

BCSRDF (“The Federation”)

Restarting our Activity when permitted

Discussion Paper

Preliminary Comments

This document is designed to assist as a framework for the Board Meeting this coming Saturday and, if there is repetition of basic facts, it is stating these only stated to ensure we are on the same page.

Basic Factual Background

1. The Province of BC is fully embroiled in the Covid-19 crisis and, under the guidance of its medical experts, has implemented strategies to combat/reduce the effect of this viral disease.
2. The practical effect of these strategies is effectively put an end to our activity except for round dancing and clogging and highly specialized calls for 1 or 2 couple squares.
3. A committee of the Fraser Valley Region has prepared and published on its website a “Plan to Plan” for restarting which is accessible for all clubs to follow as a guideline and which will be updated if, as and when necessary.
4. The Hall Committee of a Fraser Valley Club donated the sum of \$100,000 to be used at the Federation’s discretion for the promotion and support of our activities. Although not required, the Federation has confirmed with the donor that it would consider spending some of these funds to assist clubs in restarting their activities when permitted to do so quite proper. At its AGM, the use of part of the funds for this purpose was approved with respect to “hard start-up” costs.
5. In addition to using the sum approved in #4 above for Hard Start-Up Costs, the AGM recognized that there is the potential for increasing recruitment of new dancers for our activity and that part of the above funds should be used for this purpose. There was no agreement how these “Soft Costs” should be disbursed and the Federation now has to consider how to achieve this objective.
6. With respect to #5 above, only Mainstream, New Dancer Round Dancing, Clogging or Contra Clubs would be eligible. Plus and Advanced Square Dance Levels and Rounds transitioning to a higher level are not suitable for recruitment.
7. Receipt of a grant under this programme does not bar any club approved from also applying for a New Dancer Grant, provided it meets the parameters for that grant.

Hard Cost Grants

1. These are the direct expenses which have to be covered to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements. These will vary by club and location. Examples are, but are not

limited to, hall cleaning costs, hand sanitizers, shields, signs, etc. None of these items usually form part of a club's operating budget.

2. All clubs registered with the Federation are eligible whether dancer or caller/cuer/leader run. The maximum grant for any one club shall be \$500.
3. All applicants will have to complete an application form (yet to be developed) similar to the present New Dancer Class Grant Application.
4. Clubs must submit a copy of their Restart Plan, which should be submitted to the Region 2 Plan to Plan Committee for its comments. They must also confirm that it has been approved by the location in which they dance and that they have accepted any modifications required by the owner/operator of that location.
5. In determining the amount granted, the financial solvency of a club shall be considered. Clubs with a solid reserve shall be expected to shoulder some of the expenses themselves.
6. If a club is eligible for, or which anticipates a grant for, these same purposes from a third party – i.e. any person or body other than the Federation – it must disclose this in its application.
7. The anticipated and/or actual committed number of club members returning must be disclosed. As a general rule, a club anticipating less than a full square or 8 dancers shall not be approved. Exceptions may be made if a sufficiently strong case is presented.
8. Experience with some round dance clubs which have already resumed within guideline parameters shows that members are, or may be, willing to accept an increase in fees to cover additional hall cleaning costs. This is a factor to be considered by each club and should be addressed. For example, in a round dance club dancing 12 couples and faced with a \$50 cleaning cost per dance, the per head increase in fees (assuming its present fee structure is maintained) is only \$2 per person per dance.
9. As the funds to pay approved grants are ready and available, the committee shall do its best to ensure a quick decision on each application. Cheques for approved grants shall be issued by the Federation's Treasurer.

Soft Cost Grant

Preliminary Note - At the AGM, there was little or no consensus on what form these might take, and subsequent input shows a division of opinions. The discussion which follows must therefore be regarded as equally tentative. The results achieved by clubs working with Brian Elmer in advertising their new dancer classes are also very diverse.

There appears to be some agreement that, when COVID is past us, a possible demand for social events` involving interactive, healthy and friendly activities shall have been created. It follows that our activity, which fits all these requirements, may see a revival in demand and an opportunity to recruit new dancers.

Discussion

1. Social Media probably offers the best method of contact, followed radio, print and flyers in that order.
2. The size of grant which may be given to any club is not sufficient to purchase commercial radio or print exposure. Some local radio and television channels offer free resources if they are persuaded of the need.
3. Social Media (particularly Facebook and Instagram and Twitter (?)) appear to be the cheapest method of reaching a broad audience.
4. For an Association or Club to use social media effectively, it requires that they have a member or members with the appropriate knowledge and experience. Given the present demographics of our activity these persons are few and far between.
5. What follows are some ideas which may aid our decision process.
 - a) We should hire a consultant to help design a programme which fits most needs and make it available to clubs and associations.
 - b) Rather than small amounts which are too insufficient to have real effect given to individual clubs, give grants to associations to advertise generally and without discrimination for all qualifying clubs in their region. This would require that they have an appropriate internal organization to carry out this task.
 - c) Clubs dancing in the same hall or same area could pool, the grants they would have received individually to advertise jointly. This may well be more attractive since it would be designed to make the public aware of the different locations and times available within the pool area and so offer a choice to meet their individual availabilities.
 - d) The Federation, itself, takes on this task and advertises province wide. Whilst this solves the problem of who to pay and how much, it faces the major question of whether the diversity of the province and its size is such that this solution would be ineffective.
 - e) Carry on with the SquareUp BC programme ensuring that it has an agreed, viable plan and budget combined with continuous monitoring and adaptation (if required) as well as the ability to terminate the programme if appears to be failing.

It is my hope that these comments and ideas will lead to agreed procedures and policies, particularly with respect to the Soft Cost conundrum.

Cheers – and stay Healthy

Dennis Sutton (First VP)

1st Nov. 2020