

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT(S) . . .

We don't want to hear the word "unprecedented" for years after this past month!

We hope each one of you and your families are safe and healthy. We also hope that you are finding some way to not slip slowly into insanity with the stay-at-home orders. We find that being social people and enjoying the company of all of you while square dancing is just driving us nuts as we try to find more creative ways to connect with those we cherish.

By now, most, if not all of you have been contacted by a member of the Board over several steps needed to legitimize our Club. And although marshalling these changes was the furthest thing from our intent as we began service to the Club, it's the position that we're in now. Timing, in this case, is on our side as we aren't dancing and find ourselves with a little more free time. Our hope is that as a Club we get through the administration now and when it's time to dance all of this is in the past. Included in this month's newsletter is a copy of the proposed bylaw changes. We are very proud of the committee brought together to bring these changes to life. Thanks goes to **Karen and Dan Juarez, Tom Newsom, Connie and Jay Templin, Janet Hettinger, Karen Fahrmeier, Tom Miller, Floyd Bartley, T.J. Rowe, Donna & Dan Pearson, Jeanne Schlotzhauer and Frank Wilson**. This group worked very hard over the past few weeks to help create and refine what our By Laws should look like. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have this talent serving the Club! These changes are needed to update the Club and more importantly to join USDA as part of a 501(c)(3). Some are significant changes including:

- Introduces a Member in Good Standing. When the By Laws are ratified, in the first year a current member will be a Member in Good Standing.
- There are eight elected offices, all two-year terms. New voting offices are Lessons Chair and Refreshments Chair. All offices can be held by a couple, with the office receiving one vote only if held by two people. This keeps the Board fresh with new folks contributing every year and maintains the continuity of the Club.
- Includes language to allow us to join the USDA. This includes adopting a Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.
- Sets specific limits for spending.
- Establishes a budget and approves annually.
- Changes in the way we can vote including absentee ballots.

We also understand the sensitivity to changing the name of the club. However, after research and professional feedback, this appears to be the best course of action for the club. Everyone will have the opportunity to vote on the new Club name. We don't want to lose the Club identity and will most likely use both the Swingin' Singles and the new Club name in any advertisements for at least a year. This will help everyone ease into the new name.

If you have questions about any of the changes, please reach out to anyone on the Board, Mike (913-375-5009) or Cindy (913-375-6013). Stay safe, be well, and we hope to see you in a square real soon!

Cindy and Mike

Attention: Membership Vote

The Board has been working hard in the last two months in building up the Club's infrastructure and By Laws in order to legitimize the organization of the Swingin' Singles. We have determined the best course of action is to create a new entity.

As we are currently not dancing, meeting in person is possible, but is inconvenient for those who would travel only to provide a ballot. As such, we are offering absentee ballots to all. In addition, ballots can be delivered in person (in lieu of absentee ballots) at:

425 East 62nd Street
Kansas City, MO 64110
June 4 only from 11am to 3pm

We are proposing changes that require your approval as a member of the Club and a ballot, or ballots, will be sent to each home within a week. We encourage your immediate attention to both understanding the changes and voting "yes" to all. We've had an active group of participants of about 30 individuals that helped form these proposed changes.

The proposed changes are:

- Creating a new Club named Heartland Squares
- New Club By Laws
- Authorizing the Club to be established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit in the state of Kansas
- Joining the USDA directly in order to obtain a 501(c)(3) charter which they have permission to issue to square dance clubs.
- The Club Officers expanding to eight elected offices including:
 - Mike & Cindy Shedor, Co-Presidents
 - Tom Miller, Vice-President
 - Janet Hettinger, Treasurer
 - Karen Fahrmeier, Assistant Treasurer
 - Karen Juarez, Corresponding Secretary
 - Connie Templin, Recording Secretary
 - Dan Juarez, Refreshments Chair
 - Dora & Tom Newsom, Lessons Chair

If you have a question of any kind including answering any part of why these proposals are being made, please reach out to anyone on the Board or call Mike (913-375-5009) or Cindy (913-375-6013). These changes are very important to the Club and will legitimize us as a recognizable 501(c)(3) for future years.

Heartland Squares
Square and Round Dance Club
Constitution and By Laws

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this 501(c)(3) non-profit organization is Heartland Squares, Inc.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Heartland Squares, herein referred to as the “Club”, is formed to provide a forum where square and round dancers enjoy dancing together in a spirit of friendliness, fun and cooperation. The Club is welcoming to single dancers and couples. Each member is allowed the opportunity of sharing in club responsibilities. The Club colors are red and white. The Club members and Officers will show hospitality to all visitors and fellow members.

In the conduct of all aspects of activities, the Club shall not discriminate on the grounds of age, race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or religious affiliation.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership shall be open to any qualified dancer. A qualified dancer is defined as a person who has successfully completed Mainstream lessons or demonstrates competence in square dancing abilities.

Section 2. Membership is not transferable.

Section 3. Member in Good Standing is defined as a Club member who has attended four Club dances in the past nine consecutive months and is current in payment of annual membership dues. Exceptions for this designation may be appealed to the Board. All current Club membership, as of the date of ratification of these By Laws, retain all privileges and considerations of Members in Good Standing through May 31, 2021.

Section 4. The Club adopts and publishes the Code of Conduct of the United Square Dancers of America (USDA). Club members will adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Section 5. The Club is operating in the best interest of square and round dancing. Members are expected to maintain proper social behavior at all Club functions including visitations. Improper social behavior includes, but is not limited to, any unsafe or threatening behavior such as language, bullying, harassment or the use of alcohol or drugs.

Section 6. Member(s) displaying improper social behavior will be subject to removal from the dance or up to, and including, the loss of their membership or ability to visit the Club. The Executive Committee

shall review any alleged incident and, if deemed necessary, issue a warning to the person(s) involved. If the person(s) have already been warned or if the improper behavior displayed is deemed severe, the Executive Committee will review and vote to determine if the infraction(s) results in a loss of membership. The member(s) can appeal the decision to the Board after twelve months.

Section 7. The caller, cuer and their spouses or partners shall not be required to pay membership dues or any per-dance fee. They maintain all rights of Club membership except neither the caller, cuer nor their spouses or partners shall hold an elected office of the Club nor have voting privileges.

Section 8. The Club will have at least one annual meeting for all members.

Section 9. Lifetime Membership may be bestowed upon a member. Consideration of requirements include when the member has contributions similar to, but not limited to the following:

- assisted in a position of appointed or elected service on the Board for a minimum of five years,
- held membership with the Club for twenty consecutive years including any consecutive prior membership of disbanded club(s),
- attended a minimum of twenty club visitations in a year,
- served as Club greeter for a minimum of 20 dances, and
- is a Member in Good Standing.

Lifetime Membership will not be subject to payment of annual membership dues but will pay regular Club event fees. Lifetime Membership can be nominated and voted on by the Board of Directors. Voting to attain Lifetime Membership will be by simple majority vote.

ARTICLE IV – CLUB DUES AND DONATIONS

Section 1. Membership, regular Club dues and late penalties shall be reviewed annually by the Board each July. Annual club dues are due September 1 of each year. Late penalties are incurred if annual Club dues are not paid by the end of the second dance in September. The member loses membership as of December 31 of the same year.

Section 2. Members under the age of 18 are not required to make Club donations.

ARTICLE V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Elected officers of the Board comprise the Executive Committee. These include the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Refreshments Chair and Lessons Chair. These offices may be filled by an individual or couple. If filled by a couple, the partnership is only entitled to a singular vote in response to any Board motion.

Section 2. Each office serves a two-year term. No member can serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. The offices of President, Assistant Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary and Lessons Chair begin service in even numbered years. The offices of Vice-President, Treasurer, Refreshments Chair and Recording Secretary begin service in odd numbered years.

Section 3. The Board shall meet at least monthly with the exception of the month of December. Parliamentary authority is used at all meetings and the rules are contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The Club may choose to adopt special rules of order as necessary. Board meetings are open to all Members in Good Standing except for Board meetings involving disciplinary hearings or actions.

Section 4. The duties of the Executive Committee of the Board include, but are not limited to,

President

- Presides at Club and Board meetings
- Is a ex officio member of all committees
- Acts in emergencies
- Serves as main liaison between callers and facilities
- Responsible for maintaining integrity of any Club social media
- Eligible to write checks on the Club's behalf up to \$500 without further approval
- Emcees Club meetings, dances and other functions

Vice-President

- Assumes the duties of the President in his/her absence
- Acts as parliamentarian
- Directs Club visitations
- Maintains travel visitation records

Treasurer

- Custodian of all funds
- Collects monies or oversees the collection of donations at all dances
- Pays all bills
- Gives monthly financial reports for review and approval by the Board
- Prepares Annual Budget for November approval
- Shall present all materials required for a Club audit
- Eligible to write checks on the Club's behalf up to \$500 without further approval

Assistant Treasurer

- Assists in the collection of monies or donations as needed
- Oversees raffle collections, as needed, at Club events
- Assumes the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence
- Eligible to write checks on the Club's behalf up to \$500 without further approval

Recording Secretary

- Records minutes of Board meetings
- Same minutes will be approved by the Board during the next business meeting as the Club's official record of business

- Maintains correct records of business meetings and provides copies of Club minutes upon request to Club members
- Maintains formal record of business filings to associations of government reporting

Corresponding Secretary

- Maintains active membership roster, Club information and documentation
- Prepares or assists in the preparation of print advertisements, publications and notices
- Prepares and maintains required forms for all associations
- Prepares Club correspondence as requested by the President or Board
- Authenticate federation or association cards and distribute to the Club membership
- Provides notice of all scheduled Board meetings

Lessons Chair

- Works with the caller to establish lessons calendar for Mainstream and Plus dancing
- Reviews and approves lessons candidates for membership to Club after graduation
- Assists with new member recruitment

Refreshments Chair

- Responsible for coordinating opening and closing of any kitchen function
- Responsible for soliciting assistance in the kitchen
- Acquires additional kitchen supplies as needed
- Assists in decoration of hall as needed

Section 5. A quorum is a minimum of four Executive Committee members. A quorum is needed to validate any vote or actions put forth before the Board. A 36-hour electronic or telephonic notice must be made to ensure all Board members are notified prior to a vote. Meetings are preferred to be conducted in-person. However, meetings may be held electronically, telephonically or via video conference, if needed.

Section 6. If there is a vacancy in the standing Executive Committee during their term, the President will appoint a replacement as voted by majority vote of the Executive Committee. The appointment will fulfill the remainder of the elected term.

ARTICLE VI – SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND ADVISORY BOARD

Section 1. Special Committee Chairs are appointed by the President and must be approved by the Board. These positions are reviewed annually and approved between June 1 to July 31. These positions have voting privileges while attending Board meetings. They are:

- A. Heart of America Federation (HOA) Delegate

- B. Designated Missouri Association Delegate
- C. Designated Kansas Association Delegate

All above referenced delegate positions serve as liaisons between the Club and respective associations. They attend association meetings and report to the Board or during the Club dances as needed to cross-promote the Club and the associations. They are also responsible for preparing articles for the association news or for the Club newsletter.

- D. Historian – maintaining Club history with documents, pictures, etc.
- E. Webmaster – updating the Club website
- F. Newsletter Editor – compiles & publishes the monthly newsletter for distribution before the first day of every month

Section 2. There shall be an Advisory Board who are non-voting members of the Board. The immediate past President is automatically an Advisory Board member. Additional members are appointed by the President and approved by majority vote of the Executive Committee. Advisory Board members shall serve for 12 months and are eligible for an additional 12-month term.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The Nominating Committee is formed annually and consists of the President, another Board member and a non-Board Club member. The Committee is formed no later than February 1 and is dissolved after elections are completed.

Section 2. Candidates considered for elected Board positions must have at least one full year of dance experience.

Section 3. The slate of Officers shall be presented no later than the last Club dance in March. The slate shall be printed for review in the April newsletter.

Section 4. The election of Officers will occur at the last Club dance in April. Voting will be executed via secret ballot with an opportunity to write-in any other candidates' names. Those eligible to vote are Members in Good Standing. If the voting cannot take place at the last dance in April, it will take place at the next regular Club dance.

Section 5. New Officers begin their term on June 1.

ARTICLE VIII – CODE OF ETHICS

The Club shall adopt and follow the United Square Dancers of America (USDA) Code of Ethics for all members. This code addresses dancers' rights and addresses the conduct required to be an Officer of the Club. The Officers will be required to sign the Code of Ethics annually after election and no later than July 31.

ARTICLE IX – REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF OFFICERS

Section 1. When a petition to remove an Officer is presented to the Executive Committee by at least twenty-five percent of the Members in Good Standing, a special meeting of the Club membership will be called within thirty days of the petition's receipt. The removal of any elected Officer of the Club requires a majority vote of those present and voting. Only Members in Good Standing may vote. Voting will be by secret ballot.

Section 2. If an Officer is removed via a special meeting of the Members in Good Standing, the vacant office shall be filled by nominations from the floor with a simple majority vote same Members in Good Standing following immediately. If there is a failure to obtain nominations, the remaining Executive Committee shall, by majority vote, appoint the replacement Officer to serve the remainder of the term.

Section 3. When an Officer is absent from three consecutive dances, the Executive Committee shall review such absences. If no reasonable explanation is given for such absences, the Officer is deemed to have resigned from that office. The remaining Executive Committee shall, by majority vote, appoint the replacement Officer to serve the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE X – CLUB FUNDS

Section 1. The Club's fiscal year is January 1 through December 31.

Section 2. An annual budget will be presented by the President and Treasurer no later than October 31. The budget must be approved by the Board. The approved budget will be presented to Club membership via the December newsletter.

Section 3. The President, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are authorized to pay routine expenses up to \$500. Each office, and only these offices, will be considered a Club signatory. Any check written over \$500 is required to have signatures of any two of the authorized signatories. If any offices are occupied by a couple, only one member of the couple can be one of the two authorizing signatures.

Section 4. The Board is authorized to act on expenses up to \$500. Any expense over \$500 will require Board approval. The Board will approve all association dues and insurance payments.

Section 5. Any unbudgeted expense incurred by the Club over \$500 must be authorized at a Club meeting by the majority of the Members in Good Standing present. Advance notice of no less than one week will be given.

Section 6. Any investment decisions for Club funds must be approved by the Board.

Section 7. No part of the net income or net assets shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its officers, committee member, private persons, advisory member or persons asked to serve the Club members. However, the Club is authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and authorized as per Sections 4 and 5 of this Article.

Section 8. An Audit Committee with a minimum of two members drawn from Club membership, excluding Officers, shall be established annually and an audit performed within the first three months of the fiscal year. The findings will be presented to the Board and published in the next Club newsletter.

ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION

Upon majority vote of the Board of Directors to dissolve the Corporation, the Executive Committee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the benefit of the Corporation to any exempt corporation or entity organized for purposes similar to those set forth under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law) as the Directors shall determine.

ARTICLE XII – VOTING

Section 1. General membership and/or Board voting will be in person at a Club function whenever possible. Only Members in Good Standing may vote. Voting may be in person by a show of hands, written secret ballot, mail, telephonically, electronically, video conferencing or by mail. Unless otherwise specified in these By Laws, all issues to be voted on shall be decided by simple majority vote of Members in Good Standing.

Section 2. Board voting may also be accomplished with video conferencing, telephonically or electronically.

Section 3. For all issues voted on by general membership and/or Board, the number voting and the tally of votes shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Club.

Section 4. Absentee voting for secret ballot voting shall be allowed. A request for such ballot, made by mail, e-mail or text must be received by the Corresponding Secretary at least 20 days prior to the secret ballot vote. It is the responsibility of the member requesting such ballot to verify receipt of the request by the Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall mail or e-mail to such requesting member a form of the ballot to be used at the secret ballot vote, no later than 10 days prior to the secret ballot vote. The requesting member shall ensure that such ballot is returned to the Corresponding Secretary no later than 5 weekdays prior to the secret vote. Such ballot shall be returned sealed in a plain envelope, with no identifying information on the envelope. The plain envelope shall be enclosed in a mailing envelope. Upon receipt by the Corresponding Secretary, the sealed envelope shall be removed from the mailing envelope. Such returned sealed absentee ballots shall not be opened until all ballots have been collected at the secret vote. The absentee ballot will be randomly placed with all other ballots before the vote is counted.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws can be amended by two-thirds majority vote of Members in Good Standing. Written notice, by mail or email, of the amendment(s) to the By Laws must be provided at least 30 days in advance of any vote on such amendment(s). Upon passage of any By Laws, any previous versions of the same section(s) shall be null and void.