

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Cincinnati Contra Dance Board
01-13-20, 6:33 pm, Wyoming Fine Art Center Room 202**

Attendance: Board members - Debra Barrett, Ashley Greathouse, Tricia Gorman, John McCain, Kurt Grannan, Frank Buschelman, Larry Lankford, Mary Rekers, Charles Wallner, Darlene Underwood, Other attendees - Amy Fultz, Liz Burkhart, Lea Crain.

1- Whether to accept credit card payments for Pigtown Fling.

- Lea presented information on PayPal and Square. Lea uses both in her business and has not had any problems. Frank said that we already have a PayPal account that was used to pay band members for Pigtown 2019. PayPal charges 2.2% plus \$0.10 per transaction. This would be used for online registrations.
- Lea has the equipment to use Square and will let the CCD (Cincinnati Contra Dancers) use it for payments at Pigtown. The Square equipment will also allow the use of Google Pay, Apple Pay, Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover. One page of instructions is all that is needed for people at the registration table to operate the equipment. People operating the equipment would not have access to the CCD account.
- **Motion: Shall we use PayPal for online transactions this year at Pigtown? Vote: [for-against-abstain] 9-0-0.** (Note: Trisha had not yet arrived at the meeting.)
- **Motion: Shall we use Square to accept payments on-site at Pigtown?** Discussion: Why not use PayPal for both? PayPal costs more than Square. **Vote: 9-0-0** (Note: Trisha had not yet arrived at the meeting.)
- Lea will work with Chuck Reidmiller (the CCD webmaster) in setting up the CCD website to accept online payments.

2- Electro-Contra Liz brought handouts. See copy attached at the end of the minutes.

- Liz proposed a collaboration between the CCD and the Cincinnati Gender-Free Contra Dance (CGFCD) in order to bring an evening of Gender-Free Electro-Contra here to the WFAC sometime in the spring or in the next six months.
- Liz explained that DJ-Contra is top 40 pop music, Techno-Contra is electronic music, Electro-Contra is the term Liz uses to envelope all types of dance music that is not from traditional acoustic instruments.
- Liz has specific artists in mind – Nedra McNeil and Elliot Eckel who work collaboratively. Preston Bell Charles III is a friend who is not experienced with contra dance music but is experienced in experimental electronic violin music. Liz is willing to be the organizer for this event. Liz would like to have all three performers but, due to the costs, maybe just Nedra and Elliot.

- Liz is looking for funding for the event from CCD. Discussion: There are concerns about playing copyrighted recordings at events in which the CCD is involved. Is there a problem with ASACP, BMI, etc.? Live performance of a transformative interpretation of copyrighted material is different than playing copyrighted recordings. Does the WFAC have a contract with any of these organizations? Frank will check with WFAC to see if they have an account with any of these organizations.
- We have had a lot of special events lately and more planned through the end of March, and we may push our volunteers too hard to add another event in that time-frame. It was suggested that we should wait until April or later. Maybe have the Electro-Contra on a Friday before our regularly scheduled Saturday dance.
- The likely costs could range from \$365 to \$575. Liz proposes that the CCD cover the losses of the event, or cap the loss, She is sure that it will operate at a loss. There was the question of how much money we have already committed for various events and how much more we would want to commit to this event. A suggestion was made that if we do any funding, that we commit only to cover losses up to a certain amount. A suggestion was made to not have Preston play for this event since he has never played for dances.
- **Motion: CCD provides \$200 to Liz to facilitate the Electro-Contra event. Vote: 2-7-1.**
- **Motion: CCD covers losses up to \$200. The motion was amended to \$300. Vote: 8-1-1.**
- Liz is responsible for all organization of the event.

3- Dancer Survey

- Mary suggests a change regarding the numerical values on survey results. There is a question about caller terms that has a range from 1) only gendered, 2) mostly gendered, 3) an even mix, 4) mostly gender-free, 5) only gender-free, 6) either is fine. To have better statistical information, she is proposing to list #6 in the #3 category since “either is fine” and “an even mix” convey similar information.
- We need to encourage people to fill out a survey each week. John McCain volunteered to provide weather and driving conditions to add to the survey results. Frank volunteered to pass on any survey comments about sound, caller, and band each week to the sound person, caller, and band.
- Suggestion was made to allow anyone on the clean-up crew to take the surveys to Mary's office.
- **Motion: Let's have whoever is on the clean-up crew take the surveys to Mary's office after each dance. Vote: 9-1-0**

4- Storage

- CCD stores some supplies in a room at the WFAC. The WFAC will be converting that room to a handicap restroom. We need to find storage space for our supplies. Larry will be building a sound cart to replace the rolling black box that contains the old sound system. The new sound cart will hold items such as the mixer, monitors, microphones, and microphone cables, router, wireless microphone and receiver. This will free up some space above the shelf in the sound cabinet to store some of the supplies.
- There has been discussion with the WFAC about additional storage space for occasionally used supplies. It was suggested to store the quilt standing up backstage among the other WFAC props, ladders, etc. There is not additional storage space (shelves and such) backstage. It is all spoken for. It will probably be a year before the handicap restroom is in place.

5- Who will sell the old sound equipment?

- Do we need the voting membership to vote on whether to sell the old sound equipment? The discussion concluded that at the 10-12-19 membership meeting, the membership voted to have the board make decisions about smaller financial details. Pending further investigation into the details of the membership meeting for a final decision, we will begin the process. Wasn't the old system used at Pigtown for workshops? It had been in the past, but this year Ed [the sound person for Pigtown 2020] will be providing sound for the workshops as well.
- Kurt volunteered to take care of selling the old sound system. Larry will provide Kurt a list of equipment that we intend to sell. Larry checked on eBay for the equipment and found the total could range from \$1000 to \$2000. The board will decide an acceptable selling price so Kurt does not need to consult with the board for each offer made.
- **Motion: Allow Kurt to take possession of and handle the sale of the old sound equipment. Vote: 10-0-0.**

6- Fan issues

- We have a frayed cord on one fan and another fan shuts off after running for a while. The fan with the frayed cord will be taken of service tonight by removing the plug. A new cord will be installed. The fan shutting off is not a safety issue. Darlene will contact Rich Kern, who built the fans, to see if he can repair the fan that shuts off.
- Some of our box fans have disappeared. There are two box fans remaining in the dance hall. Mary thinks the missing box fans are being used elsewhere in the building and will try to find them. (Frank reported that a while back we discarded a couple additional fans that were in terrible shape.)

7- CDSS meeting

- We need to have our questions and concerns ready for discussion with the CDSS board members at the CDSS board event February 7-9. Board members: Let Deb know which CDSS events you plan to attend.

8- Caller questions

- Should all our local callers simply be in rotation for Saturday dances?
- Should there be some criteria to be included in [Saturday dance] rotation?
- Should anyone [caller] be guaranteed an annual Saturday slot?
- **Motion: Should any of our local callers be guaranteed an annual Saturday slot?**
Vote: 0-6-3
- We should find out what criteria other dance communities use to determine who calls a Saturday (or monthly) dance. Liz volunteered to contact other communities but did not specify which communities. Charles volunteered to contact Louisville, Lexington, and Columbus. Liz and Charles will coordinate their efforts and report to the board.

9- The New Year's Eve dance netted \$124 thanks to Trisha's work of recruiting volunteer bands, callers, clean-up, and sound crew. We had about 60 people at the dance.

Other agenda items are postponed to another meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27PM.

Respectfully submitted by Larry Lankford, secretary.

=====Handout from Liz=====

1-13-20

Liz Burkhart

Electro-Contra Collaboration

I propose a collaboration between the Cincinnati Contra Dance and the Cincinnati Gender-Free Contra Dance in order to bring an evening of Gender-Free Electro-Contra here to the WFAC sometime in the spring.

Benefits to CCD: there are currently no special dances that are GF; all Saturday dances are Gents & Ladies. Supporting this dance would show CCD's friendliness to GF by offering a special night of GF dancing on a weekend night. Electro-contra is growing more popular and is a special interest event. Collaborating to put on this dance would be a nice thing to do and will increase goodwill and collaboration between all parties involved.

Some easy-to-confuse terms: DJ contra, electro-contra, techno-contra.

Everyone perceives these labels differently. **DJ contra** generally describes a playlist of pop music that is formatted to be “square” for use in contra dancing. Think: Lady Gaga’s Bad Romance, Journey’s Don’t Stop Believing, and Bee Gee’s Stayin’ Alive played for a contra dance. **Techno** is a specific genre of electronic dance music, generally very repetitive; sometimes people use the terms electro-contra and techno-contra interchangeably. **Electro-contra** is sort of an umbrella term that includes all of these and more (for example, DR Shadow’s electronic contra dance music which is comprised of folk & contra samples, original beats, manipulated sounds, and live banjo playing). I am using the term electro-contra to indicate contra dancing to music that is electronic in some way, rather than commonplace acoustic instruments amplified.

The dance would be likely on a 3rd Friday, which is the day the GF Contra has been occurring. Usually our dances are from 8:00 - 10:30 ish.

The artist I’ve heard is Nedra McNeil and their partner Elliot Eckel - they both DJ collaboratively - and Nedra is the caller. It was a lot of fun with really good music and quality calling. It’s a blend of electronic dance music and pop samples with strong beats that keep dancers moving. They only have about 2 hours worth of music including 2 waltzes. We can either keep the dance short, or invite another musician to fill out the rest of the evening, keeping Nedra calling the rest of the night (or switching to another caller if needed).

I am in contact with a musician, Preston Bell Charles III, who is an experimental violinist with no contra dance experience, but we have been collaborating on creating electro-contra music based on his current model of solo looping violin. He could potentially fill out the rest of the evening but he doesn’t have a set worked up, so this would only work if the dance is later in the spring.

Nedra could potentially bring a screen/backdrop which creates an electro/club-like ambiance on the stage. We would also need lighting for the hall to round out the ambiance. Louisville Country Dancers were able to rent lights for a very low price - I am in the process of asking around to see how much that would cost.

My hope is that the dance can be billed as a collaboration between CCD and CGFCD, and that CCD can help with funding for break-even costs. If we just have the first DJs whose work I’ve already heard, I would like to pay the talent \$200 total (two DJs, one of which is Nedra also calling). If we also have Preston, I’d like to pay him \$60-\$75. Also, if we have the second artist, then the caller Nedra will work longer, so ideally we’d pay them more to accommodate for that. The hall rental at WFAC is \$100, and lights could be anywhere from \$65-\$150 roughly (I wouldn’t want to pay more than that). Advertising costs are minimal. I would like to keep the sliding-scale of \$2-\$20 for entrance to the dance. So the cost for the dance total would be \$365 on the low end for a shorter dance with one act and the cheapest lighting (an estimate) to \$575 on the high end for a longer dance with two acts and more pricey lighting (an estimate). We could agree for CCD to cover costs and CGFCD pay CCD whatever money is brought in at that dance, which will most certainly be well under \$575 or even \$365. Or the CCD could commit to only providing a set amount of funds, for example \$300, and CGFCD cover any losses (we have some backup funds that are dwindling).

Timing is dependent on funding approval by CCD as well as whether we opt for the second artist, Preston, who would need more time to prepare. It's also dependent on my availability as I would do set-up, tear-down, point of contact with artists, payout on my group's behalf, etc. Like I said, the GF dance is generally 3rd Friday but can be moved. February would be too soon to properly advertise. I'll be out of town the 3rd Friday in March, but we could do the 2nd Friday. April, May, and June's third Fridays would be good for me.