



Minutes of Folkdance Federation of California, South, Council Meeting on January 28, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m.

In Attendance:

OFFICERS - President: Diane Baker; Vice-President: Greg Solloway (Newly elected); Secretary: Margaret Lange; Treasurer: Mindy Belli; Sergeant-at-Arms: Terry Gucwa; Parliamentarian: Marshall Cates. **STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS** - Budget & Finance: Marshall Cates; Fall Camp: Lee Otterholt; Folk Dance Scene and Visiting Master Teacher Program: Jay Michtom; Scholarship: Carol Smith.

PAST PRESIDENTS - Marshall Cates. **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS** - Steve Himal.

CLUB DELEGATES - Conejo Valley Folk Dancers: Paula Davis; International Folk Dancers of Laguna Woods: Terry Gucwa; Laguna International Dancers: Greg Solloway; Pasadena Co-op: Lynn Bingle; San Diego Folk Dance Center: Mary Marshall; Veselo Selo: Shana Winokur; Vintage Israel: Jim Rothman; West Valley Folkdancers: Jay Michtom; Westside Folkdancers: Sandy Helperin; Margaret Lange: Bay Osos Dancers.

Approval of minutes from October 22, 2023. Correction of date for the January 2024 meeting from the 24th to the 28th. *Motion to approve minutes as corrected was seconded and approved.*

ELECTED OFFICER REPORTS

President Diane Baker

As appended with the following additions:

Diane noted that as we still don't have a membership chairperson, she combined the membership report with her president's report. She would like to hear from any delegate whose club had an increase in membership, specifically what they did to encourage the increase. She noted an article by Dick Oaks posted to the Federation website dealing with ideas to revitalize folk dance: "[Decline and Resurrection of Recreational International Folk Dance.](#)" Diane encouraged all members to choose one suggested action from the article and have their club engage in that action throughout 2024.

Vice President Greg Solloway

Upcoming Federation-sponsored events:

1. East-West February 17, 2024, 1 – 5:30 p.m. Cerritos (previously approved)
2. Pre-concert dancing to Sans Frontieres February 13, 2024
3. Laguna Fest March 1-3, 2024 Laguna Woods. 38 people have signed up for complete passport. Gergana Panova and Roberto Bagnoli are the teachers. As it is expensive to bring two teachers over from Europe, the objective is to have 70 to 80 attendees to help cover costs. There will be two bands featured. Marcella Lawson is collecting recommendations for the Lifetime Achievement Award.
4. Spring Fest, April 20, 2024, Somis, Cal. (previously approved). The hall has a good wood floor, there is plenty of parking, there is a 10-dollar admission, and the hours are 1 to 5 p.m. There is a need for a club member to take charge of the Fest.
5. Cerritos 15th Anniversary Party, June 8, 2024, from 1 – 5:30 p.m.
6. Statewide May 17-19, 2024 Newark, Northern California. Cesar Garfiaz, Yannis Konstantinou, and Kurt Gollhardt will present Salsa, Greek/Macedonian, and Sunday Hoedown, respectively.



Treasurer Mindy Belli

As appended with the following additions:

The sum of the checking and the savings accounts is \$91,747.00.

APPOINTED OFFICERS' REPORTS

Insurance Chairperson, Julith Neff

The certificate period is from November 9 to November 9. Julith put in for new certificates for all the clubs for the latest certificate period. There was a problem with Conejo Valley Parks and Recreation due to two additional insured requests which Julith is dealing with.

Sergeant-at-Arms, Terry Gucwa

We have a quorum.

Historian, Wen-Li Chiang

Not in attendance. No report.

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Fall Camp November 10 – 12, 2023

From Lee Otterholt: Fifty-seven people attended. There was a negative balance of \$1257, which in the large scheme of things was acceptable. Both master teachers were not able to attend so Lee and Joan Hantman stepped in to teach. Also, Terry Gucwa was not able to attend to lead the Potluck Band, but the band managed to present music. We had to improvise and it all worked out. There were lots of positive comments about the event. See appended report for further details. For Fall Camp 2024, Steve Kotansky is 1st on the list for guest teacher. Lee indicated that he will continue as camp chairperson for one more year. Fall Camp 2024 will be held the weekend before Thanksgiving, November 22 to 24. Discussion: the progress of Camp Hess Cramer is being monitored. Camp Hess might not be the same after its reconstruction and it might be more expensive than previous years. We now have institutional knowledge built up for Brandeis. Working scholarships and grants were presented as ideas for reducing cost of registration for Fall Camp. These ideas should be brought to the Finance Committee.

Finance, Marshall Cates

No report. Acknowledged the approval of \$30 expenditure for business cards (see Old Business, Outreach).

Scene, Jay Michtom

Not in attendance. No report.

Visiting Master Teacher, Jay Michtom

Jaap Leegwater and his accompanist will be coming to Southern California in April 2024. Those workshops will be coordinated by Sherry Cochran. Federation clubs that participate also will be eligible for federation reimbursement. His accompanist, Philippe, is available for accordion lessons.

Scholarship, Carol Smith

Two scholarships were issued in 2023. No scholarship applications have been received for 2024. It was recognized that there is a need to promote scholarships and educate dancers about their availability. Discussion and suggestions: distribute information in club meetings, develop a flyer that club leaders can distribute to club members; club leaders need to clarify the process; website search for scholarship needs repair, send request to



Dick Oaks to fix this; scholarships to include mileage reimbursement; periodically write article for Scene about scholarship opportunities. All suggestions should be sent to Carol Smith and she will report at next Federation meeting.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Statewide 2025

From Margaret Lange: The Portuguese Hall in Arroyo Grande has been reserved for May 2 to 4, 2025. Master teachers Zeljko Jergan and Billy Burke. In January 2025, we will submit our \$1000 deposit. A flyer will need to be produced for distribution at the 2024 Statewide Festival. Margaret will take care of this.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Nominating Committee. Diane did not receive any volunteers for the nominating committee. She has asked all current officers to continue in their positions for the following year. She asked for nominations from the floor for the following positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant of arms, parliamentarian, historian, and insurance chair. Please send nominations so we can have a ballot in April.
2. Spring Fest in Somis on April 20th. The Spring Fest flyer has been developed by Kasha. Terry is setting up the music. Help is needed for decorations, dance list set up, door entry monitoring, etc. To volunteer reach out to Diane or Valerie Daley.
3. Outreach Committee. Mindy, Paula, and Toti joined Shana, Diane, and Jan on the committee. A motion was put forward that the Federation spend \$30.00 for business cards. Operations to promote recreational folk dance were discussed: classes through parks and recreation departments and senior centers that include simple dances with walk-throughs have been successful in bringing in new dancers; live bands and dance ensemble performances have generated interest. ***Motion to spend \$30 for business cards was seconded and approved.***

NEW BUSINESS

1. Policy and Budget. Discussion: Besides outreach, Carol suggested that we use funds to ensure current members feel they can attend events. Ideas included: giving vouchers for transportation; offering lunch as part of Ojai Day of Dance; subsidizing clubs that are losing money or who have a high fee for attendance. Marshall, Fiscal chair, noted there are various ways of distributing money, i.e., charge less for admission to events and take a loss in order to sustain the membership that we have. He will call the committee together and will discuss ways to distribute. Diane said to send policy and budget ideas to Marshall.
2. Ojai Day of Dance. The date for the next Ojai Day of Dance was suggested as generally the end of September or beginning of October, a Saturday afternoon. No decision was made.

MEETING DETAILS

Next meeting proposed for Sunday, May 5, 2024, 9:30 a.m., virtual via Zoom.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

President's Report 1-28-24 includes Membership

21 clubs renewed membership in Federation for 2024, and San Diego Folk Dance Center will submit renewal forms Feb. 15 after the club's renewal process is complete.

Krakusy has the largest membership at 34. Pasadena Co-op and Vintage Israeli tie for 2nd with 29 members each.

8 associate members have joined or renewed.

Bob Altman predicted that clubs would make errors when calculating their dues; 3 clubs did just that. Mindy has submitted modifications to the renewal pages to make that less likely next year.

The NFO notified members in late December that the cost of NFO membership, thus insurance, would increase by \$10 this year. That means the Federation has paid \$160 that we did not collect in renewal fees.

Dick Oaks continues to add relevant articles and syllabuses to the website.

I urge every member of the council to read his latest post,

https://socalfolkdance.org/articles/decline_resurrection_rifd_oakes.htm.

From article by Dick regarding revitalizing recreational dance

"[Do we come] for the sense of community feeling, the natural high that comes from the combination of compelling music and graceful movement?" Quote from Chris Kermiet

Laurie Allen calls for a development fund to increase the visibility of recreational folk dance. For example in splashy big events that get news coverage.

Loui Tucker supports a "multi-pronged approach" to introduce recreational dancing to newcomers, and make it ongoing.

After reading, I urge you to choose **one** action that you will do in your club and continue that action for 2024. Perhaps suggest that others in your club read the article and choose additional actions to carry out.

Other new posts, which can be quickly identified by the "new" icon on index:

history of Armenia, the authentic Bulgarian dance, Daichovo , how dance is intertwined with politics & power by Anthony Shay and more.

Also newly posted are 11 syllabuses with links to dance instructions and when possible, videos.

The Federation website is a deep depository of folk dance resources thanks to Dick Oaks. When you have folk dance relate questions, seek answers there first.

Mari Werner has been recommended for the office of Publicity Chair. She is currently considering my entreaty.

Past President, Pauline Klak, announces that both of her daughters are engaged. She & Ed will attend the Solar Eclipse Camp in Texas in April 4- 9 (link to registration Federation "Calendar" on website)

Fall Camp 2023 Report

Fall Camp was conducted Nov. 10 – 12, 2023. The camp leadership committee was Lee Otterholt, Jan Rayman, and Kelley O’Neill. Many other members of the folk dance community contributed varying amounts of talent, effort, and other resources to make the camp successful.

Overall, there were challenges. The committee was first constituted in May, giving us a relatively short time to plan. Lee Otterholt had a health setback in July which caused him to drop out of active participation for almost a month. Two weeks before camp, Gergana had to cancel due to health issues. We were prepared for this and Lee Otterholt stepped in as teacher. Terry Gucwa (Potluck Band leader) had to cancel last minute due to Covid. The Potluck Band with help of Mindy Belli and other members rallied around and the band still met and played at the Saturday party. Lastly, Steve Kotansky had to cancel after the initial teaser dance set on Friday night due to family issues. Joan Hantman (camper) stepped up without hesitation to the role of teacher. The supportive attitude of the camp was wonderful.

There were many positive responses recorded by the Evaluation Form.

Many commented on the smoothness and collaborated reactions to any adversity. The effort and results “were inspiring”. Despite the upset in teachers, there were positive responses regarding the teaching, the amount of repetition for optimal learning, the review of teaching, and the inclusion of all levels of dance.

The facility/location was mentioned 8 times as a positive. The weather was very cooperative for us and no major facility issues arose. The on-site staff was responsive.

There were 11 comments regarding the co-operative spirit, and the friendliness of the camp.

This year in response to previous years comments, an additional \$12/ person was spent for Tier II food. In response, 9 positive comments about the food were received in the evaluations and also many by word-of-mouth. We met 16 special dietary requirements.

The parties and Sing-alongs were well received and got many positive survey mentions.

Suggestions

Some suggestions were that the dance floor was uneven and caused stubbed toes. This was relayed to the Floor contractor and in response, the invoice was discounted, and comments addressed for potential future contracts.

Marc’s stargazing event was missed and in response, future camps will strive to coordinate his well-liked event into the schedule.

Attendance

Attendance was limited to 60 participants in order to stay focused in Wapner, avoiding the need for an extra expense of dancing in the “barn”, and to maintain an intimate friendly atmosphere without overcrowding the dance floor.

In the end, we had 57 participants.

Finances

We came out at \$1257.70 in the red. This is approximately the cost of 2.34 full time campers. We had 3 spots not filled due to people earnestly promising but ultimately not fulfilling the commitment to attend and pay. To avoid this in the future, the policy going forward will be no spot held until funds are cleared. We received \$1026 in donations.

\$6,000 deposit has been made for Fall Camp 2024 with AJU.