

**Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting**  
**April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, 7:00 p.m.**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Dave B., Marika, Peg, Ron, Steve, Vinney

**Board Members Absent:** Sarah

**Guests in Attendance:** Arin, Dave T., Deb, Helena, Linda, Mike

*Secretary's Report - Sarah/Dave*

**Dave B. made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

*2025-2026 Class/Workshop Schedule*

The Board discussed possibilities for the class schedule for 2025-2026. Mark, Marika, and Steve submitted written proposals. No decision was made. David T. suggested that he and Peg poll Advanced/Challenge dancers for their opinions.

*Treasurer's Report – Ron*

Ron went over the cumulative summary and the Treasurer's report. The written report is attached to these minutes. He also went over the 2025 Fly-In profit and loss. Ron noted that the profit from this year's slightly exceeded the profit from last year's even though the hotel cost was \$1,000 greater. The Board thanked Ron and the Fly-In Committee for their hard work. Thirty dancers attended one or both sessions of the Spring Fling combo dance.

*Finance Committee Report – Ron*

Ron presented the Finance Committee Report. The written report is attached to these minutes. The committee is recommending that the Joint Dance Agreement be changed from "All contracts are to be signed by all co-sponsoring clubs and a completed copy of each contract shall be provided by Independence Squares to each club" to "A completed copy of all venue and caller contracts shall be provided by Independence Squares to each club." This would reduce the time spent on making sure all parties have signed each contract.

**Ron made a motion to amend the Joint Dance Agreement as outlined above. Dave B. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Ron made a motion to approve the Finance Committee's recommendation to open three new Certificates of Deposit (CDs) as listed in the report. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

The Finance Committee recommended that dues for the 2025-2026 fiscal year remain \$45 per member.

**Ron made a motion to approve the dues for 2025-2026 fiscal year at \$45 per member. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Announcements will be made to the club about paying dues before the annual meeting. The Board will determine the price of dances and Tuesday night classes later.

Ron presented a proposed budget for the 2026 Fly-In and an operating budget for 2025-2026, which the Finance Committee approved.

**Ron made a motion for the Board to accept the 2026 Fly-In budget as presented. Dave B. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Ron made a motion for the Board to accept the club operating budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026 as presented. Marika seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

The Board discussed two recommended changes to the by-laws. Recommendation #1 states that members who share the responsibility of an elected office shall not be permitted to jointly sign contracts or approve the disbursement of funds. The Board added a clause to restrict members who are in a personal relationship, such as a familial or romantic relationship, from jointly signing or disbursing funds as well.

**Ron made a motion to accept Recommendation #1 as amended. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Recommendation #2 would reduce the number of signers on the financial account to a minimum of two. There were no questions or concerns.

**Ron made a motion to accept Recommendation #2 as presented in the report. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### *Job Fair Discussion – Linda*

There was a discussion about Linda's idea for a job fair where members of the club can learn about what the various committees do. There will be presentations at the annual meeting via Zoom, and there will be a job fair at the member appreciation dance in June.

**At this point, everyone but the Board and Mike left.**

#### *By-law Change Recommendation – Steve*

Steve will submit a written proposal for a change to the by-laws to no longer require the club to have a paper ballot for the annual meeting.

*Fly-In Report – Ron*

The written report is attached to these minutes. Ron did not deliver a report verbally due to lack of time. He will email the Board about some measures that need to be voted on before the next Board meeting.

Ron will send out an email to the whole club about dues. Steve and David B. will send out an announcement about the Annual Meeting. Sarah will send another email with the nominees and the proposed changes to the by-laws around May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Paulos  
Secretary, Independence Squares

## **Independence Squares Treasurer's Report**

### **April 23, 2025**

Attached is the March 2025 month-end financial summary.

Items of note are as follows:

- We had a one-year CD come due on April 18, 2025, with a maturity amount of \$15,749.98. The Finance Committee has discussed our cash position and has recommendations for the board in its report of April 23, 2025, to be discussed at this board meeting.
- T-shirt accounting (through 4/20/25):
  - Income: \$780.00
  - Cost of t-shirts: \$739.54
  - PayPal fees: \$9.84
    - Net income: \$30.62

[Note: This matter is now closed and will no longer appear in monthly reports]
- 2025 Fly-In accounting
  - Net income from the 2025 Fly-In, as previously reported to the Board, is \$5593.57. A full accounting is attached.
- Spring Fling accounting
  - The profit/loss for our April 19, 2025 Spring Fling is as follows:
    - 30 dancers attended one or both sessions
    - Total dance admission fees: \$370.00
    - 50/50 proceeds: \$96.00
    - Caller fee: \$450.00
    - Venue fee: \$90.00
    - PayPal fees: \$1.24
    - Flyer printing: \$3.84
      - Net loss: \$79.08

Respectfully submitted,  
Ron R

## **Independence Squares Finance Committee Report**

### **April 23, 2025**

A Finance Committee meeting was held via Zoom on April 18, 2025. In attendance were Ron, Dave B, and Steve. Topics of discussion and recommendations are as follows:

- **Joint Dance Agreement**

The committee recommends a change to the existing JDA as reflected in the attached document.

- **Proposal to open new CD's**

The committee reviewed the club's cash position and future expenditures, and requests approval for new Certificates of Deposit to be opened with Live Oak Bank as follows:

- \$5,000, 6 month CD
- \$10,000, 9 month CD
- \$20,000, 12 month CD

- **Annual dues**

The committee recommends that dues for the 2025-2026 fiscal year remain at \$45.00 per member. Announcements regarding the fact that dues are payable no later than June 1 are to be made to the club.

- **2025-2026 annual budgets**

Proposed budgets for the 2026 Fly-In and for the club's 2025-2026 operating income & expenses were discussed and approved for recommendation to the Board. Both are attached.

- **Bylaws and procedural changes**

Several changes to the club's Bylaws and "Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures" document were discussed at length. A separate document is attached which outlines the committee's recommendations.

# **Independence Squares Joint Dance Agreement**

This memorandum outlines the roles and responsibilities between Independence Squares and xxxx as they pertain to a joint square dance event as outlined below.

## **I. Event details**

- Date(s):
- Name of event (if applicable):
- Caller(s):
- Caller(s)' fees:
- Venue:
- Venue fee:
- Venue security deposit:
- Times:
- Program(s):
- Event admission fee:

## **II. Financial arrangements**

- 2.1 The co-sponsoring clubs will share the following costs on an equal basis:
  - Hall rental
  - Hall security and cleanup, if applicable. This includes any security deposits.
  - Caller fee and transportation costs as outlined in the caller(s)' contract(s)
  - Advertising. Budget for advertising not to exceed \$xxx.xx.
  - Miscellaneous expenses, including but not limited to 50/50 tickets, refreshments and related items, decorations. Budget for miscellaneous expenses not to exceed \$xxx.xx.
- 2.2 The co-sponsoring club(s) shall remit their share of the caller(s)' fees and the hall rental fees, including any security payments/deposits and any cleanup payments/deposits to Independence Squares along with this signed agreement within 30 days of receipt of this agreement. If these costs have not yet been determined, the co-sponsoring club(s) shall remit payment to Independence Squares as soon as these costs have been established.
- 2.3 All participants who dance at the event must pay the stated admission price. If a dancer is admitted at a reduced price, the club that allowed that dancer to enter must make up the difference. Non-dancing attendees will not be charged an admission fee.
- 2.4 Independence Squares shall be responsible for the collection and remittance of all funds in association with this joint dance. Independence Squares shall remit an accounting of net income/loss to each co-sponsoring club within 30 days of the conclusion of the event. Any net income (including door admission fees, 50/50 sales, and donations) will be split equally among the co-sponsoring clubs. Independence Squares is responsible for remitting the shared net income to the co-sponsoring clubs within 30 days of the event. The co-sponsoring clubs shall share equally in any net loss and shall remit payment for their share of the loss to Independence Squares within 45 days of receipt of such accounting.
- 2.5 Independence Squares shall be responsible for any tax reporting related to the payment of fees associated with this event.

## **III. Insurance**

3.1 Insurance for the event shall be provided through Independence Squares.

#### **IV. Event cancellation**

4.1 If the event is cancelled for any reason, the co-sponsoring clubs shall share equally in all expenses.

#### **V. Callers and venues**

5.1 The caller(s) and venue shall be agreed upon by all co-sponsors and shall be contracted by Independence Squares. All contracts are to be signed by all co-sponsoring clubs and a completed copy of each contract shall be provided by Independence Squares to each club.

**Steve's comments: It hasn't been convenient to have co-sponsoring clubs sign the contracts. I think signing the JDA is plenty sufficient. I recommend the template be changed from "All contracts are to be signed by all co-sponsoring clubs and a completed copy of each contract shall be provided by Independence Squares to each club." to "A completed copy of all venue and caller contracts shall be provided by Independence Squares to each club."**

Accepted by:

Independence Squares Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted by:

Co-sponsor Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-sponsor Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Recommended Bylaw changes**

## **Recommendation #1**

Article IV-Board of Directors  
4.2 Composition

Current wording:

The Board of Directors shall consist of seven officers of The Organization, all of whom shall be members of The Organization. The Officers of The Organization shall be: President, President-Elect, Secretary, Communications Coordinator, Treasurer, and two Members-at-Large who serve as Program Representatives. One Member-at-Large position will serve as a representative of the Mainstream and Plus dancers and shall be a member of The Organization who is planning to participate primarily in Mainstream and/or Plus classes/workshops or dance events in the upcoming Fiscal Year. The second Member-at-Large position will serve as a representative of the Advanced and Challenge dancers and shall be a member of The Organization who is planning to primarily participate in Advanced and/or Challenge classes/workshops or dance events in the upcoming Fiscal Year. Those elected to the offices of President-Elect and Treasurer shall have been participating in class and/or Organization activities for a period of no less than two years. In the event that two members wish to share the responsibilities of an elected Office, they may do so as co-Officers on the ballot, but each Office is considered to function as a single voting entity when deciding Board matters.

**Recommendation to add the following at end of the paragraph:**

**Members who share the responsibilities of an elected Office are not permitted to jointly sign any checks or any contracts of The Organization or jointly approve any disbursement of funds.**

**Rationale:**

**Joint Officers present potential risk to The Organization if they can jointly approve disbursements or contracts of The Organization. This potential risk can be present if the joint Officers are in a relationship or have joint financial goals. This amendment puts a guardrail in place to prevent that risk to The Organization.**

## **Recommendation #2**

Article IV -Board of Directors  
4.4 Responsibilities  
D. Treasurer  
4.

Current wording:

Shall ensure that at least the Treasurer and three other Board members become signatories of the club bank account(s) in a timely fashion for the duration of their term(s) of office.

**Recommendation: Reword this as follows:**

**Shall ensure that the President, the Treasurer, and up to two other Board members become signers on the club's financial account(s) in a timely fashion for the duration of their term(s) of office.**



**Rationale:**

This change allows for a reduction in the number of signers on our financial accounts from four to as few as two, with the option of having up to four. The process of changing signers on our financial accounts, especially those held within brick-and-mortar institutions, presents serious difficulties. Reducing the number of signers will not eliminate that difficulty but will make the process considerably easier. Our “Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures” document provides a procedure for disbursements to be made if only one authorized signer is available, by allowing for an email approval by another Finance Committee member. This means that reducing the number of people who can physically sign checks does not create a burden on The Organization. Also, the change of the words “club bank account(s)” to “club financial account(s)” recognizes the fact that we now use other types of financial institutions other than banks, such as PayPal.

## **Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures October 2023**

### **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.~~

**Recommendation: Replace the deleted line with the following:  
The Independence Squares Finance Committee shall include the Treasurer,  
President, and two other board members.**

**Scope and rationale:**

Adds a requirement that the President be one of the members of the Finance Committee. This gives more experience regarding financial decisions since the Bylaws require that “Those elected to the offices of President-Elect and Treasurer shall have been participating in class and/or Organization activities for a period of no less than two years”. The President-Elect requirement means that once this individual moves into the President role, their experience will equal or exceed two years.

## Financial Account Access

~~The outgoing and incoming Treasurers shall arrange for the Finance Committee members to be signers on all Independence Squares financial accounts and shall remove any signers who are no longer on the Finance Committee.~~

**Recommendation: Replace this entire paragraph with the following:**  
The signers of The Organization's financial accounts are defined by the Bylaws. It is further defined here that only members of the Finance Committee can be given disbursement permissions on The Organization's financial accounts. When the signers or authorized users of The Organization's financial accounts change, it shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to arrange for a change in records at all affected financial institutions.

### Scope and rationale:

Further defines who can be granted disbursement authorization from the club's financial accounts. Removes the requirement that all FC members be signers in order to align this procedure with the Recommendation #2 Bylaw change that has been proposed.

~~The Treasurer shall ensure that all members of the Finance Committee have online access to all financial accounts where permitted by the financial institutions.~~

**Recommendation: Replace this paragraph with the following:**

The Treasurer shall ensure that all members of the Finance Committee have online access to view all financial accounts where permitted by the financial institutions.

### Scope and rationale:

This more specifically gives the FC members access to view our financial accounts without conferring access to the actual assets within the accounts unless otherwise permitted by the Bylaws or by the Board.

## Checks and Electronic Payments

~~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 via email by two Finance Committee members. In no case shall a check be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued. Copies of all such approvals shall be saved online in a place where members of the Finance Committee can review them.~~

**Recommendation: Replace the entire section with the following:**

Paper checks shall be signed by two authorized signers, provided that the appropriate financial institution has updated its records to show them as the recognized signers. If a financial institution's records have not yet been updated, the signers as recognized by that financial institution shall sign paper check disbursements. In no case shall a check be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued. In the case where two physical signers are not available, one signature must be that of the Treasurer or the President, and authorization must be given via email by another member of the Finance Committee. All email authorizations are to be obtained through the Finance Committee Google Group or whatever system is the current method of communication for The Organization.

**Scope and rationale:**

Recognizes that it takes some time to get the signers changed on all financial accounts. Provides a means for making disbursements if two authorized signers are not available to sign checks. Provides specificity regarding the means by which email authorizations are to be obtained.

~~Electronic payments (including checking account bill pay and debit card payments, PayPal, and other digital payment methods) shall be authorized via email by two members of the Finance Committee. In no case shall such a payment be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued. A copy of these emails shall be saved online in a place where members of the Finance Committee can review them.~~

**Recommendation: Replace the entire section with the following:**

Electronic disbursements (including, but not limited to, checking account bill pay, debit card payments, PayPal, and other digital payment methods) shall be authorized via email by two signers on the disbursement account. In no case shall a disbursement be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued. In the case where two signers are not available, one approval must be that of the Treasurer or the President, and authorization must be given via email by another member of the Finance Committee. All email authorizations are to be obtained through the Finance Committee Google Group or whatever system is the current method of communication for The Organization.

**Scope and rationale:**

Aligns the procedure for electronic disbursements with the proposed paper check proposal above.

## **New procedure proposal #1:**

The President and Treasurer are individually authorized to transfer funds between the various already established financial accounts of The Organization in the best interest of The Organization without further authorizations. The Board shall approve the opening and closing of financial accounts, usually under the advisement of the Finance Committee. Such recommendations from the Finance Committee are not,

however, required for the Board to make such approvals.

**Rationale:**

This has previously been discussed and approved by the board. Adding this to this document further codifies the board's approval. Further codified is the requirement for the Board to approve the opening and closing of financial accounts.

## **Financial Records (No changes recommended)**

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

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

Independence Squares' fiscal year is June 1 to May 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.

## **General recommendation #1**

**This document shall be posted online alongside the Bylaws**

**Rationale:**

This should be easily accessible to the Officers and Finance Committee, especially as new people take over these roles.

# Independence Squares Fly-In Committee Report

## April 23, 2025

### 2025 Fly-In wrap-up

2025 Fly-In's numbers:

- 163 dancers
- 162 room nights sold
- Net income before ticket sales: \$1401.57
- 50/50 sales: \$772.00
- Basket sales: \$3420.00
- Net: \$5593.57
  
- Bar sales fulfilled our obligation to the hotel with the following receipts:
  - Friday night: \$602.00
  - Saturday night: \$862.50
  - Total: \$1464.50

The committee noted that 50/50 sales were slightly lower than those of the previous year since there were very few volunteers to help with ticket sales this year. We had no sales solicited within the dance halls. We will work harder to fill this gap at next year's Fly-In.

The committee held a meeting at the Sheraton immediately after the end of the Fly-In to discuss what worked and what didn't. It was felt that overall, the event was a huge success. Our biggest issue once again was with the bar, with many complaints regarding the service and the lack of quality alcohol. This has already been addressed with the hotel. Air conditioning in the Princeton Ballrooms was also noted as an issue and this, too, has been addressed with the hotel.

### 2026 Fly-In

Current registrations stand at 72 dancers, with registration fees of \$6080.00.

Our contracts with the Sheraton include terms that match the original contracts that we had for the 2025 Fly-In. The committee was reminded that we renegotiated the 2025 contracts to give us more dance space and more room nights. That worked well for us. Ron has reached out to the hotel to discuss the possibility of renegotiating our 2026 contracts to match the dance space and room nights that we had for 2025. The hotel is willing to match our 2025 contracts. That will give us the dance spaces that we had for 2025 and will increase our room nights from 100 to 140. The cost of the ballrooms will increase from \$6600 to \$7598.22, which is the same cost that we had in 2025. All other terms will remain the same. (Note: No discussion yet about bar minimums). **The committee recommends that the Board approve this amendment.**

### 2027 Fly-In

Ron reached out to the Sheraton to discuss the possibility of returning in 2027. We have been offered the following terms:

- Ballroom rentals to match those that we had for 2025, at a cost of \$7746.48. This is an increase of \$148.26 over the 2025 cost.
- Sleeping room rate of \$142.00 before service fees and tax with a block of 140 rooms
- All other terms to remain as contracted for 2025 (Note: No discussion yet about bar minimums)

**The committee requests the Board's approval to move ahead with this contract.**

Respectfully submitted, Ron R

## Caller Liaison Report

### Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – April 23, 2025

The information below is accurate as of April 21, 2025, 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 2027

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place February 2025 through March 2026.

Saturday, May 31, 2025 – Mainstream and Plus with Advanced Star Tip Wheel Around NJ II Dan Koft  
6:00 pm – 9:00 pm People Care Center, Bridgewater, NJ Joint dance with Times Squares

Saturday, June 7, 2025 – Mainstream and Plus Pride Dance Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Tuesday, July 22, 2025 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Tuesday, August 12, 2025 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Saturday, August 23, 2025 – Summer Splash All-level dance Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Cameron Harnish will be calling as well from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek – Joint Dance with DC Lambda Squares and Chesapeake Squares

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 Open House Clay Goss 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Saturday, October 11, 2025 - 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm Mainstream and Plus; 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Dinner (Social?); 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Advanced and C1 John Hawley

Saturday, December 6, 2025 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Mark Franks – Merion Friends Meeting House 3:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Saturday, February 14, 2026 – Valentine's Dance Class level Mainstream and Plus – 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm  
Betsy Gotta

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

Saturday, April 18, 2026 - 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm SSD and Plus; 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Dinner (Social?); 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Advanced and C1 Mark Franks

Saturday, June 13, 2026 – Mainstream and Plus Pride Dance Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, August 15, 2026 Summer Splash All-level Dance Mainstream – C1 Dayle Hodge 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek – Joint Dance with DC Lambda Squares and Chesapeake Squares

Saturday, October 17, 2026 - 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm Advanced and C1; 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Dinner (Social?); 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Mainstream and Plus Betsy Gotta

Saturday, December 5, 2026 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Betsy Gotta – Merion Friends Meeting House 3:00 pm – 6:30 pm

April 2027 Fly-in: Callers: Barry Clasper, Mark Franks, Eric Henerlau April 2-4, 2027 Sheraton Bucks County (?)

**FYI Notes**

- 1) Similar to last year, after some feedback, we are recommending not hiring another caller on nights when only one of the callers is out that evening. With the beginning of the Plus class in January 2025, the Mainstream and Plus classes should be called on those nights when only one caller is available.
- 2) I was given a list by the board as to potential dates for 2026. The only ones confirmed thus far are shown above. The remainder of the list is a work in progress.