



Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors

FOHBC Board Meeting Minutes

Board of Directors Conference Call / Zoom Meeting October 13, 2021 8:00pm EST

President John O'Neill called the conference call/Zoom meeting of the Federation to order at 8pm EST.

Present: John O'Neill, President
Jeff Wichmann, First Vice-President
Michael Seeliger, Second Vice-President
Jim Berry, Treasurer
Elizabeth Meyer, Business Manager
Ferdinand Meyer V, Director-at-Large
Val Berry, Secretary, Merchandise Director
Fred DeCarlo, Northeast Region Director

Guest: John Pastor, Editor, Antique Bottle & Glass Collector

Absent: Richard Siri, Director-at-Large
Steve Lang, Midwest Region Director
Eric McGuire, Western Region Director
Martin Van Zant, Editor
Jake Smith, Southern Region Director

AGENDA A: Call to Order (O'Neill) Welcome, Attendance, Roll Call, Guest Recognition

John O'Neill welcomed all who were in attendance for the conference/zoom meeting. Roll call was taken for board members (eight members present). There was one guest, John Pastor.

This Zoom meeting is a continuation of the FOHBCs conference calls.

AGENDA K: *Bottles and Extras* Merger and Magazine Status (O'Neill, Meyer, Wichmann)

Ferdinand reviewed the past year or so relating to the pandemic where things have slowed down and we lost the ability to grow and communicate. However, some projects have continued to develop such as our National events, archiving history (articles, magazines); the research library; the Virtual Museum; a newsletter to fill in the gap between issues; up-to-date FOHBC news on the website (send something important to Ferdinand so he can add it to the news); auction price report (not quite ready). Ferdinand said that when joining the Federation, you get everything – the best of both magazines, national shows, auction price report, etc. Our membership has slightly decreased and a magazine merger will increase the FOHBC membership.

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Ferdinand developed a report of “The New FOHBC” and was presented at the March 2021 Board Meeting. It was also put on the website and was published in the July/August 2021 issue of *Bottles and Extras*. He briefly reviewed the 12-step report with the number one goal of a merger.

The purpose of tonight’s call is to further discuss the possibility of merging two bottle magazines – the FOHBCs *Bottles and Extras* and John Pastor’s magazine *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*.

Due to John’s increased business, he would like to ‘gift’ *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, to the Federation. Ferdinand explained the history of discussions held with John Pastor. Merger parameters were reviewed and include:

- Changing the name of our magazine
- New look and logo
- Keep our 72-page format and bi-monthly schedule
- Retain ModernLitho as printer OR get a competitive price
- John O’Neill and Ferdinand Meyer as leadership directors
- Keep editor Martin VanZant and Elizabeth Meyer to manage operations
- Possible increase in staff positions (Advertising Director and business person to assist Elizabeth Meyer)
- Maintain proofreaders
- Social Media Director to bolster the FOHBC membership

Ferdinand Meyer, V, and John Pastor will be heading up this effort reporting to an FOHBC Committee (O’Neill, Meyer, Meyer, Pastor, Wichmann) as well as reporting to the FOHBC Board and membership. Ten months has passed since March 2021 and much has changed. Ferdinand has followed up with a number of updated emails to clarify.

March/April 2022 is the goal for a first merged issue with Ferdinand preparing a hybrid mock-up based on both magazines. The name will be *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*.

John O’Neill and John Pastor are both available at this time to comment and answer questions.

John Pastor stated that AB&GC subscribers may need convincing that this will be beneficial to them. Although they will be going from a monthly to a bi-monthly magazine, some positives are a 72-page magazine (up from AB&GCs 48 pages); interim newsletter; FOHBC discounts; the auction price report, advertising costs for clubs/collectors will decrease (advertising in one magazine, not two), etc. There is, however, an overlap of a couple hundred people who subscribe to both magazines at this time. AB&GCs current paid subscribers are over 1,400. There is no guarantee that those who do subscribe to AB&GC will intend to become members of the FOHBC.

John O’Neill is in full support of the merger. The hobby as a whole will benefit from this merger; we can expand our membership as well as the reading content of the magazine. The FOHBC will also improve financially. This is a win-win situation for everyone.

Jeff Wichmann is also in full support of the merger and agrees that combining two magazines should be a successful undertaking. The first issue will be a great selling point.

Elizabeth Meyer shared information on some comments she has received. Apparently, word has gotten around that there is the possibility of magazines merging and she has gotten quite a few calls on this. She tells them that it is not definite yet but we are looking into it. She would say 80% were very positive about it; there is always going to be some who don't like it, don't want it, but she hasn't heard very many, probably 4 people that have actually called her on it. Elizabeth sees this as a positive way to move forward, help the Federation grow with its membership and bring on a whole new perspective of how we look and get the magazine out to everyone. John O'Neill asked Elizabeth about the commonality or theme regarding the negative comments or were they all individualized in different areas; Elizabeth stated that those few negative comments whose names she had, were not on our membership list. She actually noted two new members that joined this month are joining because of the magazine.

Michael Seeliger had questions on the transition process between *Bottles and Extras* subscribers and *AB&GC* subscribers and how is this going to work. As a paid subscriber to *AB&GC* (but not an FOHBC member), John Pastor said that subscribers will be transitioned to FOHBC memberships - if their renewal date was July, they would continue through July 2022 starting with the March/April 2022 issue.

What if you are subscribers of both? The result is they will be getting a better product. The first issue (target date of March/April 2022) is expected to be a fantastic product and hopes that subscribers will be happy with it.

The initial merging may have issues that will be addressed as they are encountered. However, some subscribers may think they are due a refund of some sort as they paid for two magazines. We need to think about this and other possible scenarios beforehand so we are prepared to handle any issues and/or concerns.

Jeff Wichmann gave a suggestion for those people who have not rejoined for one reason or another – include a membership application card within the magazine. Ferdinand added that we could have an extra 500-1,000 copies (depending on cost) and mail to those who have dropped off – again hoping that past members will rejoin.

Ferdinand said that official letters will be sent to both FOHBC members and *AB&GC* subscribers (hopefully before Christmas) informing them of the merger and outlining the reasons why, pros and cons, name of magazine, issue dates, etc. John Pastor suggested including some of the questions/answers that have been discussed. Offer options to those who may have concerns.

Concerns regarding paid staff of *AB&GC* – will the FOHBC be required to keep that staff? John Pastor briefly explained. Two paid writers are no longer being paid and there are two paid staff who work on the production of the *AB&GC* magazine. This matter has not been fully resolved.

ACTION TAKEN:

A **MOTION** was made by John O'Neill that we authorize the merger; the first issue would be March/April 2022, it would be the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* name, bi-monthly publication, 72-pages in color. By January we would have a mock-up for board approval at that point. The actual merger would take place in March/April 2022 issue if approved and then we would announce the hobby as soon as possible after approval and we tell members, John would tell subscribers and then we will jointly issue a communiqué that is put together by both parties that we all find acceptable.

The **MOTION** was seconded by Jeff Wichmann.

Discussion was held regarding the motion with several concerns still not fully unanswered such as staff, cost of mailing additional magazines, refunds. We can work through any issues as they may arise.

A vote was then taken by all board members present with 100% approving. **MOTION PASSED.**

The conference call was ended at 9:07pm EST

The next Zoom meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 8pm EST

Respectfully submitted,
Val Berry, Secretary