

**Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting
September 23, 2023 7pm via Zoom**

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

Guests present at the meeting: Arin, Jim B, Linda, Marika, Peg, Will

Secretary (Steve)

A **motion to approve the minutes** as submitted from the August 3rd Independence Squares Board meeting was made and seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

Treasurer (Ron submitted a report.)

Ron presented his report to the board. In addition to his report the Finance Committee approved the requests of three members to pay \$5 instead of \$10 at Independence Squares events. These are the same three individuals who used this accommodation last year.

Ron's suggested changes to our **Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures** document have not yet been recommended by the Finance Committee. We will discuss them at the next board meeting.

Ron made a **motion that club callers and their spouses will be comped for attending any Independence Squares event and that partners of other callers who are working a specific event for us will be comped for their attendance at that event.** Drew seconded. **Passed unanimously.**

Recruitment Committee (Steve did not submit a written report)

Steve reported that things are going well. The open houses went well. We have a large number of new students. The Recruitment Committee will meet in October to evaluate our progress and start planning for next year.

Steve will be stepping down as chair of the committee in June though he is happy to continue serving on the committee as a member.

Vinney mentioned that Cherry Hill Pride cancelled their Pride Festival due to weather and have reminded us of their no refund policy. Some board members feel strongly that we should be pushy about asking that our registration be carried over to 2024.

David B announced that there will be 8 dancers for the UCC Pride Event. Steve encouraged David to solicit interested attendee's names and email addresses. The Recruitment Committee will enter their info into our data bank for use in publicity for next year's open houses.

Health and Safety Procedures (Linda submitted a report)

The HASP Committee met on September 9. The use of air purifiers was discussed. Linda tested out an air purifier donated by Eileen on a Tuesday night and it was not loud or obtrusive. She recommends that we move forward with purchasing larger air purifiers appropriate for our two rooms at the Lutheran Church and the committee will move forward with this task.

Steve made a **motion** that we accept the HASP Committee's first proposal from their report and **no longer require signed waivers**. Ron seconded. **Passed unanimously**.

Ron made a **motion** that we accept the committee's second proposal and **update the stop sign** as specified in the attached report. Steve seconded. **Passed unanimously**.

Regarding the third proposal, Ron agreed to take responsibility, as treasurer, for recording the contact information for nonmembers who attend our events for the purposes of contacting them should we become aware of a possible exposure at one of our events.

Regarding the fourth proposal, David B. made a **motion** that the HASP Committee be given a **\$1000 budget** until June of 2024 to buy supplies recommended by the committee. Steve seconded. **Passed unanimously**.

David B. made a **motion** that we accept the committee's seventh proposal and **update the wording on the club website regarding wearing masks** as specified in the attached report. Vinney seconded. **Passed unanimously**.

The HASP Committee will move forward with evaluating our membership's ability to respond in the case of a medical emergency and their willingness to participate in training in CPR and use of an Automated External Defibrillator. Peg mentioned that there is an AED stationed on the wall of the church around the corner from the men's restroom.

Caller Liaison Committee (Mike and Linda submitted a report)

Linda discussed the report. It is included with these minutes.

Mike and Linda are working diligently to find callers to cover for absences when Mark and Betsy are unable to call on a few Tuesday nights in 2024.

The arrangements for use of the Merion Friends Meeting space for Glitter Ball 2023 are confirmed and the treasurer is aware of our obligation to pay the next installment of our fee to them.

We discussed our August 2023 Summer Splash and agreed that it went well other than the heat.

Steve talked about his effort to have a masked square during the Mainstream and Plus tips. He also recommended that we go ahead and hire Dayle for 2024. About 10 dancers from Chesapeake Squares were at the dance and their president expressed an interest in cosponsoring future Summer Splash events with us and DC Lambda Squares. Linda talked about her efforts to protect the well-being of dancers who had to deal with very high humidity and heat in the hall and emphasized that those conditions are unacceptable for future dances.

The board discussed potential callers for future Summer Splash events and future Glitter Balls.

Everyone agreed that continuing to hire Dayle for Summer Splash but also working Mark Franks into the rotation for Glitter Ball were both good ideas.

Mainstream and Plus Program Representative (Vinney)

Vinney continues 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 (no report)

Publicity (David B)

Dave reported on his discussion with Moss about her ideas for improving the Independence Squares website. Moss feels that the website should be restructured so that it is primarily targeted at potential new students. She also recommends a Frequently Asked Questions page.

The board and Dave are appreciative of Moss's input and will implement some of her ideas as time and know-how allow. In particular we will continue to make sure our "landing page" is specifically useful to potential new students.

Fly-In Committee Report (Ron)

Ron discussed the issue of a dancer who wanted to carry over his registration for two years and he also mentioned that he will be making a scheduled payment to the hotel hosting our 2024 and 2025 Fly-Ins.

Old Business

We had a discussion of inviting current Mainstream class members to our Glitter Ball. Many people emphasized the importance of including our new Mainstream class students in our community as fully as possible. We talked about making them feel special and welcomed at Glitter Ball while also subtly reminding our experienced dancers of the value upcoming dancers have to the continuation of our club. It was suggested that we provide ribbons to the class level dancers to recognize them and identify them to experienced dancers. Ron talked about the importance of making the dancing aimed at those students high quality. He suggested getting the callers a list of the known calls as far in advance as possible and emphasizing the importance of those tips.

We agreed to invite Mainstream students to the 2023 Glitter Ball.

We tabled discussion of inviting Mainstream students to our 2024 Fly-In.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 9:00pm

INDEPENDENCE SQUARES TREASURER'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER 23, 2023

- Income and Expenses. A cumulative profit and loss summary is included with this report.
- New members. Two former club members rejoined the club at the September 19 class.
- Prepaid option. At the September 19 class, we had 17 dancers use the prepaid option including three of the new Mainstream students.
- We are still waiting for completion of the signature card for our account at PNC Bank. We anticipate that this will be completed on Wednesday, September 27, 2023.
- Our next payment to the Langhorne Sheraton for the 2024 Fly-In is due on October 6, 2023, in the amount of \$2400.00. Here is a breakdown of our payment obligations:
 - Deposit of \$1,200.00 by 4/28/23 for 2024
 - Deposit of \$1,200.00 by 4/30/23 for 2025
 - Deposit of \$2,400.00 by 10/6/23 for 2024
 - Deposit of \$2,700.00 by 10/6/24 for 2025
 - Final payment of \$2,400.00 by 3/22/24 for 2024
 - Final payment of \$2,700.00 by 3/21/25 for 2025
- A document containing proposed changes to the “Treasurer and Finance Committee procedures” is enclosed for discussion by the board.

HASP Meeting September 9, 2023 via Zoom

Present: Linda, Peg, Ron, Vinney, Mike, Tim, Bob, Mary Kay, Eileen

Agenda

- (1) Discuss of mask mandate for fall 2023 classes/workshop
- (2) Continuing to track waivers
- (3) First aid kit & air purifiers
- (4) Other topics

DISCUSSION

Waivers: Ron presented this information from Sandi Finch:

Here is the response that I received from my California attorney friend who is a round dance teacher: We don't use a waiver anymore, but we probably should. Not just for covid but for any liability. We used to dance in senior centers that had one on the back of the sign-in sheets. We also used to have a sign posted on the registration desk. Although Covid cases are increasing again with a new variant, California doesn't have the concern other states are starting to have.

A waiver's value is to put people on notice, and to tell the court that you had the concern to do that. It doesn't really protect anyone from being sued. I don't think people read it and I don't think they stop to think before suing you whether they had signed a waiver. In other words, it is a little protection for you.

We do provide hand sanitizer, we do warn when someone in the group has reported Covid exposure and we do tell people to stay home if they are not feeling well. Covid isn't the only risk anymore—RSV for seniors is just as bad. We probably will post a warning sign again.

The HASP Committee's position is to discontinue tracking waivers, and to not track vaccination dates. To reach all who attend our events, we suggest that we update our STOP Sign to indicate acceptance of risk of exposure through dancing in person.

PROPOSAL ONE: No Longer Require Signed Waivers

Independence Squares will no longer require those attending our events to sign a waiver and release of liability, starting in October 2023.

PROPOSAL TWO: Update STOP Sign

Independence Squares will update the STOP Sign

Additionally, we ask that you NOT attend this event if you have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 5 days.

By entering, you acknowledge that you understand the health risk of participating in a community activity such as square dancing and you further acknowledge that you assume that risk. You also acknowledge that you agree to notify Independence Squares if you test positive for COVID-19, or become symptomatic, within 5 days of this event.

PROPOSAL THREE: Collect contact information from attendees at our events.

HASP sees value in keeping track of contact information for all those who attend our events. Independence Squares will continue to collect contact information such as name, square dance club, phone number, email address to be used to:

- To be notified in case of exposure to an infection at an IS event.
- To share information for future dances/events.

PROPOSAL FOUR: Budget

HASP will ask for an annual budget of \$500.00 at the September IS Board meeting to be able make purchases to support the health and safety of those attending our events.

HASP has identified areas that require money to support the health and safety of the IS community, such as purchase of hand sanitizer, masks, air purifiers, and so on.

PROPOSAL FIVE: Air Purifier with HEPA Filter

HASP proposes the use of one or more HEPA-filtered air purifiers in our dance rooms. HASP is researching the purchase of air purifiers to be used during our weekly classes/ workshop. Air purifiers can filter our ultra-fine particles and reduce exposure to airborne illnesses and can help keep COVID-19 and other air-born infections from spreading.

Eileen offered to donate for the club's use her HOLMES AER1 HAP9413

https://www.holmesproducts.com/air-purifiers/tower/holmes-aer1-tower-true-hepa-air-purifier-with-air-ionizer-and-visipure-air-filter-viewing-window-hap9423-uha/SAP_HAP9423UAH2.html

This model can filter the air in a room of 192 square feet, or a room that is 12 feet wide and 16 feet long. We will verify the sizes of the two rooms that we use for our weekly events to add to the research on what air purifier would be appropriate.

HASP recommends that we use the donated air purifier in the food pantry room to see how loud it is, if it generates heat, and how it works. We will check with Betsy and Mark on how they feel about the use of the air purifier. HASP will continue to research, and we will make a proposal on a purchase once we have solid data.

PROPOSAL SIX: First Aid Kit

HASP proposed the purchase of a first-aid kit to keep handy at weekly IS events and dances. IS approved the purchase via email vote. HASP has purchased a kit and will submit the receipt for reimbursement

once the kit arrives.

PROPOSAL SEVEN: Mask Wearing is Supported and Optional

HASP proposes that the text on the IS web site concerning mask wearing be updated.

HASP continues to recommend and support the wearing of masks while dancing, but not mandate mask wearing. IS will continue to make masks available at our events. HASP will continue to monitor the statistics on COVID and continue discussions and make new proposals as the circumstances change.

CURRENT TEXT: Masks: Independence Squares no longer requires dancers to wear face masks during dancing. Mask-wearing is optional, but strongly recommended, for summer dances and in the 2023 fall session of classes. We recommend that people continue to wear masks to help protect ourselves and each other and we will continue to provide masks at our dances and classes. The club respects the decision of any attendee who wishes to wear a face mask.

PROPOSED TEXT: Masks: Independence Squares does not require dancers to wear face masks during dancing. Mask-wearing is optional in the 2023 fall session of classes. We recommend that people wear masks to help protect ourselves and each other and we will continue to make masks available at our events. The club supports the decision of any attendee who wishes to wear a face mask.

HASP considered these sources:

- Continuing low incidence of COVID infections, hospitalization, ICU admissions, and deaths in the greater Philadelphia area;
- CDC has not reinstituted mask mandates as of August 25, 2023;
- Philadelphia School District position: individuals may choose to wear a mask at any time as an additional precaution to protect themselves and others;
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health: risk of contracting the coronavirus locally remains low and people may choose to mask at any time.

Automated External Defibrillator

HASP discussed acquiring and learning how to use an AED, or automated external defibrillator, which is used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. HASP will research the laws and regulations on the use of AEDs in Pennsylvania, and costs of instruments, training, and certification. HASP will check to see if the Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion, the church where we dance, has an AED already in place.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

HASP discussed pursuing CPR training for those who are interested and willing to provide aid to attendees in need at our events. Considerations include costs for initial and continuing training, legal requirements and liabilities, who would be trained and certified.

If we do acquire and learn how to use an AED and / or train people on CPR, we must consider how to inform people that while we have trained CPR and AED providers, the person in medical distress may deny treatment and how we would obtain and track permission to pursue or deny treatment.

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – September 2023

The information below is accurate as of Thursday, September 21, 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 October 2023 through April 2025.

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

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

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

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 not be 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) Betsy Gotta will not be available on January 9, 2024 and again on March 26, 2024. Attempts are being made to hire substitute callers. When a caller is contracted, the board will be notified.