

Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting Tuesday, September 25th, 2025, at 7:00 PM via Zoom

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

Board Members Absent: Chris

Guests: Arin, Deb, Linda, Mike, Tim, Will

Votes Taken Over Email - Steve

In an email on September 14th, Mike updated the Board on his negotiations with a shirt-making company and requested the Board's approval to pay for digitizing the club logo. In a subsequent email, Steve made a motion stating, "Independence Squares gives Mike the go-ahead to work with the shirt company he has found, and further, that we allocate up to \$90 for that company to do the work needed to begin the process of getting the design for the shirt uploaded." Sarah seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes – Sarah

Steve made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Cindy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mainstream and Plus Program Rep Report – Kellie & Eileen

Kellie reported that there was good attendance and enthusiasm on the first Tuesday night of the year. Betsy was unfortunately absent, and Mark taught the Mainstream class. There were three squares for most of the tips. Also present were a few dancers who had been out of touch with the club for years but want to take classes again this year.

HASP Report – Linda

A dancer reported testing positive for COVID after the Summer Splash, and the club alerted the mailing list. Going forward, there will be a sign-up sheet at the Treasurer's table at events for people who want to be alerted in event of a positive COVID test.

Linda encouraged people to use the lanterns, which she purchased to replace the missing light in the closet, when going up and down the stairs to the storage space. Kellie suggested buying a motion activated battery powered light. Linda will investigate buying one. Linda discussed strategies for dealing with the heat and humidity during summer events, including buying a de-humidifier, buying an air conditioner, asking people to bring in fans, and remembering to keep doors closed. For now, we will hold off on buying a de-humidifier or air conditioner. Steve will contact the church and see if they are open to exchanging their air conditioner or getting another one. There was a brief discussion about possibly moving Open Houses to September, in hopes of having fewer issues with heat. The Recruitment Committee will discuss this.

Treasure's Report – Katherine & Cindy

The financial documents are attached to these minutes. Cindy went over the Treasurer's Report verbally. The 2025 Summer Splash was highly successful. There were 32 dancers at the August Open House. One of our certificates of deposit (CDs) will mature on October 23rd, and the Treasurer will keep that money in the Live Oak savings account to cover club expenses, as our expenses have increased.

There was an email from the United Square Dancers of America (USDA) encouraging square dance clubs to remind dancers that non-club members are not covered by USDA insurance. The USDA does not offer insurance for individual dancers. The Treasurer will make an announcement about this on Tuesday night and will provide information at the Treasurer's table. Mainstream class members are covered by insurance. The Treasurer will submit a list of Mainstream class members to the USDA in the next few weeks.

Caller Liaison Committee – Mike

The written report is attached to these minutes. Mike is keeping in contact with Betsy to see how her recovery is progressing. The caller for the October 11th combo dance needs to borrow the club's audio equipment.

Marika presented a suggested schedule of dances for 2027, which the Board and Mike discussed. The approved schedule is as follows:

Month	Theme	Programs	Time	Date	Backup Date
January		A2/C1	7:00 - 9:30 pm	9th	16th
February	Valentine's Day	MS/Plus	3:00 - 5:30 pm	13th	20th
March	Double Header	MS/ Plus A2/C1	3:00 - 5:30 pm 7:00 - 9:30 pm	13th	20th
April	Fly-In	SSD-C2		2nd-4th	
May	Wheel Around NJ	MS/Plus A2 Star Tip	6:00 - 9:00 pm	15th	22nd
June	Pride	MS/Plus	7:00 - 9:30 pm	12th	26th
July					
August	Summer Splash	MS-C1	1:00 - 5:00 pm	21st	28th
September					
October	Halloween? Double Header	A2/C1 MS/ Plus	3:00 - 5:30 pm 7:00 - 9:30 pm	30th	9th
November					

December	Glitter Ball	MS - C1	3:00 - 6:30 pm	4th	11th
----------	--------------	---------	----------------	-----	------

Exact times are subject to change. Mike will begin to approach callers to hire.

There was a discussion about whether to offer class-level Plus at the Glitter Ball. The Board agreed on offering class-level Mainstream and full Plus with hopefully one class-level Plus tip.

The Board confirmed that all 2026 dances that offer Mainstream between the Glitter Ball and the April 18th double header, not counting Wheel Around NJ, will be class-level Mainstream or SSD, as was shown on the website.

There was a discussion about what to do on Tuesday nights when one of our callers is absent. For the past couple of years, the Caller Liaison Committee has recommended that we not try to hire a substitute when only one caller is absent. Katherine advocated for the importance of providing all four dance programs when we advertise Tuesday nights as Mainstream through Challenge.

Facilities Committee – Steve

The men's bathroom in the church ran out of soap, and Steve purchased new soap. Steve would like to change to a smaller PO Box, possibly at a different post office. Lou has returned his PO Box key, and Steve asked if anyone else would be willing to check the POX Box semi-regularly.

Publicity Committee – Chris

The written report is attached to these minutes. Chris was not present to give a report verbally.

Recruitment Committee – Marika

The written report is attached to these minutes. The committee will meet one more time on October 10th before going on break for the winter. Marika said that the paid advertising on social media reached a much wider audience than in-person events, but it is too early to draw firm conclusions about the efficacy.

Directory and Club Shirts – Mike

Mike reported that the directory was almost done, and he would send it out soon. He spoke with a printing company that would set up an online storefront where club members could order their own shirts, hoodies, or hats. The cost of the club shirt, before subsidy, would be \$65.

Steve made a motion to offer any member of Independence Squares who is purchasing a club shirt for the first time a subsidy of \$45 on the club shirt. Katherine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Encouraging New Callers and Approaching Others – Steve

Steve requested to call one tip at 5:30 on October 11th, between the afternoon session and evening session at the double header.

Steve recused himself from the discussion. The rest of the Board approved the request, as it is permitted by the bylaws and Steve fulfills the qualifications.

At this point, all guests except for Mike left.

The Board discussed approaching possible substitute callers. The Board asked Mike to try to find a substitute caller for October 28th, when Mark will be absent.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 30th.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah
Secretary, Independence Squares

HASP COMMITTEE DISCUSSION POINTS Sept. 2025

HASP PROTOCOLS ON IS WEB PAGE

- Link to HASP information on front page of IS web site is broken. Does the board want HASP to revise the current protocols?

Oops! That page can't be found.

It looks like nothing was found at this location. Maybe try one of the links below or a search?

- As an aside, if the IS page is being updated, the cover photo on the front page of IS site is outdated. Almost half of the people in the photo are not current members.

POSITIVE COVID INCIDENT AT SUMMER SPLASH

- I got the same email as everyone else about the positive COVID incident at the Summer Splash. I spoke with 2 people who self-disclosed that they tested positive after the dance. They are both recovering well. I don't know the identity of the person who first tested positive. I did not notice anyone who seemed to be unwell at the dance.

COVID INFORMATION

- COVID information is in flux and recommendations change frequently, and professionals and organizational positions sometimes contradict each other.
- The best approach is for each of us to be in communication with our health care providers and to decide what is best for each individual.
- This site is useful:
<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx>
- HASP has begun following the **Northeast Public Health Collaborative**
<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/newsroom/launch-northeast-public-health-collaborative>

“Several Northeastern states and New York City have been collaborating since early 2025 and today formally announced the, a voluntary regional coalition of public health agencies and leaders, brought together to share expertise, improve coordination, enhance capacity, strengthen regional readiness, and promote and protect evidence-based public health.”

USE LANTERN WHEN GOING UPSTAIRS TO STORAGE ROOM

- Stairs and storage room are dark. It would be safer to carry one of the battery-operated lamps with you if you have to go to the storage room. There are always 2 lamps in the closet in the dance hall. I recharge them when I notice their batteries are low.

HEAT AND HUMIDITY CONTROL

High heat and humidity can be dangerous to some, and uncomfortable for all. I have been looking into solutions, and it comes down to three areas: cool the air with air conditioning, decrease humidity, and increase ventilation. We already have the air conditioner. Here are my recommendations:

1. Obtain a larger capacity air conditioner and donate it to the church.
2. Buy a dehumidifier.
3. Bring in fans to use.
4. Keep doors to the dance rooms closed: air conditioning, air purification, and dehumidification all work better in enclosed spaces

Points to consider:

- **STORAGE** If we buy / bring in a dehumidifier and fans, where will we store them between uses?
- **AIR CONDITIONER DONATION** Peg and I are looking to installing mini-splits in our house and we will have extra air conditioner window units we could donate to the church. We

could either add one of our donated units to the dance room, or, if it is higher capacity, use it instead of the one that doesn't really cool the room sufficiently.

- FANS Ask IS community if anyone would be willing to bring in a fan and leave it at the church.
- DEHUMIDIFIER I researched dehumidifiers, and I recommend that we buy this one: Midea Cube 20 Pint Dehumidifier Up to 1,500 Sq. Ft. Cost is \$180

It is highly rated from New York Times Wirecutter reviews:

<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-dehumidifier/>

Directly from Midea \$180 and free shipping

<https://www.midea.com/us/store/cooling-and-heating/dehumidifiers/midea-cube-20-pt-dehumidifier-for-basement--room--or-garage---co.MAD20S1QWT>

For sale at Amazon \$179.10 and free shipping

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08ZMY8BC8?tag=dhguide-20&geniuslink=true&th=1>

Independence Squares Treasury highlights for August, 2025:

- We added three dues paying members to our club: Chris and Lisa Shull and Ted Marvel. That brings our member total to 70.
- There were 2 dance events during August - the Open House on 8/12 and the Summer Splash on 8/23.
- The Open House headcount was 32 and we took in \$160 for the event (minus a bit in PayPal fees).
- The 2025 Summer Splash was very successful. Income for the dance came from door admissions, 50/50 proceeds, Roy's generous 50/50 donation back to the clubs, and the Peel the Pumpkin raffle proceeds. After expenses, the 3 sponsoring clubs (Independence Squares, Chesapeake Squares and DC Lambda Squares) shared just under \$735.
- There were no unexpected expenses during August.

Caller Liaison Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – September 25, 2025

The information below is accurate as of September 23, 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.

Betsy Gotta was unavailable on September 23 for class. Mark Franks taught the Mainstream and Plus programs. There were no Advanced or C1 Workshops on that date. The Caller Liaison will remain in contact with Betsy during her recovery and the normal schedule will resume when she is able to return. The board may determine if this is acceptable or not.

John Hawley is calling the October 11, 2025 double header. He will be coming by train from Massachusetts and, as such, will not have his equipment with him. Someone will need to be at the church to bring the equipment down from the storage locker. He will be staying with Mike Rutkowski and Tim Harper, and they will provide him with housing and transportation to the dance.

Dances Through April 2027

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place September 23, 2025 through April 2027.

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 Wheel Around NJ 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 being called on those nights will be determined by which classes are being offered at the time. For this year that would be Mainstream and Plus.
- 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 Committee report

From: Chris Deephouse (cdeephouse@gmail.com)

To: is-board@googlegroups.com

Date: Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 03:07 PM EDT

Hello Board!

Here is a quick summary of our committee's activity in the past month.

- Marika, Steve and I supported the Recruiting Committee by sending emails and posting to Facebook and Instagram. I was excited to see four squares filled in our first class on Tuesday.
- I made a few changes in our website, including a new HASP page and posts about our new classes and the MS-C1 dance with John Hawley in October.
- We supported Mike Rutkowski's efforts to publish a new directory and to get T-Shirts made for club members.
- Steve Demos will be picking up mail at our PO box near 30th St Station. Lou Partridge picked up mail for many years. He is now retiring from this assignment. Chris assisted Steve to get full access to the USPS web portal.
- We are recruiting volunteers to make flyers for our seven Saturday dances in 2026. Production dates run from early November through early February to save printing costs and maximize publicity.

Comments and questions are welcome,

I will miss tonight's meeting so that I can go to the Memorial Service tonight for Jim Kitch. Starting in the late 1970's, he and some other callers organized the contra dance that now takes place in Mt. Airy (NW Philadelphia).

Thank you all for what you are doing for Independence Squares.

Chris

Chris Deephouse
1.610.585.5802

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Independence Squares Board" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to is-board+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com.

To view this discussion visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/is-board/CAGppcFL86kRV7AHU0POZRuukZzpFtAMiJKexjOQ4F5Tq-%3D0WyQ%40mail.gmail.com>.

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

September 2025 Recruitment Committee Report

- The summer 2025 open houses went great. 14 new dancers attended the July open house, 11 new dancers attended the August open house, and 16 new dancers attended the September 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 had a great turn out for the first night of lessons/workshops on Tuesday, September 23rd. 41 dancers attended in total. 11 attendees were there to start lessons as part of this year's Mainstream class. Folks all said they had a great time and look forward to continuing next week!
- We used paid social media advertisements this summer to promote the open houses and lessons. A total of four weeks of advertising ran on both Facebook and Instagram. One week leading up to each open house and one week leading up to the start of lessons.
- In addition to paid social media advertising, we continue to use social media in general as a tool for recruitment. A post advertising open houses/lessons was shared with our followers, posted in local queer Facebook groups, shared with Instagram accounts that promote queer events in the Philly area, et cetera.
- View a breakdown of the costs/results of our paid social media advertising and the overall insights for our post advertising open houses/lessons below (overall insights include both traffic from advertising and organically generated traffic).

Paid Social Media Advertising

July

Boosted Instagram post



Jul 14 • Created by ...

Boosted
Instagram media
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

1,733
Views

1,294
Reach

72
Link clicks

\$13.93
Spent at
\$2.00 per day

Boosted Facebook post



Jul 14

Post
engagements
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

1,360
Views

909
Reach

123
Post engagements

\$13.97
Spent of
\$14.00

August

Boosted Facebook post



Aug 4

Website visitors
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

2,865
Views

1,974
Reach

95
Link clicks

\$17.49
Spent of
\$17.50

Boosted Instagram post



Aug 4

Boosted
Instagram media
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

1,868
Views

1,520
Reach

80
Link clicks

\$17.37
Spent at
\$2.50 per day

September

Boosted Facebook post



Sep 9

Post
engagements
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

6,366
Views

4,226
Reach

123
Link clicks

\$43.99
Spent of
\$44.00

Boosted Instagram post



Sep 9

Boosted
Instagram media
Looking for
something fun to do...

Completed

5,436
Views

3,809
Reach

180
Link clicks

\$42.11
Spent at
\$3.25 per day

Insights From Post Promoting Open Houses/Lessons

Instagram

Views	13,588
Post interactions	353
Profile activity	536
Likes	208
Shares	104
Saves	41
Comments	0
Profile visits	386
External link taps	30
Follows	120

Facebook

