

## **Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 7:00 PM via Zoom**

**Board Members Present:** Chris, Dave T., Cindy & Katherine, Kellie & Eileen, Marika, Sarah, Steve

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Guests Present:** Arin, Bob, Helena, Mary Kay, Mike, Ron, Tim, Will

### *Approval of the Minutes – Sarah*

**Sarah made a motion to approve the minutes from the June Board meeting. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### *Report from the IAGSDC Delegates Meeting – Tim*

In an email on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, **Steve made a motion for the Board to appoint Tim as the club's delegate to the IAGSDC Delegates meeting on July 3, 2025. Marika seconded. The motion passed unanimously.** Dave T. volunteered to be the alternate delegate.

Tim sent a written report out to the Board and went over the highlights verbally. IAGSDC member dues are staying the same this year at \$1 per member per club. Tim thanked Independence Squares on behalf of the IAGSDC Board for being one of only two clubs that have had a banner dance to benefit IAGSDC so far in 2025. The IAGSDC Board urged other clubs to follow our example. There are funds available from All Join Hands to support novel development ideas. As a result of the successful 2024 Convention, \$28,600 was donated to future conventions, All Join Hands, and various LGBTQ+ nonprofits across North Carolina. Due to trans-border issues, the Montreal 2026 Convention will not be using the IAGSDC website for registration.

The proposal to combine SSD, Basic 50, and Mainstream into a single program passed. The new entry-level program will be known as Mainstream and will consist of 50 calls. The new Plus program will consist of at least 50 calls, yet to be determined. The projected rollout for the new Mainstream and Plus programs is September 2026. Anyone interested in assisting with the IAGSDC History Project should contact Jim B. or Alan H. Mike and Linda are setting up a group to digitize early Independence Squares club documents. There was a discussion about updating the number of IS members on the IAGSDC website, as the website showed 76 members. However, Ron determined that the most recent payment of dues accurately reflected the number of members we had at that time. Steve thanked Tim for serving as the delegate this year and in previous years.

### *Code of Ethics – Steve*

Steve asked if anyone had feedback about the proposed Code of Ethics. There were no concerns or revisions.

**Steve made a motion to approve the proposed Code of Ethics for Board members. Cindy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Transition Report – Steve

Cindy and Katherine now have the second set of church keys.

#### Fee Structure for 2025/2026 – Steve

There was a discussion of the fee structure for 2025/2026, considering three proposals from Mike and Tim, Katherine and Cindy, and Marika. The Board and other club members agreed that it made sense to reduce admission costs as the club has sufficient savings. People also felt that the club should do more to repay our members, who put in their time and money to make the club successful. Katherine and Cindy argued in favor of having a discount for pre-paying to encourage people to prepay, which reduces the workload for the person taking admission and reduces congestion at the door, but they ultimately supported Mike and Tim's proposal. There will be future discussion about alternative ideas to make the Treasurer's job easier on Tuesday nights.

The Board agreed to adopt Mike and Tim's proposal of a \$5 admission for all Independence Squares members and new Mainstream students and \$7 admission for non-members on Tuesday nights. There will be a prepay option as there was last year, but there will no longer be a discount for prepaying.

**Dave T. made a motion to accept the fee structure outlined above. Eileen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Steve pointed out that it would be impractical to change the dance fees for the weekend dances that have already been scheduled for 2025.

**Steve made a motion to keep dance fees for weekend dances the same through December 2025. The Treasurer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Treasurer's Report – Katherine and Cindy

The Treasurer went through their report. The written report is attached to these minutes. Ron added a new column to the profit and loss summary to keep track of where the club is over or under budget. There was a discussion about how to share financial reports and bank statements with the appropriate people while maintaining security. Bob asked if non-Board members could see the financial reports, and Steve answered that non-Board members would need to ask the Treasurer for financial information. The updated Treasurer and Finance

Committee Procedures document is now available on the website on the “About Us” page and will be attached here.

The Treasurer and Steve determined it is possible to grant limited access to club financial accounts to Peg as the registrar of the Fly-In while restricting her ability to make disbursements through those accounts.

**Steve made a motion to grant the Treasurer the power to give the Fly-In registrar access to the club PayPal and PNC accounts so long as it restricts the registrar’s ability to make disbursements. Marika seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Financial Accommodations – Steve

Steve urged the Board to keep the financial accommodations program as it is through December 2025 for Saturday dances and authorize Marika to send out an email to the club letting dancers know how they can apply for the program. Financial assistance would not be offered for Tuesday nights now that the cost for Tuesday nights has been reduced to \$5 for members and new students.

**Steve made a motion to keep financial accommodations for Saturday dances as they currently are. Marika seconded. The motion passed with six votes in favor and one abstention.**

Marika will revise the application form and send a new draft to the Finance Committee for them to approve.

#### Caller Liaison Committee – Mike

The written report is attached to these minutes. Mike is working on forwarding Cindy the contracts she does not currently have. A few callers have not yet signed their contracts, but verbal agreements are in place. A date and location should soon be set for Wheel Around New Jersey 2026, and Mike will contact the caller. We have callers for the upcoming Fly-Ins through 2027. Steve suggested that Board members look at the 2026 dance schedule and start thinking about the 2027 schedule.

There was a discussion about whether to organize potlucks or restaurant dinners for combo dances, with no one expressing interest in potluck dinners. Chris said he was interested in coordinating dinner plans for combo dances when his schedule allows.

#### Facilities Committee – Steve and Sarah

Pattie and Sarah are interested in researching what other venues are available in Philadelphia in case the club ever needed to leave the Lutheran Church.

#### Publicity Committee – Chris

Chris reminded everyone to send photos from dances and social events.

*Recruitment Committee – Marika*

The written report is attached to these minutes. Marika reminded everyone of the upcoming open houses and asked people to come early to help set up if possible. Coco is looking for volunteers to represent the club at South New Jersey Gay Pride Festival on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

*Mainstream and Plus Program Rep Report – Kellie and Eileen*

Kellie asked for opinions on how best to encourage recent Mainstream graduates and Plus dancers to come to the open houses.

*Advanced and Challenge Program Rep Report – Dave T.*

Dave T. will be reminding Advanced/Challenge dancers of the upcoming workshops and encouraging them to prepay once there is more information about prepaying. Four or five people have expressed interest in taking the Advanced class in 2026-2027.

*Old and New Business*

Mike has agreed to put together a new club directory. He will send out a request for information with assistance from Chris.

Mike, Marika, and Steve will collaborate on getting new long sleeve button down club shirts made, finding an embroidery company to work with, and either finding or making an image template.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 PM.

The next Board meeting will be on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah  
Secretary, Independence Squares

## **Report from July 3, 2025 IAGSDC Delegate Meeting, San Francisco, CA**

**Michael Levy (2025 Convention)** reported that, as of Thursday, July 3, San Francisco had 846 registrants with 141 first time attendees.

**Justin Crawshaw-Lopton (Treasurer)** presented the IAGSDC Financial Report for 2024 indicating:

Total Income: \$2,395

Total Operating Expenses: \$11,397

Net Loss for 2024 **\$9,002**

The ending bank balance as of 12/31/2024 was: \$47,013

Although we project a net loss for 2025 of approximately \$2,610, dues for clubs will remain at \$1 per club member. The existing surplus will be used to cover the shortfall.

**Joel Smith (Club Liaison Officer)** noted that we currently have:

44 fully paid member clubs

1 member club with unpaid dues

4 Associate members

11 Affiliate members

No new member clubs were admitted this year and one club shifted from full membership to Associate status due to a decline in their membership numbers. We anticipate two new clubs may join in 2026.

Only two clubs, Chesapeake Squares and Independence Squares, have held banner dances in 2025 to benefit the IAGSDC, as was the case in 2024. The Executive Board urged other clubs to follow our example!

The Recruitment and Retention Meetings will be changed to Club Connections Meetings to reflect the emphasis of these meetings on improving communications among IAGSDC clubs.

These meetings are open to anyone interested, not just club officers. Interested individuals should contact Joel for more information.

Clubs are reminded that funds from All Join Hands are available via the Club Development/Club Connections Committee to assist in novel development projects (not routine club operations).

Proposals should be submitted to the Club Liaison Officer.

**Mark Ambrose and Mike Rutkowski (2024 Convention)** reported that Carolina Twirl had:

Total Income of \$168,665

Total Expenses of \$155,472

Yielding a Net Profit of \$13,193. With additional funds received from hotel commissions after the convention and a licensing fee paid to the IAGSDC, \$28,600 has been donated to upcoming convention committees, All Join Hands, and a variety of LGBTQA+ supportive charities. The committee expects to receive an additional approximately \$2000 as a refund from the Armory due to issues with the air conditioner during our convention. Those funds will be donated to All Join Hands to assist in covering convention-related shipping costs and their general fund.

**Ed Zeigler (Chair)** reported that the new IAGSDC website is currently in testing and is expected to roll out within the next few weeks. Due to trans-border issues, Montreal (2026) will NOT be using the IAGSDC website for registration, but it is anticipated that the website will be in use for 2027. One significant change for the new website is that individual clubs will now be

responsible for maintaining the list of club members rather than the current policy of individual dancers updating their club affiliation(s). Club officers will be notified once the website is up.

**Harlan Kerr (CALLERLAB)** provided an update on the CALLERLAB convention.

Sandie Bryant received CALLERLAB's Milestone Award for 2025!

The proposal made at last year's CALLERLAB convention to consolidate the three entry level programs was passed. As a result, the SSD, Basic 50 and Mainstream Programs will be combined into a single, entry level Mainstream Program to consist of only 50 calls. The Plus Program will be expanded to include at least 50 calls. The final decision on the list of calls to be included in the revised MS Program is expected by the end of July. The next phase will be to establish an approved teaching order and revise the Plus Program. The revised MS and Plus Programs are expected to roll out to dancers in September, 2026.

**Jane Clewe (GCA)** reported 24 students at this year's Caller's School, including 13 new students.

**Pam Clasper (All Join Hands Canada)** reported that AJH-C received \$3,382 in donations for 2024 and disbursed \$4,816 in project funding.

**Gordon Macaw (All Join Hands US)** reported that AJH- US received \$54,895 in donations, earned \$13,512 in interest income, and disbursed \$39,749 in project funding.

Gordon asked clubs to remind their members that individuals may make tax-deductible donations to All Join Hands Foundation and request those funds be directed to their club. The club will receive 100% of the directed donation and the donor can claim the tax deduction, since AJH is a 501c3 entity, regardless of the tax status of the club.

**James Ozanich (Memorial Panels Project)** noted that a sixth panel has been added to the Memorial Panels,

**Future Conventions:** A bid was presented and accepted for 2029. Current Schedule is:

2026 - Montreal, QC June 28 to July 5, 2026

2027 - Albuquerque, NM July 1-10, 2027

2028 - Denver, CO July 6-9, 2028

2029 - Palm Springs, CA May 9-14, 2029

2030 – expressions of interest were received from Sacramento, CA and (post meeting), Chicago, IL

### **Election of Officers:**

Vice-Chair: Kelly Shortandqueer was re-elected to another 2-year term

Club Liaison Officer: Joel Smith was re-elected to another 2-year term

Secretary: Jim Babcock was re-elected to another 2-year term

Chair: Ed Zeigler is entering the second year of a 2-year term

Treasurer: Justin Crawshaw-Lopton is entering the second year of a 2-year term

## **Code of Ethics**

As a member of the 2025-2026 Independence Squares Board of Directors, I will

- Proactively promote ethical behavior among fellow board members and Independence Squares committee members.
- Perform duties and actions on behalf of Independence Squares properly, diligently, courteously and with respect for others.
- Provide members and outside organizations with information that is accurate and objective.
- Comply with applicable government laws, rules and regulations.
- Maintain the confidentiality of information entrusted to the club (or to me individually) by our members, donors and volunteers, except when authorized by the person sharing the information or I am legally obligated to disclose it.
- Accept responsibility for preventing, detecting, and reporting all manner of fraud or other illegal or unethical activity.
- Be honest and ethical in my conduct in all my interactions with Independence Squares.
- Protect and ensure the proper use of club assets.
- Know and adhere to the Independence Squares Statement of Nondiscrimination.
- Hold space for multiple perspectives in board meetings and commit to working collaboratively with my fellow board members.
- Work to represent the Independence Squares as a whole and keep in mind the many different needs and interests of our diverse community when acting on behalf of the club.
- Remember that we are all volunteering our time and working together to support Independence Squares. I will approach any disagreements respectfully and with a problem-solving mindset.
- Support all the decisions made by the Board of Directors.

# **Treasurer and Finance Committee Procedures**

## **June 17, 2025**

### **Finance Committee**

The Independence Squares Finance Committee shall include the Treasurer, President, and two 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.

### **Financial Account Access**

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.

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.

### **Checks and Electronic Payments**

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 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. A check shall not be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued unless further authorized by two other members 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.

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 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. Disbursements shall not be authorized by the person to whom the payment is being issued unless further authorized by two other members 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.

### **Transfer of Funds and New Account Opening**

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.

## **Financial Records**

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 1st 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.

## **Miscellaneous**

This document shall be posted online alongside the Bylaws.

## Caller Liaison Report

### Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – July 13, 2025

The information below is accurate as of July 13, 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 May 2025 through April 2027.

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, January 3, 2026 – Advanced and C1 – Brian Jarvis 7:00 pm – 9:30 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, March 28, 2026 – Advanced and C1 – Kent Forrester 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

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, I am recommending not hiring another caller on nights when only one of the callers is out that evening. The programs to be called on those nights will be determined by which classes are being offered at the time and what the final schedule of classes and workshops are as determined by the board.
- 2) I was given a list by the board as to potential dance dates for 2026. All of the recommended dates have been confirmed other than the Wheel Around NJ joint dance with Times Squares. No caller has been hired for that event as neither a final date nor a location have yet been determined.

## Summer 2025 Recruitment Events

### June

- 1 June 2025 - [Philly Pride 365](#)
  - Table, Steve Demos
- 7 June 2025 - [Delaware County Pride Parade](#)
  - Passing out palm cards, Dave Tavani
- 14 June 2025 - [Delaware County Pride Festival](#)
  - Table, Steve Demos
- 14 June 2025 - [Second Saturday: Pride Edition](#) **Event Cancelled Due to Rain**
  - Passing out palm cards, Cindy Konecko and Katherine Cheetham

### July

- 22 July 2025 - Open House

### August

- 12 August 2025 - Open House

### September

- 7 September 2025 - [South New Jersey Gay Pride Festival](#) **Tentative - Need Event Lead**
  - Table, Event Lead?
- 16 September 2025 - Open House

## July 2025 Recruitment Committee Report

- June Pride events went well. The Recruitment Committee recommends continuing to attend Philly Pride 365 in future years and considering the possibility of arranging a demo square at Delaware County Pride in the future.
- Plans are in place for upcoming open houses. They are being advertised with posters, boosted posts on Facebook and Instagram, and emails to the potential new dancer mailing list. Please attend open houses if possible and aim to arrive 30 minutes early to help set up. We also encourage you to tell your friends and share the posts on social media promoting the events.
- Plans are still tentative regarding our presence at South New Jersey Gay Pride Festival. Coco W. was coordinating, but will not be in town on the day of the event to serve as event lead. She is currently discussing with other club members whether they may be able to take the lead. If you are available on September 7th and willing to support, please reach out to Coco and let her know. We hope to have plans finalized soon.