

RSCDS Boston Branch
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 3, 2024, 7:15 pm

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

Attendance: Linda, Kat, Ted, Marsha, Cathy, Emily, David, Connie, Anne (briefly Mary Ellen Scannell, for Highland Ball and April Birnie, for ESCape)

1. MINUTES from the previous meeting:
 - a. A few corrections: we need to develop rules for kids at Pinewoods from Chris, Cathy was present but marked not in attendance, ESCape is presenting in January, not February, Spelling of Burns Night
 - b. Approved as corrected
2. TREASURER'S REPORT (**Cathy**)
 - a. December is a quiet month – our budget is in good shape.
 - b. Under donations --someone renewed twice (is it a donation, or should we refund them?)
 - c. Nashua class requested a retroactive music subsidy for their New Year's Day party. \$365, approved to them! They had 4 sets and a few extras.
3. CLASS LIAISON REPORTS

Great Barrington (Ted) Has changed from Thursday to Wednesday in order to court a couple solid new dancers! This will hopefully mean less cancellations!

Northampton (Ted) It continues, 3-4 regular couples, some others come and go, no serious increase in membership but they still have fun

Albany (Ted) Going strong with hybrid events - about 20 at Lois's house for Hogmanay and another 20 online. Eighteen dances in 3 hours, and an Auld Lang Syne at the end! Shoutout to the teachers who make it possible --all over New England, Nova Scotia, and Florida! Flurry is next upcoming event --Lois is teaching a class, hosting a Scottish Dance Party. Flurry is 16-18 of February --is it on the branch calendar?

Greenland (Anne) will be starting up again after brief hiatus for the holidays

Kennebunk (Anne) will be starting up again after brief hiatus for the holidays

Brunswick (Anne) will be starting up again after brief hiatus for the holidays

Nashua (Anne) had a good holiday party

Fairlee (David) No report

Cambridge (Kat) Veronica's Attic will hopefully make it at the end of the month (maybe Burns' Night or the last week)

Bedford (Emily) Heather is the instructor. First class of the month will be focused on beginners

Salem (Connie) MaryEllen reports that she's stepping down from leading it for a little while. There will be no classes in January.

Stow (Connie) Jan 12th with Christine playing, held party in Dec to honor Jeanetta
Chelmsford (Connie) continues to meet once a month

4. SCHEDULED BUSINESS

A. Highland Ball Budget (**MaryEllen** and **Sharon**)

- a. The Chelmsford Hall is hosting(?) the Welcome Dance and a pre-dinner for people from far away. They have air conditioning and plenty of parking. Torrent is coming to play (Ross and Sarah Parker also another person) Ask them to play Brunch too if they'd like to not leave immediately. They aren't asking for travel costs since they were planning to attend regardless. Kat is Brunch Chair and Sharon will be in touch
- b. Brunch is at Marc and Keira's house in Ipswich. Need discussion about M&K's expectations, how they want the property to be managed, etc. Sharon will reach out to Kat, they will talk to Hartsteins.
- c. On ball application, we are indicating we're ready to help people with transportation to ball/welcome dance/brunch
- d. MaryEllen met with the caterer in person a few times. Some of the caterer's staff is MIA, some of their calendar is busier than ever before.
- e. Approximate budget --same from last year + 10%
- f. Derik Kalish who does sound has asked if he can get \$450 instead of \$400, ME believes he's done it very successfully in the past (and was adored by previous bands) and she's fine with that.
- g. We're also paying Thom Howe \$50 for sound at Welcome Dance and Brunch
- h. When did we last increase? Has been same as 2019 and 2022. Paired with catering increase --is +10% because inflation/prices higher, or because we are expecting more people? The caterer doesn't plan to increase too much, but hopefully the +10% is enough of a buffer. We are keeping it at \$75 per ticket
- i. Speaking of money --if we don't make money that's okay, Exec is typically happy to subsidize it, as it is our premiere event!
- j. Thinking about not renting the Fancy Piano, but hopefully Veronica's Attic will cover it
- k. Next steps: Finish their graphics, finish their ball directions, get the application out, right after Mount Cardigan (MLK weekend) they should be able to send all info to website and all classes, and personally invite people -- what can we do to help you come to the ball?
- l. Budget Approved.

B. ESC Budget and Application (**April** and **Connie**)

- a. Changes for this year
 - i. Increased all full-time staff by \$50 (music and teacher)
 - ii. Hiring fewer musicians than last year
 - iii. A couple part-time musician roles in the budget that might not get filled (but are left in budget for flexibility)
 - iv. Part time music/ritual -- Laurel is music and Ritual dance, normally this is \$0, this year is \$500
- b. Pub Night is completely camper funded --Chris Bracken uses solely camper donations
- c. Pinewoods Fee should be reflective of increased PCI fee, we increased our camper fee a little bit more just in case.
- d. Scottish Sessions are accepting kiddos, ESC has already been approved by CDS so they can't change rules yet, and will continue to be 13+ but also will be by-discretion-for-dancer-children and all-ages of staff children
- e. Budget Approved.

C. Preliminary planning for 2024 Fall event (**Linda and Cathy**)

- a. It seems likely we will host again next November - Cathy had good conversation with Armory, before they closed for the holidays.
- b. To avoid Fiddle Hell, we asked for 3rd or 17th, or possibly the 24th - we don't have a confirmed date yet since they are sorting out their winter market
- c. No artist yet, until we have confirmed a date
- d. We like the Armory and hope to improve upon last year
- e. Hanneke received extra money because of a large attendance and our surplus was \$956

5. COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

- A. Teaching & Music Committee (**Kat**) – no TMC meeting since last exec meeting.
- B. Boston Scottish Country Dancers (**Marsha**) – Burns' Night gig on January 19th, for the Officer's Club.
- C. Highland Ball (**Marsha**) - See report above.
- D. Nominating Committee (**Marsha**) - Knows they need 2 people for exec, said "we're on it" nothing since.
- E. Fall 2024 Concert (**Cathy**) – So far so good.
- F. ESCape (**Connie**) – See report above.
- G. Scottish Sessions Pinewoods (**Kat**)
 - a. General survey - Just gender or scope creep of covid, kids, etc?
 - b. Kids should just be part of the Pinewoods eval
 - c. Masking/covid should be case-by-case basis
 - d. Multiple members in favor of keeping it focused to just role terms
 - e. Subcommittee -- Connie, Alex Bowers, Kat, Debbie, Linda
 - f. Also needs a lot of framing (Linda can help!)
 - g. Will hopefully be ready in conjunction with Susie's workshop on Feb 11
- H. Membership (**Anne**)

- a. Next year should be easier due to more familiarity with the database
- b. shared the membership numbers by type with the committee. Cathy and I had a slight discrepancy in the count (which we have since straightened out). 223 individuals and 171 members (which includes couples).

I. Website (**David**)

- a. Have a Who's Who on the website to include non-elected leadership, like chairs? It exists, but it should be much easier to find
- b. Put all Exec/TMC/etc in one list and put a link to that Who's Who page on the website. Action Item: Replace two tabs under "about the branch" (Exec Committee and TMC) and replace it with the single tab "Who's Who" with a combined list of all roles
- c. Maybe keep TMC because it has other information

J. Calendar (**Marsha**)

- a. Susan Eisley maybe wants to start a NE and NY webpage for tracking/advertising events. She has been asked to create a prototype and bring it to us

K. Equipment (**Connie**) No updates.

L. Publicity and Social Media Committee (**Alena**)

- a. Many ideas have been proposed, including for BSCD, there is homework to do. Next meeting is in late January. It might become a standing committee in the long term but we're going to push off until they've met more.

M. Loon Mountain Games (3rd weekend Sept) (**Marsha**)

- a. No response, Marsha to get in touch with Merrill Henderson

N. Bookstore (**Emily**) - Laurie reports there's nothing to report

O. Tartan Times (**Emily/Linda**)

- a. New issue is soon! A little shorter. Nikki is doing two versions --booklet and screen-ready. Still working out browser/phone reading for electronic versions

6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

- a. Revised Perpetual Calendar—review and approval?
 - i. Looks good, thank you Linda and Cathy for reviewing!
 - ii. Moving ESC to November (only budget, not application) and Equipment to December, for balance.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Branch Zoom Account. (**Cathy**)
 - i. Does not make sense to buy multiple accounts. Cathy proposed to have one zoom account for The Branch, then share the password and login among multiple people (not shared with whole branch but with several specific events)
 - ii. Cannot host multiple meetings at the same time.

1. Monday Night - Cambridge Class
 2. Tuesday – TMC
 3. Wednesday – Exec
 4. Sunday – Albany
 5. Saturdays and Fridays - offer to one-off workshops?
- iii. Admin does not have to do meeting scheduling for recurring meetings (TMC, Exec), but we should have an admin for one-offs. Marsha volunteered to administrate scheduling.

8. MEETING ADJOURNED

Next Meeting: January 31, 2024, at 7:15 PM via Zoom