

Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting
August 3, 2023 7pm via Zoom

Board members present at the meeting: Dave T, David B, Drew, Ron, Scot, Steve and Vinney

Guests present at the meeting: Arin, Eileen, Elissa, Mike, Tim, Will

Secretary (Steve)

Ron made a **motion to approve the minutes** as submitted from the June 20th Independence Squares Board meeting. Dave seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

We will table the approval of the May board meeting minutes and Annual Meeting minutes until our next board meeting.

The board discussed the option of pre-approving all candidates for membership to the club. It was decided to adhere directly to the letter of the bylaws and require that each candidate be approved by 2/3 of the board members before that person is accepted for membership.

Steve will send a message to the membership about ordering new name tags.

Treasurer (Ron submitted a report.)

Ron presented his report to the board. Ron suggested several changes to our **Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures** document. Ron's suggested changes are included in his report. The document itself is also included. Ron suggested that the Finance Committee discuss the proposed changes before seeking approval from the board. He made a **motion to table board action on his proposal** until the such time as the Finance Committee can discuss them and make a formal recommendation to the board. Drew seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

Publicity (David B)

Dave reported on some updates to information on the website.

Dave discussed the Independence Squares trip to the Museum of Optical Illusions for August 13. Eighteen people are signed up so far.

Dave will get flyers for the October dance and the Glitter Ball.

Dave will set up a meeting with Moss to discuss her concerns with the website.

Recruitment Committee (Steve submitted a report)

Steve presented his report to the board. It is included with these minutes. One item in the report is possibility of using a service to text prospective dancers from a 5 digit number. David B. alerted us to the fact that we have a Google voice number. He thinks it is possible to send text blasts using this number.

Tim mentioned that PGN has never been especially responsive to our attempts to get coverage in that paper for our club.

Dave T volunteered to take the lead on representing Independence Squares at a community event put on by Glenside UCC in Glenside, PA on September 24. There is no booth fee and Dave hopes to get 8 club dancers to participate in a demo.

Health and Safety Procedures (Linda submitted an update)

The HASP Committee has not met since prior to the May board meeting. Linda submitted an update which is included with these minutes.

After the August 3 board meeting but before the September 24 meeting the HASP committee requested via email funds to buy a first aid kit for use at Independence Squares events. After the appropriate discussion a motion was made and seconded and the funds were approved.

Caller Liaison Committee (Mike and Linda submitted a report)

Mike discussed his report. It is included with these minutes.

Mike and Linda have been having trouble getting callers to cover for absences when Mark and Betsy are unable to call on a Tuesday night.

Dane Bragg will cover for Mark on October 3.

Mark will be the only caller on September 26. He will teach Mainstream and Advanced. There will be no Plus class that night.

Betsy will start the C1 workshop on September 19, there will be no C1 workshop on September 26 and the workshop will resume on October 3.

Both our club callers are opposed the idea of having a club night instead of a class night on any of our Tuesday sessions. The board will not move forward with the idea of having club nights on the fifth Tuesday of the month. Several attendees expressed interest in having some club nights on Tuesdays in the summer.

Steve submitted the possibility of having our October dance in the ballroom at the William Way LGBT Community Center instead of at the church. It was decided that the church was the better option for several reasons including the ease of parking at the church.

Steve made a **motion** that there be no dancing the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and the Tuesday the day after Christmas. David B. seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

IAGSDC delegate (Tim submitted a report)

Tim presented his report which is included with these minutes.

In addition, Drew reported that James Ozanich was awarded the Golden Boot in recognition of his contributions to square dancing and gay square dancing in particular.

Mainstream and Plus Program Representative (Vinney)

Vinney intends to send a recap of all the calls learned each week to the students in both the Mainstream and the Plus classes.

Advanced and Challenge Program Representative (Dave T)

Dave was at Busy B's the previous night advertising our Advanced class.

New Business

We discussed a request that we got from a community group to add a link to their organization on our website. We decided to decline this request.

New board members were reminded that we need two people to verify that the door is locked every time we leave the church at the end of an event.

The idea of participating in the tradition amongst straight clubs of stealing and retrieving club banners was discussed. It was broached that we could have straight clubs steal a t-shirt or a stuffed toy with a rainbow theme rather than a banner. Steve, Eileen and Mike will discuss the idea further.

After a lengthy discussion, Ron made a **motion that our fee structure for Tuesday nights be amended**. He moved that nonmembers will continue to be charged \$10 per evening on Tuesday nights but members will be charged \$9. Nonmembers will be offered prepay packages that would amount to an \$8 charge per class if they attended each class during that time period. Members will be offered prepay packages that would amount to a \$7 charge per class if they attended each class during that time period. Drew seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

Ron proposed that the board talk further at a future date about additional benefits for members. It was clarified that Mainstream class members will be treated the same as members in terms of the fee structure for Tuesday nights.

Ron will get a breakdown of dates and prices for the first prepay package to David B. to put on the website as soon as possible.

Drew made a **motion** that we table discussion of holding back from inviting current Mainstream class members to our Glitter Ball and our Fly-In until the next board meeting. David B seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 9:07pm

INDEPENDENCE SQUARES TREASURER'S REPORT

JUNE 30, 2023

Financial reports attached include the balance sheet and profit & loss summary for the month ending 6/30/23. Net income for June was \$160.43. My plan is to give a year-to-date summary in future reports. Bank balances total \$45,707.31.

Accounting records have been inputted into QuickBooks and reports will be pulled from there. There is no cost to IS for the QB software since I already own it as treasurer for another organization.

I continue to work to change the signers on all our financial accounts. PayPal is completed and PNC and Live Oak Bank are in the process of being changed. I anticipate this to be done by mid-August.

The July 18 open house figures are not reflected in the June numbers. We had 35 dancers in attendance, with 12 of those being new dancers or dancers who have not danced in a long time. Net loss was \$45.00.

I was unable to attend last month's board meeting but sent a report in advance which outlines several changes that should be considered to the "Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures", which is attached. I don't know the outcome of that discussion and I therefore summarize it here for further discussion if needed.

- **Checking Account Access.**

This should be broadened to include "All" financial accounts, since we now have a CD, a savings account, and a PayPal account. The existing document fails to include those accounts. I suggest the following wording and suggest that the title of this section be changed to "Financial Account Access":

The outgoing and incoming treasurers shall arrange for the Finance Committee members to be signers on all the IS financial accounts, and to remove any signers who are no longer on the Finance Committee.

- **Checks and Electronic Payments.**

The requirement to have two FC members sign all checks is cumbersome during times when our club is not meeting. This should be revised to allow for written or email approval by at least one other FC member. I don't know if this will require a bylaw change or not. If not, then I propose the following, or similar, wording:

Paper checks shall be signed by two members of the Finance Committee, as provided in the bylaws of the organization. In the case where two physical signers are not available, the issuance of a check shall be authorized by at least one Finance Committee member who is not the treasurer. If a check is being made payable to the treasurer, then two other Finance Committee members must approve the issuance of the check. Approval can be done in writing or via email. Copies of all such approvals shall be saved online in a place where members of the Finance Committee can review them.

- **Financial Records.**

I intend to use QuickBooks instead of Google Sheets or Microsoft Excel to maintain our financial records. This qualifies under the term "or similar software". However, because I use a desktop version of QB, it is not possible to provide online access to the ledgers for the other Finance Committee members to view. I am the treasurer for the ICBDA (a round dance group) and for them, I also use QB and I provide copies of all of our financial statements on a monthly basis for the executive board to review if they wish to. I would like to do that for Independence Squares as well and I therefore propose the following change:

The Treasurer shall provide copies of all financial statements on a monthly basis to the board for review.

Respectfully submitted.

Ron Rumble
Independence Squares Treasurer

Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures

August 2021 Draft

Finance Committee

The Independence Squares Finance Committee shall include the Treasurer and three other board members. The incoming president shall appoint the finance committee at the board meeting that follows the annual board election, subject to ratification of the full board.

Checking Account Access

The outgoing and incoming treasurer shall arrange for the Finance Committee members to be signers on the IS checking account(s), and to remove any signers who are no longer on the Finance Committee.

The treasurer shall set up sub-accounts so that the other members of the Finance Committee can login and review the checking account transactions and statements.

Checks and Electronic Payments

Paper checks shall be signed by two members of the Finance Committee, as provided in the bylaws of the organization.

Electronic payments include checking account bill pay and debit card payments, PayPal, and other digital payment methods that may be authorized by the Finance Committee. The treasurer shall get approval of another finance committee member by email before making an electronic payment. When a payment is being made to a member of the Finance Committee, two other members of the Finance Committee shall approve it. A copy of these emails shall be saved online in a place where members of the Finance Committee can review them.

Financial Records

The Treasurer shall keep a checking account ledger using Google Sheets, Microsoft Excel or similar software. The Treasurer shall provide online access to this ledger to the other members of the Finance Committee.

The Treasurer shall prepare Income Statement and Balance Sheet reports monthly for review by the IS Board.

Independence Squares' fiscal year is January 1st to December 31. Financial records are maintained on a cash basis, with one exception: income and expenses for the Independence Squares Fly-in are recorded in the month the Fly-in occurs. Advance registration payments and advance payments to callers and vendors are treated as unearned income and prepaid expenses respectively.

Report from the Independence Squares Recruitment Committee for the August 3 Independence Squares Board Meeting

We successfully represented Independence Squares at a Bucks/Montco Pride Event in Jenkintown on June 25.

We did a square dance demo and promotional announcement at a contra dance in Swarthmore on June 27.

We did not do a square dance demo at the Mouny Airy contra dance on July 27.

Our next pride event is in Cherry Hill on Sunday, September 10.

Coco, John and Arin are working on getting college students to come to our next two open houses on August 22 and September 12.

We sent a press release about our July 18 open house to PGN a couple weeks before the event. They did not reply to the email and did not print anything about the open house in the paper.

Our open house on July 18 went well. Several folks that we haven't seen in a while showed up. 5 of the attendees found us on the web and sent us email enquiries to which we replied. One attendee saw our demonstration at Delco County Pride and thought it looked fun. One attendee was recruited by Dave B.

We had a Recruitment Committee Meeting on July 11.

Amongst other topics we discussed services that allow for Independence Squares to send text messages from a 5 digit number to a large group of recipients.

We also talked about the possibility of having an accelerated on-ramp to square dancing for contra dancers. One idea was to do blast weekends just for current contra dancers.

July 30, 2023

Health and Safety Protocols Report to the Board of Independence Squares

OVERALL COVID TRENDS

Throughout the United States, COVID trends reflect the decreased risk of severe illness and death from COVID due to vaccines, therapeutics, and past COVID infections.

COVID INCIDENCE

HASP is unable to report on weekly new COVID cases since this is measured by the number of reported positive test results, and it does not include at-home positive test results, according to US COVID tracker: https://covidactnow.org/us/pennsylvania-pa/county/philadelphia_county/?s=47273475

NEW HOSPITALIZATIONS

HASP has updated the statistics for those who test positive for COVID when admitted to a hospital for any reason. There is a general downward trend for all the counties we track, except for New Castle County, Delaware.

5/25/2023 7/15/2023

10.5	6.1	PA-Bucks County
8.8	5.1	PA-Chester County
9.5	5.5	PA-Delaware County
13.9	8.0	PA-Montgomery County
26.4	15.3	PA-Philadelphia County
6.8	7.2	NJ-Burlington County
7.8	8.1	NJ-Camden County
4.5	4.7	NJ-Gloucester County
1.0	1.0	NJ-Salem County
1.0	4.0	NJ-Mercer County
6.1	10.4	DE-New Castle County

IAGSDC CONVENTION

Many of us recently enjoyed our visit to Ottawa for the 40th annual IAGSDC Convention. The convention committee, in compliance with regional regulations, required dancers to wear masks while in the dance halls, and mask-wearing was optional in all other areas. We affirmed that we had been vaccinated against COVID infection and transmission. I know that many of us took advantage of the regional sights and visited many marketplaces, shopping centers, restaurants, museums, river tours, and the Parliament Building, and mostly went about without masks. While I don't have an official report, I have heard informally that there were very few incidents of infection or transmission of COVID during the Convention.

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – August 2023

The information below is accurate as of Tuesday, August 1, 2023, 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 2025

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place May 2023 April 2025.

Saturday, August 26, 2023 – All-level dance Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek in Newark, Delaware – Joint Dance with DC Lambda Squares

Saturday, October 21, 2023 – Plus and Advance with a C1 Star Tip – Doren McBroom 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, December 2, 2023 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Betsy Gotta 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm The Merion Meeting House (Meeting House needs to be confirmed.)

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

Saturday, December 7, 2024 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Caller and Space TBD

April 2025 Fly-in: Callers: Jeremy Butler, Vic Ceder, Don Moger April 4-6, 2025

Open Houses and Classes

Mainstream Class and C1 Workshop with Betsy Gotta beginning September 19, 2023.

Plus Class and Advanced Class with Mark Franks beginning September 19, 2023.

Open House Tuesday, August 22, 2023 – Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Lutheran Church

Open House Tuesday, September 12, 2023 – Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Lutheran Church

FYI Notes

- 1) Betsy Gotta will be away for the second week of classes, September 26, 2023. Due to the difficulty in finding a substitute caller, Mark Franks has agreed to calling the Mainstream Class and the Advanced Class that evening as both programs require the entire class year to complete. As such, Mark will be the only caller that evening. There will be no Plus or C1 that evening.
- 2) Mark Franks will be away for the third week of classes, October 3, 2023. Dane Bragg has been hired to fill in for him on that date.
- 3) At the board's request from the last meeting, I communicated with both callers about designating the 5th Tuesday of the month as club night where no classes would be taught and only dancing would be available. Both were opposed to the idea as they need every available class moment they have to get through their respective programs, specifically Mainstream and Advanced. The committee agrees with their assessment. If more dance time is needed (and it is), more dances should be held but on a different night.

Major Highlights of 2023 IAGSDC Delegates' Meeting in Ottawa, ON

Projected 2023 Income:	\$4500
Projected 2023 Expenses:	\$7130
Project 2023 Loss:	\$2630

Projected 2024 Income:	\$3900
Projected 2024 Expenses:	\$6510
Projected 2023 Loss:	\$2610

Net Assets (as of 31 Dec, 2022):	\$56,774
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No increase in dues for 2024 (\$1.00 per member).
Independence Squares was recognized as one of 3 clubs to hold a Banner Dance in 2023. One of 4 for 2022 and 2023.
Trademark registration of IAGSDC Logo has been renewed.

Current total membership is 1506 individuals, representing approximately a 13% decline from pre-Covid number.

We've lost a handful of clubs (exact number is uncertain as we haven't been able to contact some), but around 10 clubs (including IS) report membership numbers that have held steady or actually increased since the shutdown.

Kris Jensen received the Chairman's award from CALLERLAB.

Upcoming Conventions:

2024 – Durham, NC
2025 – San Francisco, CA (bid submitted and accepted this year)
2026 – expression of interest from Salt Lake City, UT
2027- open
2028 – open
2029 – expression of interest from Palm Springs, CA

Election of Officers:

Kent Tolleson (outgoing Secretary) and Brad Bruner (outgoing Club Liaison) both declined to run for re-election

Current Chair (Ed Zeigler) and Treasurer (Justin Cranshaw-Lopton) are each entering the second year of 2-year term.

Vice-Chair - Kelly Shortandqueer was re-elected for a 2-year term.

Secretary – Jim Babcock was elected for a 2-year term.

Club Liaison – Joel Smith was elected for a 2-year term.