

**Victoria Ballroom Dance Society**  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Cedar Hill Rec Centre  
**Wednesday, 14 December 2016**

**MINUTES**

**Opening Business:**

Call to Order 6:37pm

**Present:** Steve Montgomery, Louise Stevens, Coralie Theoret, Bob Adams, Thomas Webber, Douglas Anderson, Clare Martin, Chrissy Southern (Administrative Coordinator)

**Round-Table Introductions**

**Adoption of Agenda:**

**Adopted**

**President's Report:**

Fellow VBDS Board Directors for the 2016 – 2017 year, welcome to the coming year with a continuation of the success over the past few months and a consolidation of the very hard and substantive work done over the last year. I would like to thank the past Board members for the massive effort they have contributed and thank you to each and every one of you tonight for stepping up either for the first time or a continuation from last year!

To recap this past year, we have turned the Society around from a steady decline in membership numbers to a small and positive increase. Every year since 2008 we have seen a decrease in membership numbers. This year there was an increase from 254 members at the 2015 AGM to a membership count of 276 at the 2016 AGM. We currently have 284 members and we suspect this will rise to well over the 320 mark which was the membership total at the end of spring classes this year. This increase is promising; however there is still much work to be done. My hope and vision is to increase our membership to a level of at least 400 members and possibly 500. There are many contributing factors to this turnaround and I believe the main reason stems from the reformatting of our Classes—they are the foundation of this Society. We must never forget this!

We are presently a small Board in need of the combination of a few more hard working Board members, and some strong Committee members that don't necessarily have to be on the Board. We will continue to search for some strong, skilled and genuine members that also want to bring success to the future of our Society.

There are many important positions that must be filled on this Board tonight or at least by our next Board meeting. These Executive positions are integral for the success and smooth running of the Society and Board. Thank you to Bob for having important conversations with some of our Board members before this meeting. I believe we will be in a significantly better position than this time last year. I am looking forward to what we are about to achieve this year, and how that will impact VBDS.

**Appointment of Officers, Committees & Chairs** (see attached report on "Appointment of VBDS Officers & Committees"):

**Officers:**

**MOTION** - Moved by Douglas Anderson that the following be appointed VBDS Officers:

President: Steve Montgomery  
Vice President: Douglas Anderson  
Secretary: Clare Martin  
Treasurer: Thomas Webber  
Membership Coordinator: Bob Adams

**Motion Approved Unanimously**

**Committees:**

**MOTION** - Moved by Bob Adams that the following Committees be appointed, and that they be asked to report back to the January meeting on possible terms of reference and possible further member involvement:

Promotions and Marketing: Steve Montgomery – Chair, Co-Chair Coralie Theoret  
Dance Committee: Louise Stevens - Chair  
Governance: Bob Adams - Chair  
Standards and Classes: Steve Montgomery – Chair, Co-Chairs-Douglas Anderson, Bob Adams  
Youth and Family Outreach: Bob Adams and Coralie Theoret-Co-Chairs  
Social Dimension and Retention: Bob Adams and Coralie Theoret - Co-Chairs

**Motion Approved Unanimously**

**ACTION ITEM** (all Committee Chairs)

**Finance Committee**

- Discussion about interim reports, and with volunteers willing to help with the everyday bookkeeping. Software may be needed.
- Treasurer (Thomas Webber) will report back to board on possible finance committee.

**ACTION ITEM (Thomas)**

**Review of Minutes:**

Special Meeting of the Board 16 November 2016

**Approved Unanimously**

**Updates:**

**1. Standards and Classes – Steve Montgomery**

One of the most important focuses in the past year has been the structure & functionality of our VBDS classes. It is important for me to bring this new Board completely up to speed with the focus and direction of our classes & workshops for the coming year and a half, and hopefully for many years to come. Financially, our classes were in a lot of trouble due to a continual reduction of membership numbers, so we had to make some changes. A very brief recap of what we proposed and achieved as a Board this past year was as follows;

- We received feedback from the membership through an extensive survey;
- We then came up with some possible business models and had a planning session inviting the entire membership to give feedback and suggestions;
- We took all of that information and came up with a blended business model that took the majority of the memberships suggestions and ideas into consideration;
- We then took the “Reboot Business Model” to an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) for a membership vote . This was passed with over 75% approval to implement the new model. The basic foundation of this business model is a combination of a new website, continued social media promotions and changing the structure of our classes to 5, 6 or 7 week Classes to fit different needs.
- We also decided to focus on the 8 more popular dances at all the upper levels and offer Paso Doble & Viennese Waltz as workshops periodically.

- We met with the instructors in the summer this year to get considerable input with the new schedule and most of what was recommended was implemented.
- We have since made a few minor changes after the Fall Sessions including a decision to move away from the combination of a 5 & 7 week class in session 1 as there was too much of a gap for decision making in the second session. So far it has been agreed with the instructors to possibly have either 2 x 7 week sessions in the Fall of 2017 or a 6 and 7 week session (this is not finalised and some more discussion surrounding this will happen).

I have attached the Class figures accumulated from Session 1 and Session 2 with the adjustments for people who are students/disability or people who are reviewing a level while taking the level higher. All of these people get the Class for 50% off which could make a difference to the final numbers. We have discovered that this is overall a very small number of people and did not have much of an impact on the average number of students per class. You will see from the sheets that we averaged 13.5 students per class in both sessions and our break even with the one hour classes is approximately 12-13 including overheads.

I have also included Session 3 & 4 (Winter Term) which includes some new additions to our schedule. We are carrying on with offering Viennese Waltz and now offering Paso Doble. We have also added an Argentine Tango combo workshop for Prebronze/Bronze and Silver/Gold levels. We are also offering a Level 1 Night Club Waltz/Hustle workshop to test if there is any interest. I know that a year and a half ago we offered a WCS/Hustle/Nightclub Waltz workshop and it was well attended. If this workshop is popular, there is a suggestion from the instructors to offer the 2 different dances separately. All of these workshops have been made much more possible to offer during the week due to the one hour classes. Otherwise they could only really be held on the weekend which is still not completely out of the question if we have a need. We have already offered the West Coast Swing in the Fall with considerable success and will continue to offer West Coast from time to time.

All of our Classes have now received the benefit of email lists created through Mailchimp. This has been particularly beneficial for promoting and reminding members of classes which helps to maintain the retention of numbers in our classes. I believe this was one major area where we lost members and partially contributed to our membership decline.

Our Intro to Ballroom Workshops have also been evolving over the past months with a few changes including running Intro workshops on Saturdays again at Cedar Hill (the public location can only help us). We are now holding Intro Classes on two Fridays instead of three and there will be two Saturday Intro workshops. Liz and Wanda are sharing these 4 Classes. As far as promoting these workshops, we are continuing to run Facebook Ads using the VBDS Video and there is an actual page specifically for Intro Classes on the website. This page has a signup sheet which funnels into our "Interested in Ballroom Intro List" on Mailchimp. This list is now at 120 names and I have only added (from Intro signup sheets) about half of those names. So the technology is now working for us. This list has been, and is continuing promoting to the beginning of and during each and every Intro Workshop series!! There is a reminder that goes to everyone on this list the day before or the morning of each and every workshop. These are already templated and it takes minutes to replicate a reminder for an entire series of workshops. Are you impressed yet?? It's only the beginning; however I would like to point out that all of this only works if we give all these people a great experience when they come to the Intro Class and then our classes & membership. That is where the Social Dimension/Retention Committee must shine and make our membership experience one that they enjoy and share with all their friends.

## **2. Finances (Bob Adams)**

- a. General Physical Liability Insurance: our policy for 2016-17 has been renewed to Dec 18 2017 at the \$3 million level (cost is approx. \$1,200 per year)
- b. Director Liability Insurance: in the midst of getting a quote; current info is that \$1 million Director's liability insurance will cost approximately \$500-600 per year; Bob will report in early 2017 (with possibility of inviting a rep to explain the pros and cons of this type of insurance, before the Board makes a final decision

**ACTION ITEM:** Bob

### 3. Promotions & Marketing (Steve M)

Steve covered his report in Standards and Classes(above) so this is not required.

### 4. Dance Committee (Louise)

- a. New Year's Eve. The dance is going well with 20 tickets left. Shelly and Lee are coordinating. They won't be available to clean up or do delivery. Louise is looking into volunteers for these tasks.
- b. Charity Gala Ball/Options – Discussion on financial risks involved. Louise will propose a venue and book it tentatively and will report back in January with preliminary budget. Clare will invite Simone from Make a Wish Foundation to clarify tasks and VBDS responsibilities. **ACTION ITEM:** (Clare)
- c. Additional discussion of venue availability for general VBDS Dances; Louise will work with Steve (and possibly Chrissy) to make sure we have a venue for all dances in January and February. It was stated the importance of this as venues book up very quickly. **ACTION ITEM:** (Louise & Chrissy)

### 5. Governance Committee deferred to next meeting

Confidentiality & Conflict-of-Interest  
Possible workshop in January/February

### New Business

1. Music system – re-numeration
  - Discussion about cost to maintain and technical challenges. To allow for updates to the music system, the cost is \$50/hour – 2-3 hours or work, possibly 2 times per year – **deferred** to next meeting to allow time for a valid quote.
2. Jive Line
  - Look into cell phone options. Will be easier to monitor. Needs someone with knowledge to monitor (TBD); item **differed for further discussion** at the next meeting
3. Signing authority
  - **MOTION:** Remove Neil Fleischmann and Grace Wong-Sneddon, and add Douglas Anderson and Thomas Webber. **Motion Approved Unanimously**

**Date, Time, & Location of Next Meeting:** 11 January, 6:30pm, Cedar Hill Rec Centre

**Adjournment** 8:40pm

**Secretary to the Board:** Clare Martin

**Recording Secretary:** Chrissy Southern