

Boston Branch of the Royal Scottish Dance Society
Minutes of the Executive Committee

May 26, 2021

Zoom meeting: Marsha Byrnes, Bill Card, Cathy Crabtree, Karen Gansz, Susan Haines, Winifred McGowan, Linda McJannet, Lance Ramshaw, Alena Taylor, Jeremy Thorpe

1. **Minutes from April 28, 2021 meeting** – The minutes of the April 28, 2021 meeting were accepted with two corrections/deletions from the Scottish Sessions Pinewoods report. The deletions were the line concerning the capacity guideline and the line concerning teacher and musician pay for a shorter session.
2. **Old Business** –
 - a) Non-discrimination policy – Cathy had drafted a non-discrimination policy for the Branch, and Lance had sent a few revisions/clarifications. Exec moved and approved the policy with the revisions from Lance. It will be posted on the Branch website.
3. **New Business** –
 - a) COVID guidance for classes – The recent information from the CDC is saying that fully vaccinated people can gather either indoors or outside without needing to wear masks or practice social distancing. By law, there do not seem to be any restrictions. The class liaisons asked their classes how they feel about resuming in-person dancing.
 - Salem – still requires masks
 - Fairlee – will be holding an outdoor meeting without masks to discuss how they want to proceed
 - Belfast – plans to hold in-person mini dances from June to August on the last Wednesday of the month
 - Brunswick – will be meeting for the next three weeks, then will be off for the summer
 - Albany – is doing some small in-person dancing at Lois' house and continuing with using Zoom
 - Newton and Bedford – are talking about what to do in the fall
 - Brookline – hopes to start in September pending guidance from the city
 - Cambridge – may do outdoor sessions this summer, but they're still in flux

A question-and-answer section in the NY Times suggests that even with the number of people being vaccinated, activities should not resume until community transmission is low in a particular area. Also, groups/people should do as they feel comfortable. Exec discussed requiring dancers to complete their vaccination before participating and whether a policy was needed for Branch events. It was decided that the CDC information should be shared with the class leaders and recommended that participants demonstrate proof of vaccination.

- b) Annual General Meeting preparations – John Crabtree will host the Zoom meeting. Reports will be included from Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, ESCape, and the Ceilidh.
4. Scheduled reports from liaisons –
- a) Scottish Sessions Pinewoods (Jeremy) – The new Pinewoods Executive Director, Chris Jacobs, takes over on June 14th. A program provider meeting will be occurring soon, and Plymouth is scheduled to lift its restrictions on Friday. Capacity will be capped at 125 to allow for plenty of space. We may be able to determine what should be done with the Dining Hall and the Camphouse. There are currently 107 registered for Session I and 87 for Session II, so we are close to the break even point. A no-refund deposit is due when the contract is received.
 - b) ESCape (Bill) – April Birnie and Daniel Potter have confirmed that ESCape will be occurring this year. CDS Boston has said that they are willing to take a loss. April and Daniel forwarded several budget scenarios with a maximum loss of \$2800 for the Branch. It was moved and accepted that the Branch is willing to accept the risk. Information has been sent to the Branch website, and Meyer has been posting it for the co-chairs.
 - c) Bookstore (Cathy) – Laurie Somario is ready to take over the Bookstore, and John Crabtree volunteered to help move it from Maine to Massachusetts, if needed. The Bookstore will be at Pinewoods, and Alena Taylor has volunteered to help man it (or else we could do the “honor system”). Thistles and Things is also hoping to come to Pinewoods.
 - d) Teaching and Music Committee (Marsha) – Charles Liu and Robert McOwen are scheduled to be going off TMC this year. Laurie Somario will serve in the at-large position. According to the By-Laws, no one is to serve more than 2 consecutive terms. Robert has volunteered to stay on, moving from a musician position to a teacher position. He brings a lot of experience and technical abilities to the role. It was moved and approved to ask Robert to remain on TMC, but we also may want to consider revising the By-Laws. Looking ahead, there may be a Candidates Class to consider. Headquarters also has a program for people who are willing to teach but don’t wish to have their footwork critiqued. It is called “Basic Teaching Skills” and is a non-examined 12-hour course that provides an introduction to the various skills involved in teaching Scottish Country Dancing.
 - e) Nominating Committee (Marsha) – Gary Apfel is going off the Committee, so a replacement is needed. At the AGM, volunteers will be solicited, and an e-mail describing the job requirements will be sent to the membership.
 - f) Fall 2022 Concert (Linda) –Linda has sent an e-mail to Alasdair Fraser’s agent asking if he might be willing to do a Concert for the Branch in 2022.
 - g) Membership (Susan) – The rates for 2020 – 2021 were reduced 25%. It was moved and approved that we return to the 2019 – 2020 rates of \$92 for a

joint membership and \$55 for a single. The membership year runs from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

5. Optional reports from liaisons –

- a) Highland Ball (Marsha) – The virtual Highland Ball went very well. Charles Liu did a large portion of the work, Marsha handled the publicity, and donations were taken for the SDCEA. Marsha will be joined by Elizabeth Anderson as her co-chair for next year's Ball.
- b) Loon Mountain Games (Karen) – The Games are occurring this year, the same games only slightly smaller. The dates are September 17 – 19, 2021.
- c) Joint Ceilidh (Cathy) - The 2nd Saturday in November is the date reserved for the 2021 Ceilidh.
- d) Boston Scottish Country Dancers (Marsha) – The team will start up again in preparation for the Ceilidh.
- e) New Hampshire Highlands (Susan) – The committee is exploring with Camp Methodios as to whether or not it will be safe to hold camp this year.
- f) *Tartan Times* (Susan) – Nothing to report at this time.
- g) Website (Lance) – Meyer has been posting the ESCape information.
- h) Equipment (Lance) – Thom Howe is going to set up the equipment to see if it is working.
- i) Class Liaisons – See above.

6. Next Meeting –

- a) June 30th