

Minutes from the Independence Squares Annual Meeting of Members

June 4, 2024 7pm via Zoom

Board members present at the meeting: David B, Dave T, Drew, Ron, Scot, Steve and Vinney
It was determined that the meeting could proceed as we had a quorum. There are 63 members and 21 are needed for a quorum.

Approval of Last Year's Minutes

A **motion** was made and seconded that the membership **accept the minutes from the June 6, 2023 Annual Meeting** as submitted. There was a discussion about whether or not there were people at the meeting who were not members. It was clarified that nonmembers did receive the link to the meeting and that any non members at the meeting were on their honor not to vote for or against the motion on the table. The vote was called and Peg W counted 24 votes in favor of the motion. **The motion passed.**

President's Statement

Drew thanked all those in attendance for participating at the annual meeting. He thanked the board for their help and support. He congratulated our graduating Mainstream class. He asserted that the club is in very good shape. We had an excellent Mainstream class, great participation and members who stepped up by volunteering in many capacities.

Explanation of the Proposed Bylaws Changes

David B explained the rational for the proposed bylaw changes. The proposed bylaw changes are included with these minutes.

Linda B asked if all contracts must be signed or otherwise authorized by two board members. Ron answered that indeed all contracts must be thus approved. In particular caller contracts are signed by two board members.

Ron also explained that his Quickbooks software has a feature allowing him to attach documents to each expenditure. Thus, within the financial software that the club uses, there is a physical record of the authorization for every disbursement.

Voting for Board Members for the 2024-2025 term and for the proposed bylaw changes.

Drew directed members to check their email inboxes and to follow the link to vote. Chris D helped those having trouble finding the link. Everyone was able to vote successfully. 34 people had voted within a few minutes of Drew's direction.

Treasurer's Report

Ron spoke in detail about the club's profits and losses. The short story is that the club had a very good year financially in large part due to the success of the 2024 Philadelphia Freedom Fly-In. Interest

income from high yield certificates of deposit also helped our bottom line. This income is not sustainable as interest rates will come down at some point.

Ron spoke about the institution of our joint dance agreements with sister clubs when we have a joint dance. He pointed out how the agreements facilitate the running of such cohosted events and protect all parties involved. Such an agreement was used for the Independence Squares/Times Squares Wheel Around NJ joint dance and another is being used for our upcoming Summer Splash joint dance with DC Lambda Squares and Chesapeake Squares. We will continue to use these agreements moving forward.

Ron mentioned Independence Squares accommodations for dancers who have a financial hardship. He also mentioned the generosity of club members who anonymously donated memberships, Phillies tickets and Fly-In registrations to other members who were not as financially comfortable as themselves.

Report from the Health and Safety Committee Report

Linda B recognized the members of the HASP Committee and invited others to join. She spoke about the rational, initiatives and other work of the committee. Some of the highlights are below. Linda encouraged dancers to speak to members of the committee about any issues that they are having. She stressed that they will work together with the dancer to find a solution.

March
2023 RTD becomes HASP

Return to Dance Committee was renamed as Health and Safety Protocols (HASP) to reflect the larger focus of the committee; it is no longer solely focused on the decision as to whether to return to dancing during the COVID epidemic.

March
2023 STOP Sign

RTD proposes that we post signs reminding people to sanitize their hands between tips: STOP Sign

March
2023 Sanitizer

Sanitizer dispensers will made available every dance and class and at fly-in

March
2023 Fly-In Protocols

Peg as head of RTD committee met with Ron as former head of RTD to draft a list of points for the current RTD committee to consider concerning the Fly-in and COVID protocols questions

April 2023 COVID Mask Mandate Survey

HASP sent out a survey of the IS community to ask about the COVID mask mandate

April 2023 Mask Mandate

HASP proposes to the board that we continue the mask mandate through the graduation dance on May 23, 2023 and make mask-wearing optional, but recommended, for summer dances and in the 2023 fall session of classes.

April 2023 Weekly Announcements

HASP stopped the weekly announcements for COVID awareness

April 2023 Web Site Updated

Language about COVID vaccinations was updated on IS website and our protocols

April 2023 Mask Mandate

We dropped the mask mandate and still recommended wearing masks while dancing.

June 2023 Vaccination Requirement

HASP proposes that as of June 2023, Independence Squares drop all requirements for vaccinations and boosters and stop tracking proof of vaccinations and boosters of all dancers, callers, and guests at our classes, dances, Fly-Ins, and events. HASP recommends that all dancers, callers, and guests consult with their medical practitioners and obtain all vaccinations and / or boosters that are deemed by them to be applicable to their medical circumstances, including COVID boosters when they are available.

June 2023 COVID Protocols

HASP recommends mask-wearing and hand-sanitizing and / or hand washing between tips.

June 2023 Ventilation

HASP recommends ensuring adequate ventilation (when possible) in our dance spaces. We installed 2 HEPA filter air purifiers at every weekly class.

January
2024 COVID Protocols

HASP recommends IS community members get vaccinated; access treatments that are available for flu and COVID-19; use testing; use masking, physical distancing, washing hands, and improving airflow in the places where people live and work can provide an additional layer of protection.

January
2024 Mask Encouragement

HASP encouraged the wearing of masks during dancing while the trends are increasing by passing out a written statement to encourage wearing masks during this time and making an announcement during the mid-class break. HASP currently is not recommending a return to mandatory masking during classes and dances.

February
2024 Red Cross 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.

March
2024 Positive COVID Test

HASP continued our protocols of asking people to not attend our dances, classes, or events with 4 or 5 days following a positive covid test.

April – June
2024 HASP has had no pressing issues to deal with.

Fly In Report

Ron spoke in detail about the success of the 2024 Fly-In and about the planning towards Independence Squares' Fly-Ins in 2025 and 2026.

Volunteer of the Year Award

Dave T presented this award to a member whose dedication to promoting and improving Independence Squares has gone above and beyond anyone's expectation. This year's recipient is **Linda B.** Dave enumerated Linda's significant and comprehensive contributions to the club over the years and especially over the last year. In particular he praised her work on the Health and Safety Protocols Committee, her work on bringing a very successful CPR and AED training to our club and her work organizing and throwing a tremendous 35th Anniversary party.

Results of the election and the approval of the proposed bylaws changes

Chris D reported that 35 members voted. Everybody who was nominated to the board was elected. The bylaws changes were approved unanimously.

New Business

Linda suggested that it was time for a new club tee shirt. Eric K volunteered to generate some ideas.

Comments from the new Club President

Scot thanked all the board members and the committee members. He looks forward to working with everyone in the upcoming year. He reminded the members that we are not only a square dance club but also a social club and forging connections inside and outside the dance hall makes us stronger.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10.