

**Independence Squares Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 6, 2022**  
**Minutes**

**Start:** 7:00 PM Eastern (approx.)

**Attendance:** Chris D., Dave T. (joined late, so he did not vote on Secretary report), Deb, John & Coco, Linda, Peg, Ron, Steve, Vinney, Will. **Absent:** Drew

**Secretary's Report (report submitted)** – Vinney sent out revised August 31, 2022 minutes for Board members to review. **MOTION (by Steve/Ron seconded):** *Approve the August 2022 board meeting minutes?* **Yes: 5. No: 0. Abstain: 0**

Members discussed withholding/redacting any mentions of caller fees/compensation on public records. Moving forward, the club secretary shall save two copies of minutes: an unredacted copy to Google Drive, and a public copy of minutes that removes financial reports and conversations regarding caller fees.

**Treasurer's Report (report submitted)** – Chris discussed highlights of the report. **MOTION (by Steve/Vinney seconded):** *Accept Treasurer Report as submitted?* **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**

- *Dance Revenue:* members discussed that most of our dances lose money, except for the Fly-ins.
- *Sign-in sheet (action item):* President asked the Treasurer to bring a new sign-in sheet with class payment tracking.
- *Prepaying for Nov 8 - Dec 31:* Members agreed we should charge \$8 per class for the 6 classes, for a total of \$48, if paid fully in advance.
- *PayPal Changes:* Treasurer reviewing terms. Since we are not a 501C3, he doesn't feel we need to make any changes.
- *Reduced admission rate:* only one dancer paying \$5 per class.

**Return to Dance Committee (report submitted)**

The President announced that Peg will be the new chair of the Committee. Linda has added ICU usage to the weekly COVID tracking report. Moving forward, the RTD Committee will review weekly COVID trends. If anything looks concerning, RTD and Board should discuss if classes should be cancelled, or safety protocols amended.

Members then voted on RTD Recommendations (refer to RTD report):

- **Rec 1 & Rec 2:** (Ron motion/Steve 2nd) **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**
- **Rec 3** (Ron motion/Vinney 2<sup>nd</sup>): **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**
- **Rec 4** (Ron motion/Steve 2<sup>nd</sup>): **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**
- **Rec 5 A-D** (Ron motion/Vinney 2nd): Edit 5C to state "The general statement 'Bottom line...' ." **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**
- **Rec 6** (Ron motion/Vinney 2nd): **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**
- Steve made a motion to accept the text in Monkeypox handout. **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**
- **Rec 7** (Ron motion/Steve 2nd): **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**
- **Rec 8** (Ron motion/Vinney 2nd): Although we are proposing to require "full vaccination plus at least one booster", we will continue to highly recommend "up-to-date" with vaccinations. **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**
- Board discussed where on our website we should place the Monkeypox statement and resources. It was decided to place it in the "Covid Resources Section," which Ron will rename "health and safety protocols," or something similar.
- **MOTION (Ron/Coco 2<sup>nd</sup>):** *Ron be given permission to re-design Covid protocols section, which will include Monkeypox information and resources.* **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0.**

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- Club President suggested we discuss giving a budget for the RTD committee, for things such as cleaning supplies, signs, etc. **MOTION** (Ron/Vinney 2<sup>nd</sup>): *Approve a \$300 budget for RTD committee expenses.* **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**

#### Caller Liaison Report – Linda and Mike

- *Glitter Ball 2022*: will be held from 3-6:30pm now, with Dayle as caller.
- *February 2023 Dance*: Mark confirmed as caller. Will likely be at the church, but members recommended looking into the Collingswood Senior Community Center as a possible venue (Capacity: 100 people if sitting; 50 people if dancing). Steve, John and Coco will look into the space and if we can get it for February, we'll cancel the church. If we can't get it, we'll try for the April dance.
- *April 2023 Dance*: Caller to be determined. We cannot ignore the C1 and Advanced Dancers, so the April Dance should be a double header.
- *Class Callers during Betsy's 2 absences*: Clay to Call Mainstream and Plus and Mark to call Advanced and Challenge.
- *Solicit feedback after every special dance?* Surveys have gleaned little useful information. Moving forward, we should just ask dancers to reach out to us with questions or comments.
- *Mainstream Calls List*: Encourage Betsy to do a hand-out for Mainstream. Coco and John will ask Mark about Plus figures by week (an Advanced list is unlikely, as he often bases his teaches on dancer's responses).
- *October Dance Staffing*: Chris will be there for Mainstream. Mike & Tim will be there for part of it. Team will coordinate to ensure enough people will be there and someone to close.

#### Fly-In Report – Vinney and Ron

- *Decorations & sound*: Vinney and Ron will be meeting with our hotel contact on November 11.
- *Rooms for callers*: Eric and Dale are now booked for 3 days at the lower rate.
- *Registrations to date*: 95. Ron is working on exchange registrations from 3 clubs.
- *Sandie Bryant's contract*: now signed.
- *Sheraton Contact*: has not been very responsive to our outreach efforts (subsequently, she's moved on and we were assigned a new contact).

#### Recruitment Committee Report – Steve

- *Federation ad*: The \$50 Federation ad has resulted in no new dancers.
- *Pride Events*: Upper Darby and Cherry Hill Pride events haven't resulted in any new students. Two current class members came through palm cards Steve & Bob handed out at Philly Pride.
- *Meet-up*: three people came to our dances through Meet-up.

**Generic Motion (Steve/Coco 2nd)**: *Anyone who has completed a Mainstream class will be preemptively approved for membership, should they seek it.* **Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0**

#### Publicity Chair Report – Ron

- *Oktoberfest & Fly-in*: Roy created the Oktoberfest flyer. He & Deb will be resources for future flyers. Ron uploaded flyers - Oktoberfest: Meetup & Facebook. Fly-in: Facebook.
- *Old ads*: IS Website needs cleanup (currently has old open houses listed)

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- *Facebook events:* Members discussed abandoning “Facebook Events” for our dances, as they’ve had little reach.

#### Mainstream & Plus Report – Coco and John

Nothing to report.

#### Advanced & Challenge Report – Dave

- *New dancers:* we have 4 new students.
- *Calls List:* Dave sends out weekly emails with calls reviewed.

#### Storage Report – Steve

- *Contract:* Members discussed that the President should write the terms of a contract for our storage space for an authorized member of the church to sign.
- **MOTION (Steve/Vinney 2<sup>nd</sup>):** *We should move our stuff from the current storage facility to the church for \$50 a month. Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0*

#### Old & New Business

- *Summer 2023 Dances:* A survey about summer dances is forthcoming.
- *Waivers:* Ron will upload waivers, but Chris needs to give them to him.
- *IS Organizational Budget:* Ron’s CPA contact stated a budget is not required for the type of organization we are.

No further business to discuss.

**MOTION (President/Vinney 2<sup>nd</sup>):** *Adjourn? Yes: 6. No: 0. Abstain: 0*

Meeting Adjourned approximately 9:03 PM Eastern

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Finlay

Secretary, Independence Squares

Agenda for the Independence Squares Board Meeting on Thursday, October 6, 2022.

Secretary's Report – Vinney

Treasurer's Report – Chris

(A written report was submitted.)

Pricing starting on November 8.

PayPal Changes.

One person using our reduced admission rate.

Return to Dance Committee – Ron and Peg

A written report was submitted

Peg will be the new chair of the Committee.

Caller Liaison Report – Linda and Mike

Location for February dance

Format and location for April dance

Do we want to solicit feedback after every dance?

Potential to cohost with both DC Lambda and Chesapeake Squares next year? (continuing discussion)

Potential to cohost a dance with Times Squares? (continuing discussion)

Staffing our October Dance. (continuing discussion)

Fly-In Report – Vinney and Ron

Recruitment Committee Report – Steve

\$50 Federation Ad resulted in no students.

Publicity Chair Report – Ron

Mainstream & Plus Report – Coco and John

Advanced & Challenge Report – Dave

Storage Report – Steve

Old & New Business

A committee to investigate dancing in the summer of 2023 has met.

Adjourn

# RETURN TO DANCING COMMITTEE REPORT

## OCTOBER 2, 2022

The Return to Dancing committee met via Zoom on September 6, 2022. In attendance were Ron, Bob R, Mary Kay, Vinney, and Mike. Absent was Eileen. The meeting began with a review of Joe Iser's revised presentation regarding the topic of keeping dancers safe during this time of pandemic. A copy of the presentation is attached, and an explanation is below. A subsequent meeting was held on October 2, 2022, to further refine the September 6 recommendations due to concerns that were expressed regarding the original recommendations. In attendance were Ron, Vinney, Mike, Bob R, Mary Kay, new committee members Peg and Linda, and Tim (guest). Eileen was absent.

Joe has recognized that we are at a very different place than where we were back in April 2021 when he made his original presentation to the IAGSDC. We have a more contagious variant of COVID-19 now, but we also have very effective vaccines that are doing a great job of keeping the public from serious illness. Additionally, we are at a place where most people have resumed their pre-pandemic lives and are no longer interested in being masked at all times while out in public. Most square dance clubs are no longer requiring the wearing of masks. Joe's presentation gives a list of mitigation strategies that he recommends and the RTD committee discussed each of them. The last slide of the presentation gives Joe's recommended indicators and thresholds as they relate to the continuation of square dancing. The new strategy is to first look at each county's Total New COVID-19 Cases Per 100K. We then need to look at two hospital metrics, the first being New COVID-19 Admissions and the second being Percent of Staffed Inpatient Beds Occupied By COVID-19 Patients. All of these metrics are easily available through the CDC website. If the Total New COVID-19 Cases Per 100K are fewer than 200, then the thresholds for the hospitalization rates are to be gathered from the top section of this slide. If the number is 200 or above, then the thresholds for hospitalization rates are to be gathered from the bottom section of the slide. Suggested mitigation tactics are contingent upon which transmission zone each county is in and they are listed on the slide. These tactics were discussed by the RTD committee and are built into our recommendations below. A sample spreadsheet, using these new parameters, reflecting the data for 8/31/22 and 9/5/22, is attached to this report.

A discussion regarding the new bivalent booster was held and the committee agreed not to require it at this time for many reasons. The committee will continue to monitor reports of the efficacy of the booster and the public's acceptance of it.

The committee makes the following recommendations to the board.

### Recommendation #1

The RTD committee is to replace the measured COVID-19 indicators with Joe Iser's September 2022 recommended indicators and shall revise the weekly tracking to reflect those indicators.

**Rationale:** *Some of the previously measured indicators no longer hold much value when determining the safety level of dancing during the pandemic. Positivity rates are no longer accurate due to the fact that so many people perform self-tests and do not report those results. Vaccination rates have stalled and reporting them has no value. Death rates have been low ever since we started reporting them due to the efficacy of the vaccines. Hospitalization rates are now more valuable in determining risk levels. It was noted that hospitalization rates are identical across many counties in PA, and in NJ as well, and that caused some initial concern when comparing individual counties. It was noted that this is likely due to regional reporting as opposed to individual county reporting. These numbers are still important because they show us the trends across our measured regions.*

**Board action: Approved as written**

## Recommendation #2

Independence Squares should continue dancing at this time, with a continued weekly review of the indicators as reported to the board.

**Rationale:** *Our COVID-19 indicators are low, relative to the extreme numbers that we saw earlier in the year, and we continue to maintain strict safety protocols, with all dancers required to be vaccinated and boosted.*

**Board Action: Approved as written**

## Recommendation #3

A mask requirement is to remain in place within the dance halls but is to be optional outside of the dance hall.

**Rationale:** *We recognize that most other square dance clubs have made the wearing of masks optional and that many of our members are anxious to dance without masks. However, Joe Iser's mitigation requirements of spacing and ventilation are not steps that we can easily achieve due to the configuration of our dance spaces. That makes masking all that more important for our events. Other factors that weighed into this recommendation include the fact that we are, generally a more at-risk population, we are coming into the cold and flu season, and we are approaching the very busy year-end holiday season with lots of indoor celebrations that have the potential for virus spread. Additionally, we should have a consistent policy regarding all of our safety measures and shouldn't remove the mask mandate until we are reasonably certain that we won't have to reinstate it anytime soon. Allowing masks to be removed outside of the dance space gives dancers a chance to occasionally take a break from the mask without requiring that they step outside into what will soon be winter weather.*

**Board Action: Approved as written**

## Recommendation #4

The cleaning of high touch areas before and after dancing is to be resumed. Previously defined "high touch areas" include callers' and treasurer's tables, doorknobs, push plates on restroom doors, church entrance door push bar and outside handle. The committee recommended having cleaning wipes on the Treasurer's table (with a trash receptacle nearby) so that anyone who wishes to wipe a pen clean prior to using it can do so. Hand sanitizer is also to be on the Treasurer's table.

**Rationale:** *We stopped this practice earlier this year, but Joe Iser highly recommends reinstating it due to the fact that Monkeypox can be spread through surface contamination. Committee members also expressed concern about other viruses, especially during the coming cold and flu season. We recognized that this is a relatively easy task to perform and should be done because we don't know who was in our dance spaces before we arrived. We also agreed that it is courteous of us to leave the dance spaces clean for the next people who use them. And we agreed that club members, not just RTD and board members, can be encouraged to help out in this regard.*

**Board action: Approved as written**

## Recommendation #5

Updates to the club's Stop Sign are to be made as follows:

- a. "Headache" is to be added to the list of symptoms.

**Rationale:** *This is on the CDC list of symptoms to watch for but is not on our current list.*

- b. The statement that reminds dancers to notify us if they test positive within the next 5 days is to be updated to include the words "or become symptomatic".

**Rationale:** *This was a suggestion by Joe Iser and the committee felt it worthwhile to notify attendees if someone has come down with possible COVID symptoms without getting tested. This is in line with our commitment to keeping our dancers as informed as possible.*

- c. A general statement such as “Bottom line: If you’re not feeling well, please protect your fellow dancers and stay home” is to be added.

**Rationale:** *The Stop Sign cannot list every possible reason for opting to stay home and it was felt that a general statement would remind dancers that there are other conditions that should require that they not attend our event.*

- d. “Unusual rash” is to be added to the list of symptoms

**Rationale:** *The committee worked to figure out how to address Monkeypox without causing any stigmatization of our gay/bi-sexual population. At the very least, we felt that reminding dancers not to attend our event if they have any sort of strange rash was important. Other Monkeypox related recommendations are addressed in Recommendation #6.*

**Board action: 5(a), (b) and (d) were approved as written. 5(c) was amended to read: “The statement, ‘Bottom line: If you’re not feeling well, please protect your fellow dancers and stay home’” is to be added. Recommendation 5(c), as amended, was approved.**

## **Recommendation #6**

Independence Squares is to further address the Monkeypox situation by including information on our website. The exact wording and placement on the website is to be decided by the board. A proposed wording is attached to this report. It is further recommended that a small handout be available at the treasurer’s table that gives our dancers links to information from the CDC and The New York Times. A proposal for that handout is also attached to this report.

**Rationale:** *Monkeypox is a current threat, especially to the gay/bi-sexual male population. As an LGBTQ+ club, our members are more at risk than the general population. The committee felt it prudent to give our members the resources to become informed, especially in terms of protecting themselves, without raising this to a level that could stigmatize our club. Times Squares has taken the step of providing information to their members and we used that announcement as a model for our proposal.*

**Board action: Approved as written. The proposed wording of the handout was approved. The board agreed that the COVID-19 protocol section of the website should be redesigned as deemed fit by Ron. It was suggested that we consider renaming that section “Health and Safety”. The Monkeypox notice is to be posted in this section of the website.**

## **Recommendation #7**

The 2022 Glitter Ball shall be conducted without a potluck dinner. Current club protocols shall be in effect at the Glitter Ball, including the providing of water and allowing individually wrapped snacks.

**Rationale:** *Having strict protocols in place during the dance, and then allowing masks to be removed for a potluck, sends a mixed message to the attendees. Allowing the consumption of snacks, which allow for masks to be lowered for a very brief period of time, satisfies those dancers who need a little something to eat before being able to have dinner later that day.*

**Board action: Approved as written**

## **Recommendation #8**

The requirement of “up-to-date vaccination” on our website, flyers and other related documents is to be changed to “full vaccination plus at least one booster”.

**Rationale:** *The CDC recognizes “up-to-date” as having had not only the initial vaccination(s) but also the currently recommended booster. The CDC’s currently recommended booster is the new bivalent one. Since this committee has not yet moved to require dancers to have the new bivalent booster, we can no longer use the term “up-to-date”. The term “fully vaccinated” is defined by the CDC as merely having had the initial dose(s). Stating our requirement as “fully vaccinated plus at least one booster” matches our current requirement.*

**Board action:** Approved with the additional approval to have our website state that we encourage all dancers to stay up to date with their vaccinations.

**Further board action:** The board approved a budget of \$300 for future RTD expenses including, but not limited to, revised stop signs, printing of waivers and other related documents, and cleaning supplies.



**Here is the information that Times Squares included in their newsletter (note: spelling errors are theirs, not mine):**

## **Concerns About The Spread Of Monkeypox Virus**

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Pressing Questions About Monkeypox Virus:: Spread, Vaccination, Treatment.

Scientists say that containing the outbreak will depend on better understanding the virus's transmission and how well available tools work.

Want to learn more?

Here are links to the **Centers of Disease Control and Prevention** website, and to an article from **The New York Times**:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/transmission.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/29/health/monkeypox-spread-vaccine-treatment.html>

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## **Recommended wording for Independence Squares website and for a proposed handout at the Treasurer's table:**

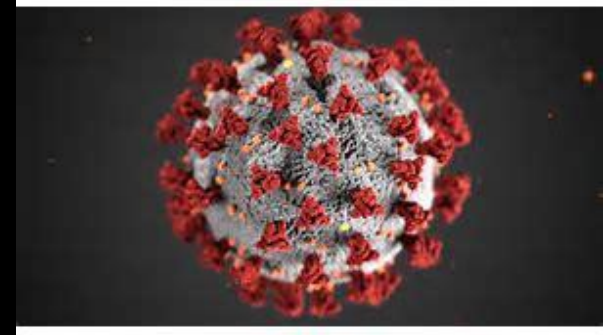
So you heard about monkeypox, let's talk about it.

Monkeypox has begun spreading in countries without a history of monkeypox, including the U.S. This has raised concerns among many communities who are unfamiliar with the disease.

For more information, including how to protect yourself, please visit these links from the **CDC** website and **The New York Times**:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/transmission.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/29/health/monkeypox-spread-vaccine-treatment.html>



Joseph P. Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc  
Medical Consultant

# COVID-19 Indicators

# Safe Delivery of Instruction and Dancing

- Overriding Principles
  - Need to protect students, dancers, visitors, caller
  - Strategy must include staying open once open

# Essential Elements

- Consistent implementation of layered mitigation strategies to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2
- Indicators of community transmission and hospitalizations to reflect level of community risk
- Phased mitigation based on levels of community transmission

# Layered Mitigation Strategies

1. [Stay home](#) if have [symptoms](#) / **rashes** - Can use antigen / home test kits
2. [Up-to-date Vaccinations](#)
  1. For all: dancers, callers, visitors
  2. **Recommend requiring new Omicron BA5 boosters** by as early as Dec 1, late as Dec 31; (CDC approved on 9/1/2022)
3. [Physical distancing](#) is still important; between squares, callers
4. [Ventilate](#) the space - virus is airborne; important when physical distancing is difficult
5. **Universal & Correct use of** [Masks](#) – especially important when difficult to distance and/or ventilate
6. [Cleaning](#) & maintaining healthy facilities - Clean high touch areas before & after use e.g. tables, but probably not chairs as clothing acts as a barrier

# Essential/ Indicators for Community Transmission

- Assess level of risk in the community using:
  - [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list\\_select\\_state=all\\_states&data-type=CommunityLevels](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&data-type=CommunityLevels)
  - **Case Rate per 100k population**
  - Hospitalizations - community testing (positivity rate) is not as accurate
    - New COVID-19 admissions per 100k population
    - % Staffed inpatient beds in use by patients with confirmed COVID-19
- Monitor sewage viral load to assess for increasing risk
  - <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#wastewater-surveillance>
  - **Current virus levels in wastewater by site** – trending down is better
  - **Percent change in the last 15 days** – trending down is better

# CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19

Case Rate Per 100K Population (past 7 days)	Indicator	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Fewer than 200	New COVID-19 admissions per 100k (7-day total)	<10	10-14.9	15-19.9	≥20
	% staffed inpatient beds in use by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	<10%	10-12.4%	12.5-14.9%	≥15%
	<b>Recommendation</b>	Square <b>dancing open</b> in both low and moderate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Masks</b> mandated</li> <li>Increase <b>ventilation</b> (outdoors or doors open with fans)</li> </ul>	No dancing unless <b>implement all mitigation strategies</b> , and total new cases & waste water <b>trends are decreasing</b>
200 or more	New COVID-19 admissions per 100k (7-day total)	N/A	<5	5-9.9	≥10.0
	% staffed inpatient beds in use by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	N/A	<5%	5-9.9%	≥10.0%
	<b>Recommendation</b>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Physical distancing</b> (between squares, callers) required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dancing only if held <b>outdoors</b></li> <li>And <b>distancing</b></li> </ul>	No dancing unless <b>implement all mitigation strategies</b> , and total new cases & waste water <b>trends are decreasing</b>



## Caller Liaison Report

### Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – October 2022

The information below is accurate as of Wednesday, October 5, 2022, 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/Notes for Board

No additional contracts or promises have been made to any caller regarding the holding of workshops or classes, virtual or live, other than those listed below.

#### Dances Through April 2024

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place July 2022 through April 2024.

Saturday, October 8, 2022 – Double Header with Betsy Gotta

3:00 pm – 5:30 pm Mainstream and Plus

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Dinner Break – Nothing formalized. Social hour.

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm Advanced through C1. Possible C2 star tip.

Saturday, December 3, 2022 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm  
The Merion Meeting House

Saturday, February 25, 2023 – Mark Franks – Mainstream through Advanced – 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm The board needs to confirm the space at the church is available.

March 2023 Fly-In: Callers: Sandie Bryant, Dayle Hodge, Eric Henerlau March 24-26, 2023 Sheraton, Langhorne, PA

Saturday, December 2, 2023 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Betsy Gotta 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm The Merion Meeting House (Meeting House needs to be confirmed but probably not until later this year.)

April 2024 Fly-In: Callers: Darren Gallina, Betsy Gotta, Bill Harrison April 5-7, 2024

#### Open Houses and Classes

Mainstream and C1 Class with Betsy Gotta

Plus Class and Advanced Workshop with Mark Franks

#### FYI Notes

- 1) Based on the safety protocols that are now in place (proof of vaccination has been extended to require a booster when eligible), each caller is notified of this when they are hired.
- 2) As to contracts for the 2022-2023 classes, the Tuesday of Thanksgiving week and the Tuesday between Christmas and New Year's will be dark with no classes being held those weeks. This is in keeping with the practices of previous years.

- 3) A dance has been proposed for April 2023 and the committee is awaiting word from the board as to the format. The proposal is to hold a dance for the Advanced and C1 programs. Alternatively, a double header where the afternoon session is Mainstream and Plus, a dinner break, and then an evening session for Advanced and C1. This is the format for the dance being held on October 8, 2022. No callers will be approached for the proposed April dance until a decision comes from the board. The space at the church will also need to be confirmed or a new space will need to be found if the church is unavailable.
- 4) Per Betsy's contract, she is away for two sessions in 2023. A caller has been offered the opportunity to call these sessions and we are awaiting word from them. Every effort is being made to find a caller for these sessions.