

**Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting**  
**March 21, 2024 7pm via Zoom**

**Board members present at the meeting: David B, Dave T, Drew, Ron, Scot, Steve and Vinney (who left halfway through the meeting after the Mainstream and Plus Program Representative Report)**

**Guests present at the meeting: Jim B, Linda, Mike, Tim and Will**

**Secretary's Report (Steve)**

Steve made a **motion** that the board **accept the minutes** from the **January 17, 2024** board meeting as submitted. Ron seconded the motion. Motion **passed unanimously**.

Earlier in February the Recruitment Committee submitted a proposal via email for a dance on Penn's Campus on April 14. After a discussion via email Steve made a motion that we accept the recruitment committee's proposal as outlined below..

**Independence Squares will host a recruitment event at the Platt Performing Arts House on Penn's campus on Sunday afternoon, April 14 or Sunday afternoon, April 28. The price is \$50 per hour so we would be charged \$150 for the time to set up and hold the event.**

**The event will run from 2 to 4pm or 3 to 5pm. The format of the event would be the same as our summer open houses. We will charge \$5 for entry.**

Ron seconded the motion. That **motion passed** with 6 board members voting in favor and Scot abstaining.

**Treasurer's Report (Ron submitted a report)**

Ron's report is attached to these minutes. Ron discussed his report.

In addition, Ron mentioned that the interest we made on our CD helped our bottom line quite a bit but interest rates have gone down so we can't count on that income in the future.

He also mentioned that a CD reached maturity recently. The Finance Committee put some of that money into a new CD that will mature in six months and will make decisions about investing more money after the accounting for Fly-In 2024 is completed.

Ron reiterated that, based on his analysis of the figures, Independence Squares is making money on its prepay option for Tuesday nights. A number of people are taking advantage of the prepay discount but nevertheless miss a substantial number of class nights. (In other words, they would have been better off paying individually for Tuesday nights but Independence Squares benefitted from them not choosing that option.)

Vinney raised the question about why we separate money raised at the Fly-In that comes from registrations and that made from other fundraising. Several people at the meeting encouraged Ron to do the accounting as he sees fit and not to rely on past practice. In particular they encouraged Ron to avoid calling the money raised from registrations "Fly-In money" and money raised through other means at the Fly-In "Club money". Ron agreed to avoid that terminology.

**Publicity Committee (David B did not submit a written report)**

David B discussed his contact with the community reporter at the Philadelphia Inquirer who wants to do a video feature on the Independence Squares community. Everybody present was very enthusiastic about that prospect and agreed that we can easily notify the club before filming that attendees will be filmed if they come on the pre-announced date that the Inquirer is there unless they make a special effort to stay off camera.

#### **Recruitment Committee (Steve did not submit a written report.)**

Steve mentioned that there have been two Recruitment Committee meetings since the last board meeting. Steve reported that everything is on track for a great open house/recruitment event on Penn's campus on April 14.

Steve also mentioned that PhillyPride365 ([phillypride365.org](http://phillypride365.org)) is having their Pride March and Festival on June 2. The website says that the event is "presented by Galaei". He said that the committee would probably come to the board at the next board meeting and ask for \$150 for a table at that event. Based on concerns of a few of those present, Steve agreed to contact the organizers and ask them if the festival and march are as inclusive as possible. In particular are law enforcement officers who are LGBTQ+ welcome to participate? He will also enquire if they have any overarching statement of purpose or a mission statement.

#### **Mainstream and Plus Program Representative (Vinney)**

Vinney mentioned that we have lost about half the students that started out in September. But we still have a square of enthusiastic students. Vinney has reached out to those students that didn't continue with the class (and in fact most of them touched base with him before discontinuing.) Those students primarily had scheduling conflicts and were not turned off by anything having to do with the club.

Dave B brought up a concern that Mainstream students aren't told how long the class lasts and that graduation is in May. Steve mentioned that this is partly by design. Those present had a good conversation about how to be upfront with students about the fact that in order to dance at dances and other clubs they must complete the full Mainstream curriculum without scaring them off with the daunting reality of having to attend 8 months of classes. At least two people suggested that part of the solution is to tell people that we want them to come for as long as they are enjoying themselves. There is no expectation that they stay for the whole term. We hope they will but we value their presence even if they don't end up graduating.

Vinney said that he would send an email to the Mainstream students clarifying that the last day of classes will be May 21.

#### **Nominating Committee (Scot)**

Scot has not found anybody else to be on the Nominating Committee nor has anyone yet offered to run for office.

#### **Bylaws Committee (Dave B submitted the Committee's proposal.)**

Dave's proposal is attached to these minutes. Dave presented the proposals of the Committee. After a discussion the final language for the proposal that will be presented to the general membership ended up as included in the second version of Dave's proposal. It is also attached.

#### **Health and Safety Procedures (Linda submitted a report)**

Linda discussed the contents of the HASP Committee report which is included in these minutes.

#### **Caller Liaison Committee (Mike and Linda submitted a report)**

Mike discussed the Committee's report that is attached to these minutes. In particular he pointed our attention to the fact that Mark will be absent an additional Tuesday in May and that the graduation dance will be held on May 21.

The Committee requested that the board outline the dances that it would like to see the Caller Liaison Committee find callers for through the end of 2025. Steve expressed his opinion that there should be a dance on a weekend in October 2024. He hoped the Committee would be able to move forward with a dance in October and that we can talk about dances in 2025 at the next board meeting.

Steve made a **motion that the board accept the Committee's proposal for the first day of classes and for the slate of classes and workshops starting in September 2024.** Dave T seconded the motion. All six board members then present voted **unanimously** for the motion.

Mike said he would finalize the contracts for 2024-2025 with Mark and Betsy.

#### **Fly-In Committee Report (Ron submitted a report)**

Ron discussed the report that he submitted from the committee and which is attached.

In particular Ron mentioned the FAQ document as well as the handbook for new attendees to our Fly-In created by Arin and Marika that are both now posted in the Fly-In section of our website.

Ron made a **motion that the board accept Gabe's proposal outlined in the Committee report to provide massages during the Fly-In.** Scot seconded the motion. The motion **passed unanimously.**

Ron discussed his plan to save a lot of money on printing by submitting a large order to an online printing service. To get free shipping and handling he will piggyback the printing needed for the Fly-In with other flyers that the club will need for future 2024 Club events. In order to facilitate making the print order as large as possible the board definitively set the time of Glitter Ball 2024 at 3 to 6:30 so that the flyers for that event can be included. Ron made a **motion that the Fly-In Committee be given permission to move forward with its plans as outlined in its report to make a large print order including Fly-In materials and flyers for future Club events.** Steve seconded the motion and the motion **passed unanimously.**

#### **35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Report (Linda submitted a report)**

Linda discussed her report which is attached to these minutes and the board offered Linda support in her endeavors.

Ron made a **motion** that **the board grant the Anniversary Dance Committee a budget of \$400**. That money will be used for expenses outlined in the report as well as food, plates, etc. Dave T seconded the motion. The motion **passed unanimously**.

### **New Business**

Steve mentioned that he is going to work with Jim B of Times Squares to plan a second joint Wheel Around New Jersey dance in January or February of 2025.

Dave B mentioned that Arin and Marika are planning a club outing to the Philadelphia Museum of Art on a Friday night in May.

Steve made a **motion** that **the annual meeting be on June 4 via Zoom at 7pm**. Dave T seconded the motion and the motion **passed unanimously**.

Several people affirmed Dave T's suggestion for the volunteer of the year. We will make the decision firm at a future meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned at approximately 9:25pm**

# Independence Squares Treasurer's Report March 21, 2024

A fiscal year-to-date Profit and Loss summary is enclosed for review

Net income for the year, not including Fly-In income and expenses, is in the red at a net loss of \$2090.87. The breakdown is as follows:

- Tuesday classes: Loss of \$219.84
- Special dances: Loss of \$357.66
- Open houses: Loss of \$110.00
- General: Loss of \$1403.37

More specific information is as follows:

- The CPR/AED training resulted in a net monetary loss of \$1232.98, as follows:
  - Paid registration fees: \$525.00
  - Hall rental: \$85.00
  - Red Cross fees: \$1672.98
- The February Kent Forrester dance resulted in a net loss of \$281.88, as follows:
  - Admission fees: \$120.00
  - Caller fee: \$300.00
  - Flyers: \$16.88 (this was for both the Feb and March dances and rightfully should be split between the two. For simplicity, I just kept it in Feb's numbers)

For March, we will incur another loss of \$150.00 for the Kent Forrester special dance, as follows:

- Admission fees: \$155.00
- 50/50 proceeds: \$80.00
- Caller fee: \$300.00
- Hall rental: \$85.00

The club is obligated to make a payment to the Fly-In venue on March 22 in the amount of \$2400.00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ron Rumble, Treasurer

## Independence Squares Proposed Bylaws Changes for 2024

### Members at Large

Purpose: To drop references to the program books, as they are no longer available, and to eliminate the extra reference to retention, as it's already discussed in section 6

#### 4.4 E. Members-at-Large (Program Representatives)

1. To act as ombudsmen for the concerns of their respective programs and to report the outcome of the Board Meetings to their programs on the issues that concern them.
2. Shall be liaisons with the membership of the relevant programs at lessons, dances and other activities.
3. Shall sustain open channels of communication with dancers, teachers and the Board.
4. Shall coordinate the meeting and greeting of dancers at their respective classes and/or workshops.
5. Shall be responsible for maintaining a list of participants in each program for the following purposes:
  - ~~a. Making Dance Booklets available for each class program.~~
  - ~~b.~~ Communication between the Caller and the Board of Directors for determination of who will receive a certificate of graduation from each class.
  - ~~c.~~ Ordering club badges.
  - ~~d. Retention purposes.~~
6. Shall be in charge of coordination of retention efforts for dancers.
7. Each of these members at large shall be elected by the entire membership of The Organization.
8. Shall exercise the powers and perform such duties as are usual to this office or as delegated by the President or at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

### Publicity Chair

Purpose: to rename the position and update the description to more accurately depict its responsibilities

#### 4.4 F. ~~Publicity Chair~~ Communications Coordinator

1. Shall be responsible for all external correspondence for The Organization, including oversight and maintenance of ~~all of~~ The Organization's ~~social media accounts~~ online presence and email distribution.
2. Shall oversee dissemination of information pertaining to club activities to the wider community.
3. Shall perform other duties as are usual to this office, or as delegated by the President or at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

### Signatures on Checks:

Purpose: to update the language to include electronic authorizations, allowing the board to use electronic forms of payment.

### 8.3 Signatures

All checks, contracts, demands for money, and notes of the Organization, shall be signed or otherwise authorized by two Officers designated by the Board of Directors.

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### Signatures on Checks:

Purpose: to update the language to include electronic authorizations, allowing the board to use electronic forms of payment. Removed “demands for money” and “notes of the Organization” as their definition is unclear.

### 8.3 Signatures

All ~~checks, disbursements of funds and , contracts, demands for money, and notes of the Organization,~~ shall be signed or otherwise authorized by two Officers designated by the Board of Directors.

HASP REPORT TO INDEPENDENCE SQUARES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

March 2024 Meeting

New Proposals

- HASP has no new proposals at this time.

CPR / AED Class

- 19 people participated and earned Certificates of Completion from Red Cross after having been instructed in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the use of a portable automatic external defibrillator, and what to do if someone is choking.

COVID Tracking

- HASP is tracking two trends for Philadelphia County:
  - COVID incidence in patients who are hospitalized.
  - COVID incidence in patients who are admitted to intensive care units.

Current community risk level for Philadelphia County is LOW.

New Hospitalizations with COVID	1/27/202 4	2/3/202 4	2/10/202 4	2/17/202 4	2/24/202 4	3/2/202 4
PA-Philadelphia County	128.0	113.0	103.8	99.2	93.1	77.0

ICU Admissions With COVID	1/27/202 4	2/3/202 4	2/10/202 4	2/17/202 4	2/24/202 4	3/2/202 4
PA-Philadelphia County	11.9	11.5	10.7	13	9.2	8.8

# Caller Liaison Report

## Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – March 19, 2024

The information below is accurate as of Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 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.

Discussions were held with the callers and members of the Caller Liaison Committee and the following recommendations are made for classes beginning in September 2024.

- 1) Classes would begin on September 24, 2024, two weeks after the last Open House as the callers are unavailable until that date due to existing travel plans.
- 2) Betsy would call the Mainstream class and a C1 workshop. There are insufficient numbers of dancers to begin a new C1 class.
- 3) Mark would call a Mainstream workshop and an Advanced workshop. The Mainstream workshop would provide the newly graduated Mainstream class an opportunity to hone their skills. The Advanced workshop would provide the newly graduated Advanced dancers to hone their skills as well.
- 4) In January 2025, the Mainstream workshop would become a Plus class if there were sufficient interest to do so. If not, the Mainstream workshop would continue.

### Dances Through April 2026

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place April 2024 through March 2026.

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

Saturday, June 1, 2024 – IS 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dance – Betsy Gotta Mainstream through C1

Time 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm The doors will open at 5:30 pm to view the Anniversary display.

Saturday, August 24, 2024 – Summer Splash All-level dance Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek – Potential Joint Dance with DC Lambda Squares and Chesapeake Squares

Saturday, December 7, 2024 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge – Merion Friends

Meeting House

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

Saturday, December 6, 2025 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Mark Franks – Merion Friends

Meeting House

March 2026 Fly-in: Callers: Sandie Bryant, Ted Lizotte, Chris Phillips March 13-15, 2026 TBD

### Open Houses and Classes

Sunday, April 14, 2024 – Open House Howard Richman 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Platt House Lobby

Tuesday, July 23, 2024 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Tuesday, August 27, 2024 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

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 not be available on March 26, 2024. Mark Franks will not be available on April 16, 2024 and again on May 14, 2024. Betsy and Mark will cover for each other, so no substitute is required. The Mainstream and Advanced Classes will be the programs called. This suggestion was accepted by the board and is only for classes through May 2024.
- 2) Graduation dance should be scheduled for May 21, the last day of the semester as Mark Franks will be out the previous week.

# Independence Squares Fly-In Committee Report March 21, 2024

- As of 3/18/24 we have the following:
  - 116 attendees
  - 144 room nights booked
  - \$10,380 in registration fees
- A budget for the 2024 Fly-In has been drafted and is attached.
- Final hotel payment of \$2400.00 is due on March 22, 2024.
- New documents created for this year's Fly-In include a Fly-In Q&A section on our website and "A Guide for New Attendees", both created by Arin and Marika.
- A flyer for the 2025 Fly-In has been created and is attached.
- A proposal has been submitted by Gabe, one of our MS students, to provide massages at this year's Fly-In, pending approval by the board. Permission of the board to provide this service at the Fly-In is requested. Details as follows:
  - Gabe is a licensed massage therapist, and a copy of their license has been provided
  - A consent and release form, to be signed by each client, has been shared with the committee
  - A sign-up sheet has been drafted, with room for 18 time slots running Saturday morning and afternoon, and Sunday
  - Time slots are 15 minutes each
  - Cost will be \$15.00, payable by cash or Venmo
  - A flyer has been drafted and Gabe will take care of printing them
  - The committee is working on a plan to provide some privacy, if possible, although not guaranteed
- At a previous meeting, the committee agreed to make a proposal to the board for the purchase of a printer since Casey is unable to bring her printer any longer. After doing research, it was decided to forego this option due to the cost. The committee would instead like to go ahead and print the necessary documents through an online printer that Ron has used in the past. This would be supplemented by Ron bringing his printer to the Fly-In for Casey to use in order to print last minute items. The online printer can print what we need for about 12.6 cents per page and if we have an order of \$125 or more, shipping is free. We are proposing that in order to get to that price range, we build an online order that would include the flyers that the club will need for many of the upcoming events of this year. That would include flyers for the Summer Splash, the open houses, the Penn event, the Anniversary dance, and the Glitter Ball. In order to do this, the board will need to finalize the details for each of these events. We believe that the only details left to finalize are the times for the Glitter Ball and the start date for our classes in the fall of this year. The committee is asking the board for permission to submit this print job and to finalize the details necessary in order to do so. The cost of this job would be charged to the appropriate categories.

Report to Board on 35th Anniversary Dance & Display  
March 21, 2024

Planning is continuing for the Independence Squares 35th Anniversary Dance & Display. This event will be held on June 1, 2024 at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion, 2111 Sansom St., Philadelphia.

Steps in process:

- (1) Gathering names of people who have been involved with Independence Squares since 1989 by reviewing old club directories.
- (2) Gathering paper documents on history of IS, including contracts, boards of directors minutes, old newsletters.
- (3) Gathering photographs.
- (4) Gathering club banners.
- (5) Gathering tee shirts, club shirts, bandanas, vests, polo shirts.
- (6) Planning space arrangements for the dance hall and for the display hall at the event.
- (7) Space has been reserved and Betsy Gotta has been hired as our caller.
- (8) Budget has been developed.
- (9) Email has been drafted.
- (10) Photos are being selected for display and enlargement.
- (11) Fun and games are being developed, such as
  - Questions and answers
  - Name that call: say the definition and have people guess the call. Name that call using Tamination definitions <https://www.tamtwirlers.org/taminations/>
  - Scavenger Hunt: put hints up on the display to encourage people to look at all the displays; winner who succeeds in the hunt gets a prize.
  - Map with pins for locations of our fly-ins
  - Map with pins for locations of our classes

Roles that have been assigned:

- a. Treasurer will be Mike Rutkowski.
- b. Décor and historical item management will be committee led by Linda.
- c. MC will be Peg.
  - i. MC will welcome people to the event and call out some people who we have not seen in a while and introduce callers.
  - ii. Announce how to use the parking stamp for reduced parking next door
  - iii. Introduce the outline of the evening: visit display hall, dance, break, dance
  - iv. Give out prizes at the break for quizzes
  - v. Announce winner of 50-50

Roles that need to be assigned:

1. Publicity.
2. 50-50 raffle ticket seller(s).
3. Get sheet cake.

PROPOSED BUDGET

We are asking for a budget of \$300.00 to cover the costs of supplies for the event.

SUPPLIES	ITEM COST	COMBINE D COST
Printing Flyers ??	\$50.00	\$50.00
Pack of 24 wooden easels 5 inches high <a href="https://www.amazon.com/Art-Supply-Natural-Business-Display/dp/B00NLNRV6O/ref=sr_1_">https://www.amazon.com/Art-Supply-Natural-Business-Display/dp/B00NLNRV6O/ref=sr_1_</a>	\$20.00 each; need 50 easels for tabletop display	\$40.00
Floor Easel (buy one, use the Stop Sign easel) <a href="https://www.amazon.com/AmazonBasics-Instant-Adjustable-Collapsible-Supports/dp/B07P8TXWYH/ref=sr_1_7">https://www.amazon.com/AmazonBasics-Instant-Adjustable-Collapsible-Supports/dp/B07P8TXWYH/ref=sr_1_7</a>	\$14.12	\$14.12
Command Variety Pack, Picture Hanging Strips, Wire Hooks and Utility Hooks, Damage Free Hanging Variety Pack for Up to 19 Items, 1 Kit. Use to hang banners and tee-shirt lines. <a href="https://www.amazon.com/Command-General-Purpose-Variety-17231-ES/dp/B07712H557">https://www.amazon.com/Command-General-Purpose-Variety-17231-ES/dp/B07712H557</a>	\$17.59	\$17.59
Photo printouts	5 x 7 are \$1.04 each at Shutterfly; print 50 for display	\$52.00
Photo Enlargement 16 inches x 20 inches at Shutterfly <a href="https://www.shutterfly.com/selectprints/?printSize=16x20#/">https://www.shutterfly.com/selectprints/?printSize=16x20#/</a>	\$20 each; print 2 photos: one of first convention in NYC and one more of a group shot at a more recent convention	\$40.00
Prizes	3 prizes @ \$25.00 each	\$75.00
		\$288.71

## PROPOSED INVITATION LIST

We plan to invite over 160 people that have been involved with IS in the past and for whom we have contact information. We know that the contact information might not be correct or current for all the people on the guest list, and we know most people will not attend (they live too far away, don't have time, don't want to come for whatever reason) so we can hope some people from this list will attend. But we want to invite as many people as we can. I have a list of 58 people for whom I have no contact information. We will go through this list to see if we can find a way to contact them.

We will also invite all those who are currently involved with the club: current membership, those in the current Mainstream class, and those who are currently attending our classes/workshops.

## DRAFT EMAIL INVITATION

Points to keep in mind:

- We should send the invitation out **after** the 2024 Fly-In.
- Email should be sent by the IS Board; if it comes from me, my name and address won't be recognized by almost everyone on the list and will probably end up in spam.

- There is no expectation that information from 1989 to present is going to be correct. We should expect some emails to not go through.
- This list does not include the current Mainstream class dancers. They will have to be invited separately. The IS board has the current roster.
- Send email invitation to neighboring clubs, particularly New York Times Squares, Chesapeake Squares, and Lambda Squares

Dear present and past Independence Squares Club Members and Friends:

Come one, come all! Independence Squares Club is having an anniversary! Our club was accepted into IAGSDC in 1989 so this makes us 35 years old!

We will have an Anniversary Dance & Display, including square dancing, with the illustrious Betsy Gotta, the first caller to call for us besides our founder, Allan Laufer. Programs will be Mainstream through C1. Hopefully we will have our newest members of Independence Squares there (having just graduated in May!) as well as many of our long-term members and friends who have been here through it all. For those of you who want to dos-a-dos and allemande left Betsy will get you back on your toes in no time. Even if square dancing is not your thing anymore, come anyway to see all the displays, delight in our shared history, and catch up with old friends!

We will have a photo montage dating back to the first days, a display of the history of our club and of our fly-ins, and a display of our banners, and an array of tee shirts, club shirts and vests. And plenty of other memorabilia will be there for perusing and reminiscing! There will be games, prizes, and surprises galore! Doors will be opening at 5:30 for the displays to be viewed and to give you all time to re-connect and socialize with each other.

So dust off your dancing shoes and join us!

Date: June 1, 2024

Display Opens: 5:30 pm and will remain open all evening.

Dancing runs: 6:30 pm– 9:30 pm

Location: Lutheran Church, 2111 Sansom St., Philadelphia, PA 19103

Parking: There is a parking garage immediately next door with reduced parking

Thank you and see you soon!

The Board of Independence Squares

Philadelphia's LGBTQ+ Square Dance Club – Member of the IAGSDC

<https://independencesquares.org/wp/classes-2/>