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Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors

FOHBC Board Meeting Minutes

Board of Directors Conference Call / Zoom Meeting

11 July 2023, 7:00 pm CST

President Michael Seeliger called the video conference call to order at approximately 7:00 pm CT.

Present: Michael Seeliger, President
Alice Seeliger, Secretary
Ferdinand Meyer V, Director-at-Large
Elizabeth Meyer, Business Manager/Membership Director
Eric McGuire, Western Region Director
Stephen Jackson, Second Vice President
Henry Hecker, Midwest Region Director
Brian Bingham, Historian
Charlie Martin, Northeast Region Director
John O'Neill, Director-at-Large
Craig Cassetta, Conventions Director
Kathie Craig, Treasurer
Tom Lines, Southern Region Director
Richard Siri, Director-at-Large

Absent: None

Guests: None

1. Michael Seeliger welcomed those in attendance. Roll call was taken for board members. An agenda had been emailed to each board member.
2. No non-board members or guests were present.
3. **Treasurer's Report**
 - a. Michael reviewed the June 2023 financial report that was shared on screen.
 - b. **FOHBC and VM account reports** were included and continue to be favorable.
 - c. **Reno Accounts Receivable.** Michael noted the accounts receivable for the Reno souvenir program. He will work with Kathie Craig, Treasurer, to get these funds collected. Elizabeth has kept an up-to-date spreadsheet and will share that with Michael and Kathie.
 - d. **Magazine Ad Revenue.** Michael asked how much of the magazine costs are being paid by advertisers and if all advertiser spots are filled. Currently about one-third of the cost is covered by ads. There are still a couple prime spots available and should be offered to other auction houses. With the auction house ad price increase there was a bit of shifting but our ad revenues for these have not declined. Heckler had two ads, back cover and inside full page. He is now just taking the inside full page at a higher rate. John Pastor had inside back cover and is now taking an inside full page instead which is a little bit less but not much. This leaves the inside back cover and outside back cover, plus another full page, that could be sold. Selling these would bring us up to close to 50% coverage of the magazine costs from ads. Ferd noted that Jim Hagenbuch kept one page and Jeff Wichmann kept the inside front cover. Jim had expressed some concern about the price increase but Ferd pointed out that their ads also appear in many places on line through FOHBC ad announcement/placement. The widgets on the right hand side of the web page also feature these auction house ads at no additional cost. Ferd has received requests to sell these spots to other advertisers such as insurance providers. This could be another source of revenue and should be considered in the future.

- e. **Budget Finalization.** Kathie and Michael have gathered the financial data for fiscal year June 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 and they are preparing this to present to the audit committee to verify the data. Michael will also be putting together a tentative budget for next year to include goals on income and expenditures.

Richard Siri noted that since the Reno show issue with the Grand Sierra has been concluded, he and Beverly would like to accept the stipend offered to them as show chairs. They would like to donate it to the Virtual Museum. Their generosity was acknowledged by the board and they will receive recognition on the donor records. Details of transferring funds from the FOHBC account to the VM account through Paypal were noted with O'Neill stating that if the transfer is made as "friends and family" there will be no fees taken out by PayPal. There will be a description included in the transfer to keep a record.

4. Unfinished Business

- a. **Sales/Marketing/Merchandising Directorships.** Ferd, Elizabeth and Michael discussed the potential duties of a Sales/Marketing Director, and the embellished duties of a Merchandise Director. These positions really need to be filled and if anyone knows someone who would be suitable and interested, please let Michael know. Elizabeth noted we have received numerous orders for merchandise very recently. She is working with Chi-Chi on fulfilling the orders after Elizabeth accepts payments. Since we have not been advertising these, it is great that we are getting some interest in the items we have for sale on the web site.
- b. **National Bottle Museum Progress.** They have set up the computer station Michael sent to them in the main office where museum visitors enter and they emailed us a photo of the set up. They are already seeing some interest. Ferd will update the information poster that sits next to the computer. A stack of promo cards is available for distribution. Ferd showed a possible mouse pad that could be displayed here and also sold as a merchandise item...good item for the new Merchandise Director to research.
- c. **Regional Directors.** Charlie reported he has contacted the clubs in his region to confirm contacts information we have. Tom Lines requested the link Elizabeth previously provided to directors, but probably before he joined the board. Elizabeth will forward that to him and Tom will work on contacting each club. Henry will begin working on this soon as he has been on staycation (rehabbing from surgery). Eric McGuire has the link and will begin contacting clubs for updates.
- d. **Scanning Progress.** Brian Bingham had not seen the list Ferd had sent him about things to start scanning. Ferd will resend that. Brian is ready to get started on this.
- e. **YouTube Project.** Craig has set up the account and is ready to add content. Craig has researched how to send videos using Apple with an iCloud link. Craig emailed a how-to guide to board members recently. Craig will also work on putting the On-Line Seminar Series on to the FOHBC YouTube channel.
- f. **Business Manager Assistant.** Elizabeth said this project is going well and she is staying current. They are now sending out membership renewal notices by mail. Elizabeth is now only sending one additional magazine after the subscription expires. This is prompting subscribers to contact her when they don't get a magazine. Some of those who have called indicated they paid but it turns out they were actually paying John Pastor for his sales catalog. So there is some confusion from those who came over in the merger. The mailed subscription renewal notice will hopefully take care of this. The expiration date is on the back of the magazine but that is frequently being missed. It seems some people just need a physical reminder so mailing the reminders will hopefully increase the renewal rates.
- g. **Committee Membership Interests.** We are always soliciting members for committee activities. If board members or anyone else expresses an interest in helping, let's get them on a committee.
- h. **Bylaws Committee.** Ferd, Elizabeth and Michael have been working on developing a description of duties of each position on the board. They would like to minimize the in-depth descriptions to provide more leeway for activities expected to be carried out by the position

holder. Rather, they are looking at having the board decide what activities are to be carried out. Also allowing directors to set up their own committees if they want help. The bylaws changes will not be ready for the August 2023 Annual Meeting. Instead, we will set up a separate, special meeting to address the bylaws revisions.

Michael noted that there is a question about whether Minutes, Bylaws, and Financial Reports should be available to anyone visiting the FOHBC website or be moved to the Member Portal. We will need to check to see if it is a requirement of a 501(c)3 to publicize our financial records. For the most part, directors agreed that minutes and bylaws should be open to all. It was agreed that we should continue having any financial data presented in the Member portal although financial data is not currently being posted to the web site.

- i. **Annual Board and Membership Meetings.** Reminder that the Board of Directors meeting is set for Friday, August 4 at 7 pm CDT and Saturday, August 5 at 10 am CDT. The annual membership meeting will be August 12 at 10 am CDT. The meeting announcements need to be sent out by a press release, email, and the FOHBC Facebook page requesting an RSVP so that they will be sent a Zoom invite.
- j. **Membership Survey.** On hold. Probably not a priority at this time.
- k. **Convention Committee Report.** Craig reported that no one in the Northeast Region submitted a proposal to host the 2025 FOHBC event by the June 30 deadline. The question is whether it makes sense to open it up to all regions, giving preference to the Midwest District since that district would be next in line. Michael stated that the rotation has not really been followed in the past. The committee needs to address this and present a proposal to the board.
- l. **Webmaster Progress Report.** Michael is expecting to receive a proposal on updating the website soon and will bring it to the board.
- m. **Houston 2024 Progress Report.** Ferd noted that he, Michael, Elizabeth and Alice have been involved in extensive communications with the principals of the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) to secure agreements and it has been difficult up to this point but, hopefully, the contract will be secured soon. We are way behind the curve and feel information and contracts must be disseminated by the first of August to potential participants. There is much to be decided before then. On-site visits at the Museum and Hotel ZaZa are planned for as soon as we get a signed contract from the Museum. Ferd is getting almost daily requests for information. Once we receive a signed contract, Ferd will be putting together a proposal to present to the board outlining all the logistics of the event.
- n. **On-Line Educational Seminars.** First two went well, next one is coming up July 18 on HH Warner and his patent medicine empire by Michael Seeliger and Stephen Jackson. Ferd is keeping a running list of those who have requested an invitation to any of the presentations and they are sent an invite a day before the seminar. A few days after the seminar, it is available on the FOHBC website and they will also be converted to a YouTube version and placed on the FOHBC YouTube channel. Ferd suggested the next seminar be a show and tell. Elizabeth wondered about a perfume bottle presentation. Eric has submitted a substantial number of photos including some amazing perfume bottles of the civil-war era that will be featured in the next Virtual Museum news noting that they will be put into a new gallery in the VM. Great idea for one of our Educational Seminars. The board agreed on the show and tell format for the next seminar (#4).
- o. **Foundation.** Stephen suggested it needs to be set up in Tennessee where FOHBC is incorporated. This will require hiring legal counsel in Tennessee but there should be some groundwork set up before that including a separate board of directors to be somewhat separate from the parent organization. Stephen will put out some feelers among those he knows to see if he can identify a legal contact who can help us with this. Ferd reminded the board that Doug Simms, currently working with the VM, has volunteered to get us in touch with a person who can work on securing grants for FOHBC, so we need to follow up on that offer. Stephen said there are entities actively looking for causes to which they can donate funds so putting together a package we could present to them will be quite worthwhile.

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- p. **Show Packet Report.** Regional Directors and individual FOHBC clubs are being sent the show packets if requested. At this time, Elizabeth is not going through the show schedules and sending them a packet unsolicited. Michael would like to have each show receive a poster and promotional cards, preferably through a contact who will oversee the promotion at the show. Charlie has been very successful in ensuring clubs in his district receive packets. Tom Lines received packets from Elizabeth for the Tallahassee show and represented FOHBC there. He also has some cards in his antiques booth. At shows Michael has attended, he has walked around the dealer tables and asked each dealer to have the cards on their tables. The cards are proving to be a great marketing tool.
 - q. **Membership Lists to Directors.** Covered previously. Alice asked Tom Lines if he has received direction on this project. Elizabeth sent him the link to the membership list but he really hasn't received any specific direction. He's figured it out though so he will be using the membership list and club show announcements to determine who should get a packet.
 - r. **Awards Program.** Alice continues to work on this.
 - s. **AntiqueBottles.net, Corning Glass, Smithsonian website additions.** Michael is seeing more traffic from some of the web sites.
 - t. **Global Interest.** Michael has contacted all of his foreign bottle collectors and encouraged them to subscribe to the magazine in digital format if they are not already doing so. There are a number of foreign digital subscribers already but it would be great to increase this.
 - u. **Auction Price Report.** Ferd said this will be updated with all of 2021, 2022, and 2023 at the end of this year.
5. **New Business**
- a. **Volunteers to Contact.** Michael asked Ferd for a list of those who have volunteered to help the FOHBC in any way so that he can get them involved.
 - b. **National Insulators Association.** Michael and Ferd were contacted by the National Insulators Association about combining a national event with the two groups and possibly other groups, in Montana in 2028. Tom Lines was cautious about combining efforts with insulator collectors because he has found there is little synergy between bottle collectors and insulator collectors. Richard Siri has done a couple bottle shows in Montana but he did not find them worthwhile to participate in at that location. Ferd noted we would need to see a proposal before any decisions are made.
 - c. **Other Comments.** None

Michael asked for a motion to adjourn. Tom Lines moved, Charlie seconded. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.

The foregoing conveys our understanding of items discussed and decisions reached during this meeting. FOHBC will assume these notes correct and a matter of record unless notice to the contrary is received within one week of the issue date of these meeting notes.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice J. Seeliger, FOHBC Secretary