

# Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 24, 2025, 7:00 pm

Location: Zoom

for Zoom access use link in email OR call: 1-617-417-1621

**Attendance:** Cathy Crabtree, Anne Johnson, Alena Taylor, Robert McOwen, Jim Savitt, Hana Lang, Kat Dutton, Linda McJannet, Karen Sollins, Dave Ward

## Agenda

1. Minutes from previous meeting (**Alena**)
  - a. Make Anne's changes – see email. Otherwise approved.
2. Treasurer's report (**Cathy**)
  - a. Sept 30<sup>th</sup> is end of the fiscal year. Next month will be a deeper dive, so not all numbers are final. Membership is just fiscal 2025. Administrative expenses include marketing and honorariums to Copley Sq., Ordering post cards and bracelets. Generally a good year, better than the last few years.
3. Reports from Class Liaisons
  - a. **Jim Savitt**

Great Barrington, MA: (Ted Randolph) started up on 9/4. Missed this week as teachers were either out of town or getting ready for Scottish Weekend.

Northampton, MA: (Ilene Goldstein) class has started up on 9/11. Ilene is in conversation with 3-4 new folks who are interested.

Albany, NY: (Lois New & Barb Bemis) class continues with 8-10 dancers regularly. Fall Frolic preparations are pretty well done. No info yet on signups.
  - b. **Kat Dutton**

Somerville: (Kat Dutton) Continues to meet Thurs 1 to 2 sets of dancers, including new dancers.
  - c. **Hana Lang**

Chelmsford, MA: (Rebecca Gore) No news.

Bedford, MA: (Heather Day) No news to report

Fairlee, VT: (Gary Apfel) Preparing for Autumn Social Oct 4<sup>th</sup>. Hoping members of exec will spread the word and join themselves.
  - d. **Robert McOwen**

Cambridge, MA: (Alex Bowers) Announcement made about April festival with some interest.
  - e. **Cathy Crabtree**

Stow, MA: (Vickery Trinkaus-Randall) Class picnic was well attended. Will meet this Friday for the first time of the season. Will meet twice a month.

**f. Dave Ward**

Greenland, NH: (Merrill Henderson) Started Sept 9th, no new dancers.

Nashua, NH: (Loren Wright) No word from Loren, but 6-8 dancers.

Lancaster, NH: (Bill Tobin) Prospect for new dance venue at local church.

**g. Anne Johnson**

Kennebunk, ME: (Merrill Henderson) Started beginning of Sept. Only 4 to 5 dancers in attendance.

Belfast, ME: (Dawn Little) No news.

Brunswick, ME: (Anne Johnson) Started in Sept. Had 2 full sets and 4+ new dancers. Fall party on 10/18.

Bucksport, ME: (Dawn Little) No news.

**h. Karen Sollins**

Salem, MA: (MaryEllen Scannell) Started a 6-week program. 5 new dancers and 3 new dancers from last year continue to come.

Guilderland/Albany: (Bethany Wright) started a new class using Continuing Education. 12 people attended.

Scheduled business:

4. ESC Pinewoods debrief – **(Connie Kent and Geoffrey Wood)**

We had a fabulous 10th anniversary session with every bed in camp full! Our final camper was admitted off the waitlist on Day 1 of camp and miraculously was able to make it! There was only one camper remaining on the waitlist who we weren't able to admit. However, at our request, many people withdrew themselves from the waitlist as camp grew closer and they made other plans. This enabled us to more efficiently admit the campers who were still interested.

I believe Cathy has confirmed that this number is finalized: our total profit this year was \$2,923.62, to be split between RSCDS and CDS-Boston Center.

As a celebration of our 10th anniversary, we also printed ESCape t-shirts this year. Our goal was to break even on cost for the shirts, but we ended up with \$662 in profits, which we donated to scholarships for future campers, split between SDCEA and CDS-Boston Center.

We required masking for the first 24 hours of camp, in addition to testing upon arrival and at dinner on the first two days. We heard feedback from

several people who were appreciative of the covid precautions. We also got questions from several people about why our covid policy seemed "behind the times." However, when we explained that our goal is to provide a safe camp experience to more vulnerable people who may not feel comfortable at completely mask-free camps, we found everyone we talked to to be supportive of our goals and masking policy.

Classes were well attended throughout the week. We saw the typical dwindling of attendance as the week went on, although a few classes had higher attendance on day 2 than day 1--possibly related to the masking requirement, and the hot, humid weather.

Our staff was excellent, and we're extremely appreciative that our musicians were able to adjust on the fly when our bagpiper got sick right before camp and couldn't make it. Special thank you to Dan Emery for filling in at the last minute!

The highlight of ESCape for many people this year was the last night dance, when we had a huge thunderstorm and power outage in the middle of our Scottish set. With a wet dance floor, no lights, and no amplification, our staff and campers all stepped up to look after each other and create a truly magical last night. Our callers made a plan to adjust the evening program and switch to easy contra dances; campers lent their flashlights to illuminate the hall; the band came into the middle of Hands Across to play acoustically; we used a "human mic" system to repeat announcements so everyone could hear over the storm; camper musicians and callers joined the band and helped out on the dance floor to bolster the sound of the music and the caller. When the lights finally came back on, we were able to resume some of the previously planned program. Definitely an ESCape to remember!

Possible lottery feedback from Exec: 50% balance of admitting members before non-members. (there is a small discount for RSCDS members). Vote affirmative.

2026 musicians & teachers have been identified but not yet published.

## 5. PW Scottish Sessions 2025 debrief – (Marc and Keira Hartstein)

### a. Feedback

- Campers noted (correctly) that the music staff came together wonderfully to fill the gap, but several did note that the band wasn't as exciting as usual and that some classes had issues with musicians (including staff musicians) inexperienced at playing for SCD classes.
- Several campers noted persistent sound issues during classes in Hands Across.
- Some MCs appeared to be underprepared.

- Some campers expressed concern that classes as a whole were underattended.
- Many campers were pleased at the number and energy of 18 and under campers.
- Several campers expressed appreciation both in feedback and directly to the co-chairs that the session continues to have a Covid policy. Some noted that it is either the only dance event they still attend or the only one they can attend at least part of unmasked. Many appreciated that testing was straightforward and matter-of-fact, and having free tests helped.
- 6 campers expressed displeasure in the use of non-traditional role terms. 2 long-time campers said they would not be returning. (There were another 2 such last year as well) 10 campers expressed appreciation for the varied terms used for dance roles. As a note, teachers and MCs were asked to use terms they were comfortable with. They were encouraged to prefer “positional” terms whenever possible, and to introduce whatever role terms they might use before each dance using them.
- At the request of the Dining Hall we offered more consistent jobs which resulted in more variety in how many jobs people had. There were several complaints.
- Several campers expressed appreciation that things felt organized before and during the session. We mention this not to pat ourselves on the back, but to note that campers will give more benefit of the doubt when they perceive that things are well-organized and everybody is doing their best.

b. Safety

- A musician had to be sent home after the first night. We appreciate Exec’s support in deciding how to handle the situation. We received note of appreciation from several campers during and after the session for not ignoring it.
- A camper got so drunk Friday night of Session 2 he needed help from multiple campers and was unable to drive himself home Saturday morning. With camper assistance he was dropped off at the home of another camper who kindly offered to look after him while he slept it off.
- We received several complaints from campers and crew regarding loud drunk campers in the Pinecones Parking lot on Friday night of Session 2.
- One dancer fell and injured her wrist and had to go to urgent care. She and her husband withdrew from the remainder of Session 2. There was some conflict between multiple people providing help with differing priorities in care, exacerbated by the nearest hospital having had a somewhat recent name change leading to confusion. We did not investigate the cause of the fall to determine if any changes should be made next year.

c. Other

- A waiting list was required for Session 1. We discussed in advance and gave priority to staff and their guests, MCs, critical large roles (people who had already agreed to e.g. host a party, run the Auction), the 2023 co-chairs, and

people who had to withdraw from 2024 due to Covid, then conducted a lottery from the remaining people. We made adjustments to ensure first-timers got into at least one session, and that people flying to camp would not have an awkward gap in a hotel. While looking at the list we observed that 12 people who had applied for Session 1 only were still on the 21-person waiting list. We found that accepting them all would require going very deep into the lottery to find Both Session people to exclude, which seemed substantially unfair. The result was that prominent members of our community were at the front of the waitlist, which we acknowledge was not universally appreciated by the community. Two past campers regarding whom we had discussed behavior concerns (and agreed to admit to camp) also ended up on the waitlist. In the end we accepted two campers from the waitlist.

- 43 campers who attended ESCape also attended Scottish Sessions, with 40 carrying over from Session 1, 2 waitlisted and returning for Session 2, and 1 only attending Session 2. We believe this is a historic high, and that overlapping participation between the two sessions has been beneficial to both.

- Attendance recovered to roughly typical pre-Covid numbers. Notable sources of growth included: 8 new dancers from a class in Maine, 6 new Youths (1 under 18), and 6 ESCape campers who had never attended Scottish Sessions

Reports from liaisons:

6. Teaching & Music Committee (**Kat**)

- a. Chair: Susie Petrov, Vice-Chair: Howard Lasnik, Secretary: Illana Schmitt
- b. Talked about music for the Highland Ball and music stuff for Scottish Pinewoods 2026.

7. Boston Scottish Country Dancers (**Karen**)

- a. Open rehearsal on Sunday.

8. Highland Ball (**Karen**) –

- a. Please delegate the reaching out to these possible chairs: (Hannah – Cathy, Dirk and Emily – Alena, Ken and Sara - Linda) Plan for getting out initial Save-the-Date publicity.
- b. Been in contact with Susie and Tom about musicians and music.
- c. Save-the-dates will compose a save-the-date email will go out by Linda.

9. Nominating Committee (Karen)

- a. No news.

10. Fall Concert (**Cathy**)

- a. Rehearsals have started.
- b. Post cards mailed, posted to websites, and will reach out to the other Scottish organizations in the area after the weekend. Email blasts to go out in the next couple of weeks.

- c. Armory is ready. Platform is ready.
- 11. ESCape (**Kat**) See Scheduled Business
- 12. Pinewoods Scottish Sessions (**Kat**) See Scheduled Business
- 13. Membership (**Anne**)
  - a. 124 individuals so far. Ended last year with 247 individuals. Anne will send out another reminder at the beginning of October. Will also send out email to remind teachers/class leaders to remind their classes.
- 14. Website and Calendar (**Robert**)
  - a. Updated Who's Who, which has already been updated on the website. Calendar event created for the workshop is up.
- 15. Equipment (**Hana**) System will be in use on 10/18 in Brunswick.
- 16. Publicity and Social Media (**Alena**)
  - a. Very few responses were received from class leaders & teachers to the survey of how and if and what they'd like for social media presence. Link is in the Tartan Times to bring in a wider audience.
- 17. NH Highland Games 2025 (**Karen**)
  - a. Highland Games was last weekend, collected some names for new possible dancers, sounded like they had a good group of try-it. Full report to follow.
- 18. Capital Region Highland Games 2025 (**Jim**)
  - a. Albany did a demo and we got a few dancers to join in Ceilidh dancing. They want us back next year.
- 19. Bookstore and Archives: (**Hana**)
  - a. RSCDS Archives are in NH, no news, but will continue trying to reach
  - b. \$2300 sold at Pinewoods, \$700 to consignment. Successful bookstore year. Offering very reduced prices for numbered books. Not many people purchase CDs. Hana to send info to Robert.
- 20. *Tartan Times* (**Linda**)
  - a. Recent edition went out, and excited about the next issue to have advice from RSCDS, as presented by Jen for warming up before dance class.
- 21. North American Scottish Country Dance Festival (**Karen**) Competition in April in Philadelphia. McNab Dance possible, under-18 team possible, Charles announced recruitment efforts in Cambridge.

Old Business:

22. Conclude discussion of and vote on “incentives/rewards” for Chairs of major events (PW, Ball, and others?)
  - a. Commemorating people at the ball is fantastic. We will recognize and thank the chairs in the Tartan Times. Vote is unanimous to celebrate our Chairs.
23. Hand-written thank you notes to co-chairs—clarify who should do this in each case.
  - a. Linda to write thank-you notes going forward as Branch President.

New business:

24. Language for calling: PW Scottish Sessions evaluations: excerpts
  - a. Progress has been made. No need to re-survey or survey the Pinewoods community. Please show compassion for those who are trying to get used to the change.

Adjournment: 9:08pm

**Next Meeting: October 29, 2025, 7:00 PM**

(Alena will not be in attendance. Kat will take notes and format for distribution.)

## Executive Committee and Liaisons -- 2025-2026 *Rev. 8-26-25*

### Officers

President: Linda McJannet

Vice-President: Karen Sollins

Treasurer: Cathy Crabtree

Secretary: Alena Taylor

### Event and Committee Liaisons

ESCape: Kat

Equipment: Hana

Boston Scottish Country Dancers: Karen

Nominating Committee: Karen

Highland Ball: Karen

NH Highland Games: Karen

TMC: Kat

Scottish Sessions Pinewoods: Kat

Membership: Anne

Summer's End: Anne

*Tartan Times*: Linda

Bookstore and Archives: Hana

Website and Calendar: Robert

Publicity: Alena

Concert: Cathy

Hana Lang

Chelmsford, MA: Rebecca Gore

Bedford, MA: Heather Day

Fairlee, VT: Gary Apfel

Robert McOwen

Cambridge, MA: Alex Bowers

Cathy Crabtree:

Stow, MA: Vickery Trinkaus-Randall

Dave Ward

Greenland, NH: Merrill Henderson

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Lancaster, NH: Bill Tobin

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Great Barrington, MA: Ted Randolph

Northampton, MA: Ilene Goldstein

Albany, NY: Lois New & Barb Bemis

Anne Johnson

Kennebunk, ME: Merrill Henderson

Belfast, ME: Dawn Little

Brunswick, ME: Anne Johnson

Bucksport, ME: Dawn Little

Kat Dutton:

Somerville : Kat Dutton

Karen Sollins:

Salem, MA: MaryEllen Scannell