

**Minutes from the Independence Squares Board Meeting
Thursday, April 9th, 2026, at 7:00 PM via Zoom**

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

Board Members Absent: None

Guests Present: Deb, George R., Helena, Jed, John T., Linda, Louis, Suzanne, Pattie, Will

Approval of the Minutes – Sarah

Sarah made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 18th meeting. Steve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Katherine and Cindy

The written report is attached to these minutes. The total balance across the club's bank accounts increased by \$5,787.30 between February 28th and March 31st. The Fly-In was highly successful thanks to the hard work and generosity of everyone involved. Income from the Fly-In more than covered the year's losses to date from other events. Joint dance agreements have been signed by Times Squares, Chesapeake Squares, and DC Lambda Squares for the upcoming joint dances in May and August.

Preparations for the Annual Meeting

Steve made a motion that dues will continue to be \$45 for 2026/2027. Dave T. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve made a motion that we give the Mainstream graduates a free year of membership and a free name badge. Chris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Eileen and Kellie will provide a list of Mainstream graduates. Sarah will send out a notice to the club with the recommended bylaw changes and the slate of candidates. Election Buddy will be used to count votes.

New Caller Support Initiative – Chris

Chris submitted a written report, attached here. The committee continues to work on their plans to encourage new callers.

Guidelines for Smooth Dancing and an Inclusive Dance Environment – Steve and Chris

Steve and Chris hope to have a report ready for the May Board meeting. They will be contacting those who expressed interest in joining the committee. The HASP Committee stated that they

do not believe this initiative falls under their purview and they are not interested in being involved as a committee, although individual members may wish to participate.

Facilities Committee – Steve and Sarah

The contract with Arch Street Meeting House for the July 14th dance has been signed. Steve contacted Merion Friends Meeting about the Glitter Ball 2026. They introduced new guidelines for using the space and new fees that will increase the cost of the Glitter Ball.

Publicity Committee – Chris

The website is up to date with the schedule of upcoming dances. Linda suggested that the website needs a more recent picture, and Chris requested that anybody who has a more current picture send it to him. Chris made a proposal to change “We welcome all” to “We welcome everyone” in the inclusivity statement on our flyers, etc. The Board decided not to make an official change and to let people use both version interchangeably.

Recruitment Committee – Steve

The written report is attached to these minutes. The committee is getting ready for the Open Houses and Philly Pride 365 on June 7th. Last year, the committee had a budget of \$600 for printing, registration fees, and Facebook ads, and the committee requested the same for this year. This budget does not include caller fees and rental fees for the Open Houses.

Steve made a motion that the Recruitment Committee be allowed to spend up to \$600 on registration fees and publicity. Mike seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mainstream/Plus Program Rep Report – Kellie and Eileen

Eileen reported that classes are going well, and the students who went to the Fly-In had a good time. There is a dancer who graduated from this year’s Mainstream class at Busy B’s, which used the Mainstream 2026 call list, who has been coming to the Independence Squares Mainstream class since March and wants to become a member of the club. The Board decided to consider her a member of our class and give her all the benefits of graduating. A report is coming in May about which of our students are candidates for which of our offerings.

Accommodations for Square Dancers with Disabilities

Steve asked the Board to consider ways in which the club can be more proactive in making accommodations for square dancers with disabilities. The Board will discuss this further in May.

Nominating Committee – Dave T.

The Nominating Committee found candidates for the role of Mainstream/Plus Rep. Volunteers have also come forward to run for Advanced/Challenge Rep, Communications Coordinator, President, and President-Elect, and someone is tentatively interested in running for Secretary.

Caller Liaison Committee – Mike

The written report is attached to these minutes. Mike stated that not much has changed. The club will continue to let Mark and Betsy decide which room they would like to call in to alleviate the space issues. There was a discussion about what programs to offer on Tuesday nights starting in September. Mike presented a proposed schedule based on his discussions with Mark and Betsy and a schedule based on his discussions with Dave T. No decision was made.

Bylaws Committee – Jed

Jed presented the second draft of the proposal from the Bylaws Committee. There was time for meeting attendees to ask questions and make comments. The committee will work on a final draft for the Board to review in May.

Fly-In Committee Report – Linda

The written report is attached to these minutes. In the absence of Ron, Linda went over the report verbally. The profit from this year's Fly-In was \$8418.19. The revenue from registrations significantly exceeded the Fly-In Committee's expectations. The club has a contract with the Sheraton for 2027 and 2028. Around 50 people have registered for next year.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM. The next meeting will be at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, May 6th.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah
Secretary, Independence Squares

Treasurer's Report - Activity through 3/31/2026

1. Ending balance total across PNC and LiveOak accounts was \$53,766.37 on 3/31/2026 as compared with \$47,979.07 on 2/28/2026 - an increase of \$5,787.30.
2. As of March 31st, 2026 Fly-In income was \$8,718.19 over expenses. We expect this amount to be reduced by \$300 when an expense reimbursement is processed in April. Ron will be delivering a more detailed report on the Fly-in financials.
3. The operating loss for Tuesday classes grew to (\$4,483.94) as of 3/31/2026 from (\$3,885.23) as of 2/28/2026 - an additional loss of (\$598.71).
4. The operating loss for Special dances grew to (\$791.05) as of 3/31/2026 from (\$368.04) as of 2/28/2026 - an additional loss of (\$423.01).
5. The proceeds of the 2026 Fly-In, our major fundraising event of the year, have more than covered the losses we have incurred for open houses, Tuesday classes and special dances.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Konecko

Katherine Cheetham

Co-Treasurers

April 6, 2026

New Caller Support Initiative - Board Report 4/9/2026

The mission of the New Caller Support Initiative (NCSI) is to recruit and sustain new square dance callers as they establish their ability to call for Independence Squares.

Recent Progress

Steve continues teaching classes at Club Sashay in Delaware County. He is also hosting afternoon practice sessions with dancers from Independence Squares, Busy Bees and other clubs. He is also participating in the recently revived Delaware Valley Callers Association.

Jay H. is coordinating the Delaware Valley Callers Association (DVCA), picking up the torch from John H. There are several new callers participating. Dane B. and Jenn E. are participating as well.

Next Steps

1. Continue reaching out to club members about the opportunity to learn to call.
2. Support workshops for Steve and other new callers to learn to call.
3. Facilitate opportunities for new callers to call tips at Independence Squares events.
4. Sponsor new callers to attend GCA and CallerLab hosted caller schools.

Comments and questions to Chris Deepphouse, cdeepphouse@gmail.com

Report to the Independence Squares Board from the Recruitment Committee

The committee met on March 26. Arin, Chris, George, Steve and Vinney were present. Marika, Will and Helena hope to be able to attend our April meeting.

Preparations

We discussed our preparations for the open houses on June 16 and September 8 as well as our participation in PhillyPride365 on June 7. Steve will make palm cards and flyers for open houses that are very similar to the ones used in previous years. Vinney will make a binder to have available on Tuesday nights so that people can sign up to help staff those events.

Budget

We recommend to the board that they give us a budget of \$600 to cover publicity (possibly including Facebook ads) and registration fees at events. The \$600 does not include the caller fee or venue fee for the two open houses.

Fee for Open House Participants

The committee recommends to the board that we again charge \$5 for entry into the open houses.

Feedback from our Mainstream Students

In order to help us decide if the advertising we did on Facebook was effective, Chris will make a short survey for our Mainstream students to determine if they were influenced by any of our publicity and if so where did they hear about Independence Squares.

Caller Liaison Committee Report

Independence Squares Board of Directors Meeting – April 8, 2026

The information below is accurate as of April 6, 2026, 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.

Please inform the Caller Liaison Committee of any changes regarding policies concerning the hiring of callers and dance schedules allowing ample time for the committee to make any adjustments or changes.

Dances Through April 2028

Callers have been contracted and confirmed for the following dances taking place April 2026 through April 2028.

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 People Care Center, Bridgewater, NJ 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm

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

Tuesday, June 16, 2026 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 – Mainstream and Plus Dayle Hodge 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

Tuesday, September 8, 2026 – Open House Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

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

Saturday, January 23, 2027 – Advanced and C1 Mark Franks 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, February 13, 2027 – Mainstream and Plus Valentine's Dance David Hartman

3:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Saturday, March 13, 2027 - 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm Mainstream and Plus; 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Dinner; 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Advanced and C1 Betsy Gotta

April 2027 Fly-in: Callers: Barry Clasper, Mark Franks, Eric Henerlau, John Hawley April 2-4, 2027 Sheraton Bucks County Please note that John Hawley will only be calling on Saturday, April 3, 2027

Saturday, June 12, 2027 – Mainstream and Plus Pride Dance Betsy Gotta 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Saturday, August 21, 2027 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 David Hartman will be calling with Dayle during the first half of this dance.

Saturday, October 16, 2027 - 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 Brian Jarvis

Saturday, December 4, 2027 – Glitter Ball Mainstream through C1 – Dayle Hodge – Merion Friends Meeting House 3:00 pm – 6:30 pm

March 31 – April 2, 2028 Fly-in: Callers: Betsy Gotta, Michael Kellogg, Justin Russell, Brian Jarvis Sheraton Bucks County Please note that Brian Jarvis will only be calling on Saturday, April 1, 2028

FYI Notes

- 1) Dayle Hodge called for the Mainstream and Plus classes on March 31, 2026 when Betsy Gotta was attending CallerLab and Mark Franks was attending to unexpected family matters.
- 2) On April 7, 2026, Mark Franks will begin teaching the additional Plus calls from the revised list as established by CallerLab so that the Plus dancers will be ready for the new program list in September 2026.
- 3) Both Betsy Gotta and Mark Franks will be available and ready to start classes on September 22, 2026. The next step for the board is to determine what programs to offer and whether it be a class or a workshop.
- 4) The committee is working on scheduling dances for 2027 based on the preferred dates from the board. The only dance remaining unfinished is the May 2027 Joint dance with Times Squares.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Rutkowski

Linda Bourdet

Dave Blatt

Independence Squares Fly-In Committee Report

April 9, 2026

2026 Fly-In wrap up

The financial numbers for the 2026 Fly-In have been finalized. A detailed report is included and a summary is below:

- Net income before 50/50 and basket sales: \$4136.19
- 50/50 income: \$832.00
- Basket income: \$3450.00
- Total Fly-In income: \$8418.19

2027 Fly-In (April 2-4, 2027)

As approved by the board, an amended contract with the Sheraton Bucks County Hotel which increases our room block and codifies the terms of the bar, has been signed by all parties.

2028 Fly-In (March 31-April 2, 2028)

As approved by the board, a contract with the Sheraton Bucks County Hotel has been signed for our 2028 Fly-In.

Miscellaneous

A new Fly-In role has been created to handle most advertising functions. Eric has agreed to take on that responsibility.

Respectfully submitted

Ron, for the Fly-In Committee