



SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH. INC.

Minutes of Teachers' Committee Meeting

July 16, 2005

At the home of Bruce & Jo Hamilton. In Armin's absence, Alan Twhigg called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

Present: Kathy Allen, Cathy Bertics, Bruce & Jo Hamilton, Linda Henderson, Coletta Hill, Paula Jacobson, Susie Langdon Kass, Pat O'Brien, Jim Passage, Lin Pettengill, Alan Twhigg.

Regrets: Ellen Aaron, Armin Busse, Rebecca Davis, Juliet Davoren, Sara Gratiot, Kathleen McAdam. Thanks to those who sent regrets before the meeting. That makes life easier on the hosts, and on your secretary and chairman in preparing for the meeting.

Old Business

1. Minutes of meeting April 23, 2005

Moved (Coletta/Jo) that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as distributed. **Passed.** The committee thanked Bruce for the readable layout.

2. Report on Party Program Committees

The Valentine's ball program is in process, and will be done by its deadline. The Oct/Nov committee has not yet scheduled a meeting.

3. Report on Teachers' web page

Armin has provided the "printer-friendly" version of the agenda that was requested at the previous meeting. However, it's currently reached by asking to print the whole page (you then get just the "next meetings" section and the agenda for the upcoming meeting). Some found this confusing, and would prefer a "print the agenda" button.

4. Tutor Training

Dwayne was out of town, and had not sent a report. We have had an item on every meeting since June 2004 for Dwayne to talk with Ron about this. Those two have certainly talked, so our assignment [and probably our intent -bh] was obviously not specific enough. We decided to ask Dwayne to:

- Choose a site (e.g. Mt. Tam) and date in Spring 2006 for a weekend-long workshop. If none is available, this can slip as needed.
- Sign up Ron and possibly other people who have run several candidate classes, e.g. Jo & Bruce, Lynda Korsan, Carolyn Hunt, Mark Post and Fred Macondray.
- Let the secretary or chair know by Sept 15.

Pat will convey this request to Dwayne. [Dwayne, we know we did this in your absence, and you may think it goes beyond your initial charge. If you think so, can you suggest someone to take this on?]

5. Email reflector

There were no further complaints about non-delivery. We didn't think to add the new prelims' addresses until a few weeks ago. **The secretary** will add a reminder to do this after future exams.

6. Fall 2005 workshop

Dwayne was out of town, and had not sent a report. In case he has not lined up one of the Asilomar teachers, we talked about alternate plans. We noted that shortly after classes have begun is an awfully busy time.

Some history: we used to hold a standalone 1-day workshop in the spring and hire an out-of-town teacher (e.g. Hugh Thurston, Mary Brandon, Marjorie McLaughlin, Linda Speedie). We thought it would save money if we took advantage of a teacher already brought in for Asilomar. We don't have to stay with the Asilomar association. **The secretary** will ask Dwayne what the plans are.

7. Selection of Party Program Committees

Coletta volunteered for the May/June party. The committees are as follows (convener in italics):

Event	Members	Due
Oct/Nov 2005 Monthly Party	<i>Bruce, Susie, Dwayne</i>	08/01/05
Valentine's Ball 2006	<i>Lin, Gene Bissell, Jennifer Kelly</i>	08/15/05
Dec 05/Jan06 Monthly Party	<i>Bruce, Pat, Fred DeMarse</i>	10/01/05
March/April 2006 Monthly Party	<i>Bruce, Alan, Armin</i>	12/01/05
May/June 2006 Monthly Party	<i>Bruce, Paula, Coletta</i>	02/01/06

We have at times had a practice of new prelims either serving on a committee with two very senior teachers or observing a committee. **Moved** (Coletta/Lin): we recommend that **Bruce Herbold** write to the new prelims, inviting them to observe the monthly party program planning process and asking them to state preferences for which meeting(s) they'd like to attend. It was understood that Bruce has the option to do this or not, has authority to decide who (if anyone) observes which meeting, and may establish the guidelines for observing. **Passed.**

New Business

8. New Adjudication standards for Pleasanton

Kathleen was out of town, so we tabled this until our next meeting. We also decided to add an item for "Assessment of adjudications and performances at the Pleasanton Games — planning and execution." The intended result will be recommendations for

2006.

9. Spring Dance Workshop

Kathy Allen reported. She thought Ellen Aaron gave a very interesting workshop and was careful not to wear people out before the evening dance. She didn't attend Bruce Herbold's session.

Some of us wished we had had clearer guidance beforehand about the experience level expected of the two classes, so we could advise our dancers which one to attend.

We noted that the workshop was put on without input from the Teachers Committee (TC) only because the Branch Committee (BC) wanted to get it organized quickly, and the timing fell between TC meetings. **Kathy** will tell the BC that the TC volunteers to help with the planning and promotion of this event in the future.

10. Old records project

Paula reported that she hasn't made any progress. The Harveys have the turntable, she has the records and Don MacQueen has the noise-reduction software. **Paula** will talk to the Harveys and get this moving. She will let us know what kind of help is needed once it gets underway.

Pat O'Brien brought a box of records which Mark Post had given her. We recommended that she send Armin a list of the records and their cuts for his "resources" list. That will make it easier to tell whether it duplicates or augments the collection Paula has.

11. Core Dances and their inclusion in monthly party programs

We began by remembering that there is a repertoire list on the branch web page (<ftp://ftp.rscds-sf.org/SFRepertoire.xls>), which lists the experience level (B/I/A) of each dance and marks those in the current repertoire as "core" or "suggested."

Some of us have lately been adapting the experience level for the expected progress of beginners through the year. For example, a dance marked 'I' is likely to be out of their reach in the fall, but might be doable in the spring. In those cases, we have sometimes marked the dance as 'B' on a spring party program. We discussed this practice.

We noted that some classes have beginners starting at different times (e.g. January) than others. Others (those constrained by Park & Rec regulations, for example) may run basic classes only half the length of a regular class. And different teachers introduce figures in a different order. For these reasons it's hard to say when a given dance may be accessible to beginners.

We tend to re-label 'I' dances as 'B' when the guidelines require a 'B' but we think the 'I' dance is more interesting. An effect of this practice is to drive out solid basic dances, and this drives up the average difficulty of our party programs. Many of us have seen this effect, and heard complaints from our beginners (e.g. "there were no dances I could do after the first set, so I went home").

Those at the meeting (and one person who wrote in) want to reverse this "difficulty creep." A strong consensus was that we want to keep the difficulty levels of dances as they appear in the repertoire list, and not raise or lower them for the time of year. We

don't know whether this will be sufficient; but we want to take only this one step now. Each of the upcoming program planning meetings has a member who was present at this meeting, so they can make sure this happens.

It was asked whether the repertoire list is up-to-date. We review it periodically. **The secretary** will see when we did this last, and whether it's time to do it again.

12. Database for ball program writeups

Alan said he is often asked to write dance notes for ball programs. Dances appear on many programs, so it would make sense to keep a repository of writeups. He proposes to do this. There was discussion of what format to keep it in, and a clear go-ahead.

13. Encores at parties and balls

Susie reported having felt there were too many dances encored at the recent gala. Some were encored when only a few people seemed to want an encore, and on at least one occasion two dances in a row were encored. Our discussion leaned toward seeing this as the MC's responsibility, and a matter of judgement. We wished (yet again) there were a signal for "we loved that and we appreciate you very much, but we do not want an encore." **Bruce Hamilton** has notes on MC'ing a dance, and will make those available on the Teachers' web page. We also thought an article in the Speyper might help: people might be more tolerant when things don't go their way if they know *why* dances are encored (or not). We volunteered **Susie** to write that and bring it back to the TC for vetting.

14. TAC area representative

Alan is going to the TAC summer school and AGM in a few weeks, and wondered if there was anything we wanted him, as Area Representative, to take or bring back. We suggested that he take the information that the SF branch is pretty cohesive given our geographic diversity, and that children's classes are doing well (we suggested that he present some pics of the recent Children's Ball). We asked him to bring back a consensus or best practice on music equipment, and to ask about Exec minutes, which we don't seem to get anymore.

15. Date and Location for next meetings

- October 1, 2005 at the Harveys'. Video at 1:30, meeting at 2:00. **Note change from October 8.**
- January 21, 2006. Video at 1:30, meeting at 2:00, At Pat O'Brien's if she'll be in town.
- April 22, 2006. Video at 1:30, meeting at 2:00, place TBD in the East Bay.

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Hamilton