December 2017 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Nancy Reindl, Sam Smith, Paul Somlo, Christa Torrens, Julie Olsen

Also Present: Duffy Boyle, Will Loving, Peter Johnson, Heather Carmichael.

* Minutes for November 2017 Meeting were approved and posted.
* Discussion of the Westminster dance and its future(s):
  + Pat has formally resigned from her role as Westy coordinator. We thank her for her service.
  + 30 December has been scheduled as an \*extra\* contra/waltz dance at Westminster. This is a week later than our usual Westy slot, but fulfills the commitment we made in our grant proposal. (Hall rent was $75; this should be possible in future also.)
  + Chip has keys to the hall; Pat might also. We need to know who has keys, in order to be good tenants.
  + Pat has booked the first 3 months of 2018; after that there’s a lot more room to steer the Westminster dance in a new direction.
    - Problems with the old model: the (implicit) concept of a “beginner dance”, largely driven by old-time bands, wasn’t popular with dancers.
    - We’d like to see something other than a straight-up contra, out of concern for possible conflicts with the Denver and Zesty dances.
    - Perhaps a mix of other couples dances and contra (ie waltz, swing, blues, hambo.) Peter suggested we look at the model of the Montpelier dance exchange, and offer workshops on couples dancing. But this might be problematic, if it involves double-booking a caller and instructor.
    - Can we poll dancers, to see what they’d prefer?
  + This led to more general discussion of using the Westminster series to try out new concepts and recruit new dancers.
    - Will suggested a techno contra, backed by youth outreach of some sort.
    - CDNY did a very nice model of an introductory contra, with top talent, in which experienced dancers would get in free.
    - Possibility of flyering the Regis and Auraria campuses, as well as outreach to colleges’ (and high schools?) social dance groups and classes. Sam will research this.
    - Connections to the old-time dance community, in Lyons and Fort Collins?
  + We assigned a committee to head up the Westminster bookings. Duffy and Helle are core members, with Peter and Will involved in a supporting/resource role. Also contact Kathy and Chip, to see if they’d be further interested.
* We also explored possibilities of instituting a CFOOTMAD dance weekend, since Stellar is ending and Moonfest is in decline. However, there are several possible models for what a dance weekend might look like:
  + One option is a residential weekend. Nancy is interested in this, possibly based at the YMCA of the Rockies, with a target date of Labor Day 2019.
    - The mountains—and dancing in them—might be a significant draw for out of town dancers.
    - Nancy has reached out to Teri toward exploring this possibility.
  + A second option (noted by Will among others) is an urban/commuter weekend, potentially centered on or based out of the Avalon.
    - This is potentially much more accessible, and cheaper/easier to organize.
    - How available would the Avalon be for a three-day stint? What concerns for displacing other communities, scheduling in advance.
  + It’s also important to compare the urban-weekend model to the current 3-day guest band specials. These are well-attended and successful, but also somewhat different from the models we’ve been discussing.
    - Many dancers don’t attend all 3 dances. Also concerns about how many people come down from Fort Collins.
    - We don’t get as many out of town (or out of state) people coming in for the weekend specials. (Could we improve this, with more publicity, or a single venue?)
    - While the specials often involve national guest bands, guest callers are less common.