

Cincinnati Contra Dance Member Meeting 8-26-19

Attending: Christie Armstrong, Debbie Barrett, Frank Buschelman, Charles Wallner, Ryan Smith, John McCain, Lynne Ross, Mike Boerschig, Carolyn Tindal, Rebecca Pace, Bernadene Zennie, Francie Corzine, Tricia Gorman, Bret Augsberger, Sally Christopher, Jerry Black, Larry Lankford, Mike Self, Amy Foltz, Steve Edwards, Cori Yaeger, John Bealle, Susan Vogt, Darlene Underwood, Jeneene Brengelman, Pete Armstrong, Betsy Lehman, Ray Hassard, David Brendamour, Lea Crain, Nick Rockstroh , Deven Corzine

Deb called meeting to order at 6:36 pm

Charlie described his take on the situation. Mistaken opinion that there are only 2 sides to this issue, etc.

1. OFFICIAL RESULTS of RANKED CHOICE VOTE at JUNE 24 MEMBER MEETING: PROCESS E WAS CHOSEN.

Statement of Process E and information about governance restrictions, and their effects on Process E were presented on page 2 of the Agenda packet. This and other background material is also included in these Minutes, starting on page 5.

2. Our main goal tonight is to decide how to implement Process E.

A. Revise wording of Process E

VOTE The Board suggests the Membership change the wording in the first sentence of Process E to say: "Switch one Monday per month to Gender Free and have the rest be gendered. Do this for a while and watch how that works out. Debbie moves the above. Charlie 2nd

In favor: 18 Opposed: 0

Ryan asked for clarification whether Dances that feature no role terms would be welcome at either evening. Ryan explained there are particular dances that are called that only use positional calling. No mention of gender or not, just the positions of the dancers are referenced.

In favor: 15 Opposed: 2

B. When to start Process E

VOTE The Board suggests we begin using process E in the month of January, 2020. Please see next page for reason. Debbie moves the above, Rebecca 2nd

In favor: 21 Opposed: 0

C. Regularly recurring Monday or variable

VOTE The Board recommends that members choose 1 pre-defined Monday per month for gender-free calling. See next page for reason.

Larry commented: If we choose variable, it could create scheduling problem.

Rebecca feels best to make it same Monday every month.

Pete moves that we set a specific Monday per month. Jerry 2nd

John McCain agrees that a fixed Monday is best

In favor: 21 Opposed: 0

D. If regularly recurring, decide which Monday

Pete's question: what would be a conflict caused to the 2nd Saturday dance if it's the 3rd Monday:

Explanation – folks won't want to dance so close in days, like 2 days after the Saturday dance.

Rebecca felt shouldn't be 3rd Monday.

On a separate topic, Carolyn states that no-role-calling is a way to get around using gendered dancing.

Darlene: positional calling is not a satisfying night and the dances are too simple; there are no complex dances. It is a limiting dance tool.

Sally shared that dances such as Midwestern Folklore include moves to which role calling aren't necessary: becket, do-si-do neighbor, do-si-do partner.

VOTE The Board recommends every 4th Monday, so as not to negatively impact attendance at the second Saturday contra dance.

In favor: 22 Opposed: 0

E. How long to continue Process E

Nick recommends 6 months enough – scheduling is 6 months in duration, so it fits the scheduler's (Therese) needs.

Larry recommends 5 months so there is enough time for scheduler to ask for block-out dates from performers to create the schedule.

Jeneene recommends 6 months and then in April, 2020, we get together again to see if we want to extend the process another 6 months.

Debbie invited Rebecca to read her benchmark proposal: one of the benchmarks is to use 13-month rolling average of attendance, not \$\$\$. Rebecca's proposal:

Use a 13-month rolling average of Monday night attendance (not dollars received) as a reference. At the end of the trial period:

If the Gender-Free-Monday attendance is 85% of the rolling-average attendance, keep the one Monday schedule

If the Gender-Free-Monday attendance is the same as or greater than the traditional attendance, add another Gender-Free dance per month (2 a month)

If the Gender-Free Monday attendance is less than 60% of the rolling-average attendance, drop the Gender-Free dance.

If, at the end of the trial period, the Gender-Free-Monday attendance falls between 60% and 85% of the rolling-average attendance, the Board can decide whether to extend the trial, call another membership meeting, add a Gender-Free dance, or eliminate the Gender-Free dance. The Board may base their decision on any information available, including member surveys, caller surveys, local trends, and regional and national experience with Gender-Free terminology.

by Rebecca Pace
August 26, 2019

Cori recommends at least a year because of seasonal dancers

Ryan recommends 6 months is a good initial period. It matches with our schedule so as not to disrupt building the schedule. We could revisit in April to continue or change the process altogether.

Susan recommends at least 6 months and thinks it would be easier if we could change how we create the schedule.

Darlene doesn't want to interrupt Therese' scheduling process.

Mike Self recommends at least a year. It would give us all a break from meeting again so soon.

Amy asked will board decide or community? Debbie – answered – the community.

Nick stated we have attendance #s for the last 2 months. Have we had at least one GF dance per month? (Answer is Yes.) We could use the #s from those past months.

Pete moves we initiate this study period for 9 months starting January, 2020. Charlie 2nd.

Sally – distressed by the apparent assumption that it will become a popularity contest – may not add to sense of community.

Darlene – Data we already have has a lot of charge – it is flawed data – we need to look at this with fresh data.

Steve – 6 months is what helps the scheduler.

Charlie mentioned logic for 12 months due to seasonal dancing.

Pete moves that we initiate a study-survey period of nine months of one GF dance on the 4th Monday of the month, beginning January, 2020. Charlie moved the motion

VOTE

In favor: 11 Opposed: 13

Ryan moves we have a 6-month period for process E with a meeting in mid-May to evaluate how to proceed, whether or not to extend the process. Charlie 2nd.

In favor: 21 Opposed: 3

F. Whether or not to extend Interim Policy until Process E starts

Charlie moves that we extend the interim policy until process E starts January 2020

In favor: 23 Opposed: 2

Debbie suggests we have an annual member meeting with a potluck, then dance!

We understand that not all who want to vote can get to every meeting. At the annual members meeting, we will vote on whether members who couldn't be at meetings can cast their vote over the next few weeks.

We need to give members a month notice on board elections as we will be close.

We elect our Board every October. Usually we have those elections on several consecutive weeks using paper ballots at the dance.

Our Bylaws say we need to have those elections in an annual members' meeting, giving at least one-month notice.

We want to follow our Bylaws as well as we can.

So we'll have an actual annual members' meeting in 2019, right before the regular October Saturday dance, on Oct 12. We'll try to join it with a potluck, too.

- At the annual meeting we'll also ask the members to approve spending guidelines that we submit.

Ryan stated that the way we've been electing is not defined in the Bylaws.

Debbie agreed and stated that the Bylaws do not talk about an open-ended board. At some point in the past, the leadership decided to open it up to more input. It's another thing to decide: how to reconcile our practice and our bylaws.

If you would like to run for the board, let a current board member know. You may or may not end up on the leadership board (Executive), you may end up on the larger board.

Pete moves for adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Christie Armstrong 9-5-2019

Background included in the agenda:

I. Statement of Process E:

“Switch one Monday per month to Larks & Ravens and have the rest be gendered. Do this for a while and watch how that works out.

“For example, ... Set the 3rd Monday of each month as Gender Free and track weekly attendance for a year to evaluate. Before starting, establish benchmarks to decide whether to

- i. ultimately, keep the 3rd Monday schedule or
- ii. add another gender-free dance each month or
- iii. drop the gender-free dance”

II. Cincinnati Contra Dance is a 501c3. 501c3 status gives permission by the federal government to run an organization as a tax-free entity. A 501c3 is listed as an organization that provides charitable and/or educational activities to its membership and the community at large. The 501c3 status requires the organization to guarantee its membership and donors that its business will be handled with fiscal and ethical integrity.

III. At the 6/24/19 Member Meeting, the votes electing Process E were counted after the meeting had closed. Thus, there was a perceived conflict among some members between Process E and the interim policy. However, since the votes on Process E were counted after the June 24 meeting, the results are to be officially reported at the next membership meeting (on 8/26/19). Then the members can determine when and how to implement Process E. The Interim Policy that was voted on has a time limitation, so the Interim Policy ends at the next general membership meeting (in other words, on 8/26/19).

IV. The Board can make suggestions to the membership on how to proceed with Process E at the August 26 meeting, but the members are to make the final determination on the procedures to follow in implementing Process E. Also, if a set date is established to begin Process E, the members will determine whether to extend the Interim Policy until the date that Process E starts.

A. Revise wording of Process E? (This paragraph is identical to the corresponding paragraph on Pg 1. The Board suggests the Membership change the wording in the first sentence of Process E to say: “Switch one Monday per month to Gender Free and have the rest be gendered. Do this for a while and watch how that works out.”

B. When to start? Since the 2019 schedule is already confirmed with bands and callers, the Board suggests we begin using process E in the month of January, 2020. Otherwise, a major upheaval of the painfully-arrived-at schedule would be necessary.

C. Regularly recurring Monday or variable? The Board recommends that members choose 1 pre-defined Monday per month for gender-free calling. This will help dancers plan further ahead if they prefer to come only on nights with some specific caller language.

Background continued

D. If regularly recurring, which Monday? The Board recommends every 4th Monday, so as not to negatively impact attendance at the 2nd Saturday contra dance.

E. How long to run? The Board tabled the proposal to offer a recommendation on this question.

F. Extend Interim Policy until Process E starts? Here is the full language of the original interim policy, which the members approved on June 24:

Interim Policy, also known as “Callers’ Choice”, also known as “Time Limited Policy and Procedures for Dance Callers”

“Time of Implementation – between the general membership meeting of June 24, 2019 and the immediately-following general meeting.

Policy, for the time period stated, experienced callers will be allowed to choose dance terminology (terminology for this policy is to mean gendered or gender free language).

PROCEDURES

1) Callers who are hired are to be informed of the sensitivities and discussions among the membership of the Contra Dancers on the issue of gender free calling 2) The board of the Cincinnati Contra Dancers, at least one week in advance, will post on website and social media, the callers hired for that dance and the terminology they will be using to lead the dances. 3) This policy is no longer in affect after the general membership meeting immediately following the June 24, 2019 meeting.”

This policy authorized Callers’ Choice until the next Members’ Meeting. Now we need to vote again on the interim policy (Callers’ Choice) to decide whether to continue Callers’ Choice until Process E starts.

G. Benchmarks? The Board recognizes that it will be difficult to discern dancers’ preferences and the intensity of their preferences regarding callers’ role terminology based purely on attendance, because there are so many confounding factors. These factors include:

I. Individual preferences for individual callers II. Individual preferences for individual bands III. Injuries that render a dancer unable to dance for varying periods of time IV. Individual schedule constraints, such as work and school schedules V. Holiday periods when individuals have more schedule flexibility