

# RSCDS Boston Branch Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

## October 29, 2025 7:00pm via Zoom

**Attendance:** Linda, Jim, Cathy, Kat, Hana, Robert, David, Anne, Karen

**Treasurer's Report:** See Cathy's report for details. Summary is that membership is a little up from last year and we increased rates a bit, so things look very healthy. Pinewoods and Concert last year were both very healthy. Classes are using their subsidies, yay!

**Minutes:** In general, keep a private/just-for-exec archive with full names, but try to scrub names from the minutes when possible (especially for privacy around decisions).

- Small correction: "Jen's advice" should be "advice from RSCDS, as presented by Jen" (re: warm-ups)

**Class Liaison Reports:** All classes are encouraged to send photos/videos/etc to Nikki for Social Media reasons!

- Great Barrington
  - No report
- Northampton
  - No report
- Albany
  - Fall frolic was a success! About 48 attendees from all over Boston Branch and some visitors from DeVal and NY. Dancing for the whole weekend with teaching by Yvonne Yang, ball prep by Karen Sollins, and music by Elke Baker and Liz Donaldson. Parts were hybrid and people were able to attend via zoom in lieu of the normal Albany Sunday night zoom class.
- Somerville
  - Has determined the class ethos: "Do Hard Things Badly". Getting around 10-12 dancers most nights, had a bonus fifth-Thursday class for Halloween.
- Bedford
  - About fourteen dancers each week. Have managed live music sometimes recently which lets Heather dance as well as teach (thanks Beth Murray and Catherine Miller!)
- Chelmsford
  - No report
- Fairlee
  - Autumn Social on October 4th had approximately 30 dancers. Great music from Liz Anderson and her band!
- Cambridge
  - Special dance event to recognize MaryEllen Scannell went extremely well -- approximately 73 attendees including the band and four small children!
  - Everybody enjoyed the party on Monday evening. Joan Hill and Judy Reynolds Shaw both very much appreciated being able to join the celebration on Zoom. Great to see so many people dancing including the children!

- The Branch SAGM is on 10th November. We're assuming that it will be run as usual with Exec providing refreshments and helping with setting up the hall.
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- Stow
  - Meeting twice a month (on 2nd/4th Fridays) and having 2-3 sets and generally at least one live musician. Sometimes the dancers are so enthusiastic the dancing goes later than planned!
- Greenland
  - Had a promising start to the season but lost a few weeks to church repainting. Looking hopeful for November!
- Nashua
  - Regularly gets 6-8 dancers, Loren is working on a program for the New Year's Day party
- Lancaster
  - No formal response, are presumably still looking for a venue. We have reached out to Bill Tobin to let him know exec may be able to help with insurance
- Kennebunk
  - Meets every Sunday, usually with a small number of dancers (4-6, occasionally as many as 8). Merrill has been very creative!
- Brunswick
  - Fall party had 40+ attendees and was very well received! They continue to get new dancers regularly
- Belfast and Bucksport
  - Hosted a joint Halloween class party with about 18 total and some good costumes. Dawn Little runs both classes every week successfully.
- Guilderland (the new Albany-area class)
  - Bethany Wright has been running a short-term class through the rec center, her and Lois are considering an end-of-class party to celebrate that
- Salem
  - Charles Liu has joined the music rotation alongside Susie and Dirk! They sent a brief video of their two newest dancers practicing (alongside several shoes!). The class sends a list of pointers every week after the class, with videos, suggestions, etc --a great way to keep practicing!

**AGM Delegates:** Votes were due by November 6th. Linda has said our proxy is able to vote for the various organizational changes --the only policy change is an increase in membership fees and consideration of joint vs single memberships to create better equity between the levels. HQ will also be ceasing publication of Scottish Country Dancer magazine in print.

**SAGM prep:** Monday November 10th, remind the people you liaison for that they need to give reports if relevant. Nikki will present on the social media report!

Cathy proposed moving some reports from AGM (June) to SAGM (November) to better balance the length of the two meetings. General consensus was that this is a good idea to look at and work on for next year --sometime in the next six months we will compare lists of what reports are given when and try rebalancing, then we will give our "normal" slate at the AGM in June'26,

and the "new" slate at the SAGM in Nov'26 (which might mean some reports happen twice in six months --this is okay!)

**Website:** Noted that there is nothing about Pinewoods Benefit Ball, it has been determined that is not occurring this year. We had a brief discussion about the future of PBB including ways to potentially raise money for the branch and what we could do with additional funds.

**Pinewoods 2026 Budget:** Short version: We approved Jeremy and Kendra's budget with a small increase in the cost for S1 and keeping the same costs for S2 and both sessions (based around the idea that S1 is more likely to sell out, so providing an incentive for dancers to attend S2). See Jeremy's summary/google sheet for more details.

Summary of details:

- PCI raised rates by \$2 per bed per night
- All staff teachers are full-time instead of having two half-time --this means our fees are the same, but we pay one fewer housing waiver
- Geoffery's travel is being paid as "local" since he will be in town for ESCape (rather than paying for full airfare from California)
- Hanneke has her music budget and is working on hiring --she is electing to hire mostly east coast musicians so may come in well under on her travel budget. She has mentioned that the payment is comparatively low to other events, we may want to increase musician fee in future years if possible.
- Most fees are the same as last year, admin is higher (printing costs, buying more magnets), party budget is a little higher
- Considering having slightly fewer parties (last year S1 had seven parties in 3 days, which is admittedly a lot)
- Primary goal in budget is to continue to keep attendance up (hoping that last year was start of a new trend and not an anomaly!).

**TMC Report:** We celebrated Dirk and Emily as ball chairs and have formed a sub-committee to create the ball program so advertising can begin around New Years. Pinewoods 2026 has a full slate of teachers hired (a guest teacher from Germany, Linda Henderson, Geoffrey Wood, and Katherine Giacoletti to teach highland and step). MC list has been drafted and are being voted on.

**Boston Scottish Country Dancers:** Getting ready for the concert performance! Considering doing a display for the North American Festival. Has a few new dancers, and one who has rejoined after being gone for a few seasons.

**Highland Ball:** Ready with a "75th anniversary" theme. Venue, band, sound are set. Welcome dance location is being chosen, and budget and program are being worked out. Next up is advertising!

**North American Festival:** Charles Liu and Jen Schoonover are the point people for creating teams from the Boston Branch. We are hoping to have a social team and possibly a display team --they have found better results by approaching people individually rather than mass emails.

**Concert:** Going well except that everyone is waiting until the last minute to buy tickets again, which is nerve wracking. Will be a great event!

**Membership:** 190 members currently!

**Equipment:** Used for the Brunswick party, all went well.

**Bookstore:** Offering a \$1 sale on used RSCDS books --a flyer has been sent out to the teacher's list advertising this!

**Archives:** They have a collection of Tartan Times as well, and Hana and Linda will sort out specific documents to send to them.

**New Hampshire Highland Games:** Merrill reports 40-50 people for the ceilidh dancing, and 4-5 sets for SCD. The games provided a much-needed sound system, since they were quite close to the bagpipes for the highland dancing. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped at the table and as ringers in the dancing. The NHScot organization is acquiring and renovating a building in Concord NH, which would be an excellent place to start a new class in the future!

**Next Meeting:** December 3rd