

**Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 19th, 2025, at 7:00 PM via Zoom**

Board Members Present: Chris, Cindy & Katherine, Kellie & Eileen, Marika, Sarah, Steve

Board Members Absent: Dave T.

Guests: Arin, Deb, Will H.

Approval of the Minutes – Sarah

Steve made a motion to approve the minutes from the last Board meeting as amended.

Marika seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

At this point, Chris joined the call.

Sarah sent out a draft of the minutes from the Annual Meeting. Steve asked Board members to send in any corrections. The Annual Meeting minutes will be posted on the web after the past Board members have had a chance to submit corrections.

Approval of New Memberships

The club bylaws require the Board to vote to approve new memberships. Two dancers, who are members of another club, are seeking to become members of Independence Squares.

Steve made a motion to accept Clark and Lisa as members of Independence Squares. Cindy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Schedule for Board Meetings

The Board agreed to meet on the following days: Thursday, September 25th; Thursday, October 30th; Tuesday, November 25th; Thursday, January 8th; and Monday, February 9th.

HASP Report – Linda

Linda was not present, but she submitted a written report, attached to these minutes. Steve printed out a blank copy of the accident report form to put in the black folder and will bring it to the Summer Splash.

There was a discussion about the issue of heat at the Summer Splash and the Open Houses. Board members wondered if the heat at the Open Houses was too much for dancers who are more sensitive to heat. Steve raised the idea of moving the Open Houses to another location, but people were generally not in favor. Eileen will ask HASP to research heat mitigation strategies and come up with a proposal.

Steve asked whether some sort of announcement should be made at Open Houses reminding people to watch their personal belongings, as it would be easy for something to be lost or stolen. There were some arguments for and against such an announcement. No decision was made.

Treasure's Report – Katherine and Cindy

The financial documents are attached to these minutes. The Treasurer issued a correction for the June profit and loss spreadsheet. The corrected document is available in the Google Drive. Expenses for July include the Open House, the round dance lesson, the storage unit, and a new water cooler. Caller contracts have been signed for all dances that have been announced on the club website, including the 2027 Fly-In. Peg has successfully logged into PNC and PayPal, which the Board agreed to give her access to. Currently she cannot make mobile deposits to the PNC account, but this will change in the future.

Finance Committee – Steve, Cindy, and Katherine

The Board discussed raising Mark and Betsy's pay, as it has been six years since they last received a raise. Steve discussed the idea with Mike before the Board meeting, and Mike believed we should give them a raise either this year or next year. The entire Board was in favor of giving the callers a raise effective this year. The Board thought that Mike should decide what amount should be considered as the caller fee and what should be the amount for travel expenses.

Steve made a motion to raise Mark and Betsy's pay, effective immediately. The Treasurer seconded. The motion passed with five votes in favor, one abstention.

Summer Splash

Times Squares gave Independence Squares a free registration to Peel the Pumpkin to auction off at the Summer Splash. The Board agreed that the proceeds from the raffle should be shared with the other participating clubs. Steve asked for volunteers to supervise selling 50/50 and raffle tickets. Eileen will be in charge of 50/50 tickets. Arin and Marika will help. Steve will ask Mary Kay to be in charge of the other raffle tickets. There is also a need for volunteers to bring food. The Board discussed other logistical concerns. Steve told the church that we will contact them soon about renting a space there for Summer Splash 2026. He wanted to wait until after the event before we commit to renting the space again next year.

Caller Liaison Committee – Mike

Mike was not present for the meeting, but he submitted a written report, attached here. Wheel Around NJ 2026 is still in the planning stages with a probable date of May 9, 2026.

Facilities Committee – Steve and Sarah

The Facilities Committee has not had a meeting yet, but they intend to meet. Steve has begun to share emails concerning rental venues with Sarah.

Publicity Committee – Chris

The written report is attached to these minutes. The committee met recently and divided responsibilities among their members. Flyers for all 2025 dances are complete and available on the website. Several people will work on designing flyers for the 2026 events in time for the Fly-In Committee's big print order in late February or early March.

Chris made a motion to make the next June dance a member appreciation dance. Eileen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

At the last Board meeting, it was decided that the price for weekend dances would remain \$10 through 2025. Steve argued that the price should remain the same through 2026.

Steve made a motion to continue charging \$10 for weekend dances, with combo dances costing \$10 for one session or \$15 for both sessions, through the end of 2026. The Treasurer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve, Chris, and possibly others will work on organizing our Google Drive and getting rid of obsolete documents. They will consult Deb as well about what is important to keep.

Recruitment Committee – Marika

The written report is attached to these minutes. There will not be an Independence Squares presence at South New Jersey Pride due to schedule conflicts. Marika asked people to come to the Open Houses and advertise Open Houses and classes. The written report includes data from the paid social media advertising that ran in advance of the Open Houses.

Mainstream and Plus Program Rep Report – Kellie and Eileen

Kellie said that attendance has been good at the Open Houses, and it seems that attendees are having fun. She thanked Recruitment and Publicity for their work.

Supporting New Callers/Caller School

The Board discussed ideas for how to encourage dancers to become callers. Ideas included giving student callers floor time, whether on a Tuesday night, at a weekend dance, or at a small gathering. Will H. provided a document he wrote about encouraging new callers. A committee might be formed to focus on this issue. There is interest in offering the same financial aid for Caller School that we offered last year. The Board will discuss this further.

Old and New Business

Mike emailed the Board with his findings about getting new club shirts printed and his recommendations. He recommended a subsidy of \$40 for the club uniform for those who have not received one in the past. More definitive decisions will be made when there is more information, and for now Steve will let Mike know that the Board likes his ideas. Mike has also made progress on the new club directory.

There was a discussion about whether to offer class level Plus at the Glitter Ball as well as class level Mainstream. A decision will be made at the next meeting.

The Board will discuss creating a suggested schedule of dances for 2027 at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah
Secretary, Independence Squares

HASP Meeting Wednesday July 23, 2025 Zoom

Present

Linda, Peg, Mike, Tim

Current Composition of HASP Committee

- Linda (chair)
- Peg
- Mike
- Tim
- Mary Kay
- Bob
- Eileen
- Vinney

Helena expressed interest in attending HASP meetings at the Committee Job Fair held at our Pride Dance Saturday June 7, 2025.

Insurance

Independence Squares pays for insurance from the United Square Dancers of America. We pay per member of the club for liability and accident medical insurance. If there is an injury or non-injury incident that occurs at a club function, an accident report must be filled out by the President, or otherwise appointed person who is an officer of the club who is hosting the dance.

1. Action items: Here is a link to a pdf of the accident report form so that the board will have blank accident reports and make them available at IS club events.
2. The Board will decide who from the IS Board, in addition to the President, will be responsible for filling in the form, if an incident occurs.

Data Collection

Since medical and scientific data is incomplete and hard to gather currently, we are no longer collecting and disseminating statistics, and have not done so since the COVID epidemic emergency was declared over in May 2023. HASP will continue to monitor the news for information on disease outbreaks and other health and safety matters that might affect our square dance community.

Health and Safety

- HASP recommends the club continue to practice the precautions we have been using lately:
- Hand washing
- Providing hand sanitizer
- Providing face masks

- Using HEPA filters in each dance room

HASP Forecasting

- HASP will continue to be available to anyone in the IS square dance community who has questions or concerns or just wants to talk about health and safety issues
- HASP welcomes input from the IS community
- HASP will continue to meet as needed to discuss issues that have arisen.

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – August 19, 2025

The information below is accurate as of August 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 August 2025 through April 2027.

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, May 9, 2026 – Mainstream and Plus – Dan Koft Time and Location To Be Determined

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. A caller has been hired for that event but neither a final time nor a location have yet been determined.

Publicity & Communications Update 8/19/2025

Steve, Marika and Chris met a few weeks ago. We split up responsibilities as follows:

- Chris is primary on email and website updates
- Steve is primary on the Facebook group
- Marika is primary on Instagram
- Marika and Steve will each make updates on the Facebook page.
- We are keeping each other informed. We welcome your input.

We are looking for photos and videos taken at our dances, classes, and outside social events. Please email them to Chris, or be in touch.

We will be making paper flyers for 2026 dances. The process starts in November with details to follow.

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

- 16 September 2025 - Open House

August 2025 Recruitment Committee Report

- The first two open houses went great. 14 new dancers attended the July open house and 11 new dancers attended the August open house. Feedback from attendees has all been positive. We've had excellent turn out from club members. Thank you to everybody who took the time to attend and help represent our club!
- We've been trialing using paid social media advertisements this summer to promote the open houses. Advertisements have had a fairly wide reach so far. Additional advertising will run ahead of the September open house and the first day of classes.

Boosted Facebook post

	Aug 4 • Created by Marika ... Link clicks Looking for something fun to do? Seeking...	Completed	2,865 Views	1,935 Reach	95 Link clicks	\$17.49 Spent of \$
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Boosted Instagram post

	Aug 4 • Created by Marika ... Boosted Instagram media	Completed	1,868 Views	1,560 Reach	80 Link clicks	\$17.37 Spent at \$ day
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Boosted Instagram post

	Jul 14 • Created by indepe... Boosted Instagram media	Completed	1,733 Views	1,294 Reach	72 Link clicks	\$13.93 Spent at \$ day
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Boosted Facebook post

	Jul 14 • Created by Marika ... Post engagements Looking for something fun to do? Seeking...	Completed	1,360 Views	921 Reach	123 Post engagements	\$13.97 Spent of \$
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- Unfortunately, we will not be attending South New Jersey Gay Pride Festival this year because no volunteers were available to coordinate a club presence at that event.