. Dave moved, Ron second, Passed unanimously.

Publicity Chair Report - Dave

A few new names are added to the list serve. Mostly maintenance.
The website may be perceived as not very active. Discussion of insuring all the clubs activities be posted by informing the publicity chair. Website updated.

Mainstream & Plus Report - Steve

Discussion of ways to graduate the class. Discussion of the board possibly paying for the badges for the new members. The policy has varied over the years.

Motion: We graduate, give club pin and wave first year membership dues the four mainstream students. George moved and Ron second. Passed with one nay.

Action: George and Steve will order badges.

Advanced & Challenge Report- Ron

No change.

Resumption Committee - Ron

The committee has formed, met and produced a set of recommendations to the board. They are attached to these minutes. Discussion & approved with the inclusion of mahjong in section 6. Ron took on the role of the point person with the church.

A interim activity should be considered for this summer. We need to watch for the Pride announcements and how we can participate.

Committee Assignments - Norma, Dave

The committee has found members to be candidates for the board as President elect - Steve Demos, Treasurer - Chris Deephouse, Publicity (communications) chair - Ted Marvel, Mainstream/Plus Rep - Bob Rhode, Advanced/Challenge Rep. - Ron Rumble & Secretary - Will Hamp. The Fly-in committee has co-chairs Casey Bradshaw & Dave Tavani.

Retention Committee - Steve

The committee is preparing to contact recently lapsed members.

Recruitment Committee - Steve

Recommended modifying our Facebook & web pages.

Motion: The retention committee's recommendations be accepted and the pages updated. Steve moved and Norma seconded. Passed unanimously.

IAGSDC Annual Meeting - Tim

The notice for agenda items for the annual meeting has been sent out. Our club has no agenda items. The delegate & alternate will be designated at the next meeting.

Annual Meeting:

Discussion of annual meeting.

Request for agenda items, proposed slate of officers, the proposed by-laws change and the date (June 8, 2021) of the annual meeting will be sent out by the secretary.

Discussion of annual dues.

Motion: The dues for the upcoming year be \$5.00. Ron moved, Will second. Passed unanimously.

Old business - Steve

The social night scavenger hunt well.

New Business:

Proposed:

- Send out information of what happened at the board meeting sooner.

Next meeting - May 26, 2021.

Motion to adjourn: Will moved, Norma second, passed unanimously.

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – April 2021

The information below is accurate as of Monday, April 26, 2021, 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, April 20, 2021. My impression is that it was well received by all the attendees. This was a workshop/dance for the Mainstream and Plus programs. There was a similar number of attendees as last month but still supported by a larger number of club members than of other guests. Special guests included Mark Franks. Betsy did review two of the calls that the Mainstream class was lacking and she also reviewed the other two remaining calls that Mark had reviewed at the March workshop. There will be a review of all four of these calls at the May workshop.

No additional contracts or promises have been made to any caller regarding the holding of workshops or classes, virtual or live, other than the Glitter Ball in December 2021.

- 2) The May 18, 2021 workshop is the last remaining virtual dance on the schedule. As in-person dancing is not yet on the schedule, the committee recommends holding additional virtual dances in June, July, and August. The dances should continue to be held on the third Tuesday of the month and using the same format for Mainstream and Plus. We would also recommend using Betsy Gotta and Mark Franks for these dances as well. Dances with other callers are advertised through our mailing list and on social media.

Dances Through December 2021

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place April 26, 2021 through December 4, 2021.

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 – Mainstream/Plus Workshop – Mark Franks 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm Virtual

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

- 1) Discussions continue to be held with Mark Franks and Betsy Gotta about the status of the club. 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.
- 3) The Merion Meeting House contract needs to be completed for the Glitter Ball in December 2021. Mike Rutkowski passed along copies of the contract to George Rizer who will ensure that the contracts are completed. Signing the contract would hold the space for the club but, as we found out this year, the contract can be cancelled up to thirty days in advance with no penalty or financial obligation on the part of the club.

Return To Dancing Committee Recommendations to the Board ~ 2021-04-26

1. A club member should be officially designated as our point person to have regular communication with the church. "Regular communication" should be defined as a monthly phone conversation with the church representative or other church authority, with a report being made to the Board after each contact. The frequency of contact can be amended if the church indicates that it will have no further information regarding reopening until some specific future date.

Rationale: It is important that the authorities at the church hear from us so that they are aware of the fact that we are interested in resuming dancing as some point. It is also important that we have up-to-date information regarding the church's plans as we make our plans to begin dancing again.

2. We should, through this committee, monitor CDC guidelines relative to the pandemic and consider those guidelines when deciding when to resume dancing. We should also adhere to the guidance and restrictions set forth by the State of Pennsylvania, the City of Philadelphia, and the church.

Rationale: The CDC recommendations, while not "requirements", are valuable suggestions regarding the safety of social activities and should be considered by the Board. Those guidelines will help this committee when it comes time to determine safety protocols. The restrictions set forth by the other entities are

constantly changing and cannot be overruled by this committee or by the Board. It is important, therefore, that this committee continue to monitor those restrictions.

3. We should measure the decline in coronavirus cases quantitatively by tracking two specific indicators related to the spread of the virus and should use this information to help us decide when it is safe to resume dancing. These indicators are the “total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days” and the “percentage of tests that are positive during the past 7 days”. This committee should be responsible for charting those numbers and reporting them to the board monthly.

Rationale: The Board has previously determined that “a steady decline in coronavirus cases in Philadelphia & surrounding PA and NJ counties” will be a minimum, but not the only criteria for IS to resume dancing. Our committee feels that this specific criteria needs to be defined.

4. This committee should monitor the aforementioned indicators for Philadelphia County and the surrounding areas and will define the surrounding area as the following 10 counties:
 - a. Bucks (PA)
 - b. Chester (PA)
 - c. Delaware (PA)
 - d. Montgomery (PA)
 - e. Burlington (NJ)
 - f. Camden (NJ)
 - g. Gloucester (NJ)
 - h. Salem (NJ)
 - i. Mercer (NJ)
 - j. New Castle (DE)

Rationale: Similar to recommendation #3 above, this committee agrees that the “surrounding area” should be defined. With the exception of Mercer County (NJ), the counties listed here were previously communicated to the membership through the survey that was taken last year, as the “surrounding area” that should see a decline in cases before dancing could resume. Mercer County was added to

this list by the committee at the suggestion of one committee member due to the fact that two of the committee members currently live in that county.

5. We recommend removing the requirement that the Philadelphia school system be back in session without social distancing in place, as a minimum criteria for a resumption of dancing.

Rationale: It was felt that this criteria had no real value in our determination of when to return to dancing. It is likely that Philadelphia schools will reopen before dancing can resume, in which case, this would be a moot requirement. Even if the schools are not open once the Federal, State, and Local authorities determine that dancing can safely resume, we felt that school reopening had no effect on our ability to start up our activity. Conditions that would cause the schools to remain closed would be considered by this committee and by the Board by way of other monitoring procedures recommended above. One committee member disagreed with this recommendation but didn't feel strongly enough about the issue to block its inclusion in this document.

6. It is recommended that the current schedule of Zoom Social Nights and Zoom Game Nights be continued until dancing resumes.

Rationale: We felt that regular interaction among our club members helps to keep them engaged with the club, an important component in getting them back on the dance floor once it is safe to dance again. The existing social and game nights have been a great deal of fun and are popular with a core set of members and non-members, with non-regular attendees occasionally joining in.

7. We recommend that the Board further explore its recommendation from the March, 2021 Board meeting that the club hold some outdoor social event, even if dancing at that event is not yet recommended by the CDC, or permitted by the state in which the event would be held.

Rationale: Like item #6 above, we believe that an outdoor social activity will help to keep our members engaged. It is likely that many members will welcome the opportunity to get together face to face after not having seen each other in person for so long. Additionally, many other clubs are entertaining this idea in order to

give their club members an opportunity to socialize in person for the first time in over a year.

8. It is recommended that this committee continue to monitor the status of 2021 Philly Pride, and monthly report the findings to the Board.

Rationale: While the return of Philly Pride is still up in the air, it was felt that this could be another welcomed social event for our members. It could also give us the opportunity to advertise our club and recruit new class members for the future.

Recommendations from the April 6, 2021 Meeting of the Recruitment Committee of Independence Squares

In Attendance: Tim Harper, Bob Rohde, Chris Deephouse, Norma Beard, George Rizor, Will Hamp, Steve Demos

Updating our Website and Facebook Pages

Currently under *About* on our **Facebook Group Page** it states:

Independence Squares welcomes all to our inclusive square dance community. We are Philadelphia's only club teaching and supporting modern western square dancing for the LGBTQ+ community and our friends.

Founded in 1988, our club provides a fun, alcohol-free environment where you can have a great time dancing with a variety of people. We have members young and old, gay, lesbian, and even some straight allies! Check out our website for more information on visiting our club, and check out when the next open house is. See you in a square!

Check out our website to see when we will be starting our next beginners class and for when our monthly Saturday evening dances are!

www.independencesquares.org

Our committee recommends to the board that the wording be changed to:

Independence Squares welcomes all to our inclusive square dance community. We are Philadelphia's only club teaching and supporting modern western square dancing for the LGBTQ+ community and our friends.

Founded in 1988, our club provides a fun environment where you can have a great time dancing with a variety of people. Check out our website for more information. We hope to see you in a square!

www.independencesquares.org

We also recommend to the board that the following sentence be removed from the home page of our **website**.

Current membership is approximately a 60/40 male/female ratio, and we welcome LGBT and straight dancers to join us.

We did not discuss this at the meeting but Steve finds this sentence problematic:

you can dance either the boy's or girl's part, regardless of your actual gender

and he recommends that we change it to:

anyone can dance the boy's part or the girl's part