

Swing N Country Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 26, 2009

Present: Ann Clark, Rich Cooper, Bill Dortch, Marcia Emmett, Jerry Kieras, Leah Noparstak, Roger Peterson, Susie Kaplan, Tobi Oberman, Judi Troemel
Absent: Don Moeller,
Guests: None

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by President, Roger Peterson.
Mission Statement read by: Marcia Emmett

President's Report:

- Next Board Meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2009.
- Roger stated we are doing really, really well at not making a profit.
- Roger suggested tonight's meeting focus on the Marketing agenda.
- A \$500 presentation will be made at Swing City Chicago this coming weekend in Jenna Becker's name. This represents proceeds made from showing the movie Love n' Dancing.
- Roger requested that each committee submit their proposed 2010 budget. It was suggested by Rich that we hold a separate meeting where the agenda is just budget. November 30 was the agreed date. Site is TBD.
Action Item: Each committee will bring their budget drafts to the November 16th meeting.
Action Item: Everyone will save November 30 on their calendars.
- Elections for 2010 will be run by Leah. Roger recommended Chris Pappas as a good candidate. Tobi suggested Val also. Roger asked the board members to think really hard about bringing names in.
- Tax Exempt Status: If we want to have this status we need to request it from the Illinois Department of Revenue and attach articles of incorporation and copy of the by-laws that must include free admittance to dances and lessons for hardship cases.
Action Item: Need US Internal Revenue Service letter.

Membership: We are \$1863 behind budget. Per Roger, this is still good considering the economy.

Susie suggested we look at the St. Louis Rebels web site. They have gone to a single date renewal and have an excellent way of explaining how it works to their members.

Attendance: It is lower but not really bad. There is a concern that there are now more places to dance. The economy is also a factor.

Communications: Roger requested that if a Committee takes an action, to think about whom else on the Board needs to be informed because of that action.

Food and Drink: We cannot bring in homemade foods to Franklin Park.

SNC Officer and Committee Reports: (Listed alphabetically)

Dance Camp Chicago: (Leah, Chair) Julie, Tobi, Roger, Susie, Don

Per Leah, a tentative schedule for DCC has been created. The quantity for the main mailing/distribution is 1500 copies and includes clubs, people and other entities. Tobi will distribute DCC flyers to the various club tables at Swing City this coming weekend. Jerry asked for copies of flyers that he could distribute. It was stated that any of us can copy the pdf file and print flyers. Mayl will also put out DDC flyers. Leah is checking into fleece hoodies, pullovers, etc that can be Dance Camp branded. Committee members will purchase their own. They will do a trial cost. Alfred already has Vector art which possibly can be used.

Action Item: Roger to call Bob Boyle regarding ASCAP.

Education: (Tobi, Chair) Penny and Jerry. (Susie resigned).

Report was submitted. Tobi requested discussion on Item 2 which called for the teacher to either review the previous week's lesson or start a new amalgamation. Per Rich (also an instructor), *keep it simple* and let the dancers master the technique first. Intermediates can handle new amalgamations; Beginners can not. Tobi feels too much information is taught. Rich suggested that the Beginners be an entirely separate focus than the Intermediates. The new lesson time actually lasts 40 minutes with a ten-minute q/a. This new format is transparent to the students.

The ongoing concern is that we invite folks to join in any time, taking even a single lesson rather than the whole 4-pack.

Happenings: (Judi, Chair) Julie and Bill.

Action Item: Call Constant Contact to find out what they need to prove we are a non-for-profit organization so that we can take advantage of the advertised 30% discount for one year advance payment. There was a motion made by Roger to spend \$336.00 for one year advance payment to Constant Contact. Judi seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

It was agreed to promote all dance venues in *Happenings* regardless of reciprocity.

Marketing: Jerry Kieras (Chair) Roger, Judi, Susie members.
A report was submitted as per the following:

Action Item: Jerry is creating a new flyer distribution list which will be made available to all board members.

Action Item: Facebook Invitations: Jerry will start inviting people he knows and hopefully have enough members to send out invitations by the holiday party.

Action Item: Who We Are: Jerry will put together a tri-fold flyer on Who We Are.

Action Item: Jerry will create a poster to display at each dance. This poster will advertise SNC events.

T-Shirt Advertising: Jerry wants to run the *Send-Us-a-Picture-of-Yourself* contest for a whole year; Susie and other members want to make the contest shorter. The need for shorter increments, such as 3 to 4 months, was discussed. The idea of *Holding-the-SNC-Fan-Up* instead of wearing a t-shirt was introduced. Judi invited members to come out to her garden should they ever want to see her in a t-shirt. The T-Shirt advertising discussion was put on hold pending the next Marketing meeting scheduled for December 3 (place, time, TBD)

Action Item: Jerry: Contact all SNC teachers asking if they would like to donate a 30-minute dance lesson.

Action Item: Rich. Jerry requested that Rich provide him with the names of the Club's or Events that we currently provide financial support.

Action Item: Leah. Jerry requested Leah provide him with the names of the Club's or Events that we provided financial support in the past.

Club Logo Patches: If we sell items, even if we are tax exempt, we need to charge tax. Selling club logo patches was tabled for future discussion at the next Marketing Meeting.

Action Item: Jerry. Pink Card: Update current card to include the SNC calendar on the back.

Per Roger, Merry Chapman used to be quite the marketing person out at the Ranch. If we could go around, pass out cards and just talk up the Club to people, attendance to lessons and dances might go up. Another suggestion is to welcome people by their first names. Roger suggested an in-house album with photos to help the front desk greet members by name. It was agreed that this idea would require more work and still would not provide immediate identification. Leah and Tobi are very good at face-name association.

Conclusion: If we can think of better ideas to recruit new members, let Roger know. Jerry said he would get pink cards out to the Silver Saddle Reunion

Action Item: Judi. Attempt to get name-tags to wear at dances cheaper. Currently they are very expensive and are used only at lessons.

Jerry proposed that we drop the non-member fee for dances from \$12 to \$10. Tobi countered by stating we should then raise our lesson price to \$5 from \$4. Judi stated there is good marketing strategy in pricing at a ten dollar cap. The topic was tabled for discussion during the budgeting process.

Music: Leah (Chair), Roger, Rich, Susie, Ann, Jerry, Ron Oberman – members.

Rich, Hania and Don are now looking through 393 songs and rating them on a scale of 1 to 5. The process is going slower than anticipated.

Operations: Leah (Chair), Roger - member

Audio Cable Mix Up Problem: The Rebels had a cable problem at one of their dances and used both our audio cables and Xdance audio cables for their dance. They share the storage cabinet with SNC. Borrowing our cables is fine, however, they got the cables mixed up at the end of the evening and we had many of the Xdance cables and Xdance had some of ours.

December 18 dance: We expect low attendance. An IPOD play list will be used to save money.

The 50/50 raffle was cancelled at the last dance due to low attendance. Leah first surveyed the attending dancers before making this decision. There are no 50/50 raffles scheduled until after the first of the year. Susie presented the idea of letting dancer's know exactly what we are spending the 50/50 money on; such as a Club's Wish List. She suggested this might generate more participation.

New Videographer in January. Gary is quite interested; however the quality of his camera is not good. Two get-started actions: See if we can find a camera that is good enough to video; secondly final good output of copying.

Action Item: Bill and Roger will try to make the DVD copying done in a simple way.

Toys for Tots collection will occur at two dances: November 20 and December 4.

Secretary's Report:

The main correction was the hours involved for a volunteer videographer. Time involved is 8-9 hours/month not per week plus attending all Wednesday lessons. The balance of the revisions was grammatical and spelling corrections.

Action Item: Judi will provide Roger with a corrected version of the minutes.
(done)

Motion was made to approve the minutes as corrected and was **unanimously approved.**

Special Events: December Holiday Dinner: Leah, Tobi and Julie.

Theme: "A Gingerbread Holiday". Cookies and water served upstairs is part of Holiday Planning committee instead of Hospitality. Leah had a question as to the decorating/door prize budget which was answered by Rich.

Treasurer's Report: Rich (Chair)

Clarification on the submitted treasurer's report is as follows:

We went below minimum in the checking account and were fined; this may occur again with Dance Camp. (It was suggested Rich smile at the bank teller to get this waived.) Rich is looking into eliminating the carbon portion of the ordered blank checks as a cost-saving item.

For \$100, membership can be had in all three organizations: ASCAP, BMI and National Fast Dance Organization. The board voted on the expense which was **unanimously approved.**

Action Item: Leah will provide Rich with our actual membership number.

Action Item: Rich will find out if Dance Camp will be covered in the \$100 membership fee.

Web Site: Roger (Chair)

Roger has been working DCC web site and is waiting for more information from the Committee.

Adjournment: Leah motioned for adjournment at 9:46 pm. **Motion unanimously passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Troemel