



FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL BOTTLE COLLECTORS  
FOUNDED 1969

**Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors  
Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)  
15 October, 2024, 7:00 pm CDT**

**Present:**

Michael Seeliger, President  
Kathie Craig, Treasurer  
Alice Seeliger, Secretary  
Elizabeth Meyer, Business Manager  
Ferdinand Meyer, Special Projects Director  
Craig Cassetta, Marketing Director  
Brian Bingham, Membership Director  
John O'Neill, Director at Large  
Richard Siri, Director at Large  
Charlie Martin, Northeast District Director  
Henry Hecker, Midwest District Director  
Eric McGuire, Western District Director

**Absent:**

Steve Jackson, Director at Large  
Tom Lines, Southern District Director

**Quick recap**

Michael presented a review of the Federation's financial status, including projected income and expenses, and investment funds. The Board discussed possible revenue increase strategies including fundraising, increasing dues, charging clubs for show insurance coverage when requested, reducing discounts for club advertising in AB&GC, and charging extra for a promotions package for show publicity on media other than the magazine. He addressed the organization's membership numbers and the need to remove non-renewing members from access to the Auction Price Report and Member Portal on a timely basis.

Michael presented a proposal to increase the pay for the AB&GC magazine editor, institute payment for a Webmaster, and confirm the continued payment for a social media person.

He noted that the Houston 24 Exposition final financials were not yet completed but it is likely that it will break even.

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Federation anticipated expenses and income will net a shortfall of approximately \$20,000 per year if no additional sources of income are realized.

#### **Next steps**

- Michael will form a fundraising committee to explore ways to raise funds for the Federation.
- Craig and Brian will work on promoting the upcoming Reno show, including potentially creating and selling T-shirts with the show flyer designs.
- Michael will take leftover Houston merchandise to the Nashville show to sell if he receives that from Ferd and Elizabeth.
- A motion was made by Charlie and seconded by Richard to approve the paid positions of AB&GC editor (\$1250/month), webmaster (\$500/month), and social media person (\$250/month). A unanimous vote was cast approving this motion.
- A motion was made by Charlie, seconded by Kathie that we appoint Ferdinand to these positions for a contract term of two years with a reassessment at the 18-month mark. Vote was unanimously in favor of this motion. Ferd and Elizabeth abstained from voting on this motion.
- Richard will continue planning for the Reno 2025 National show with a goal of contributing at least \$12,000 to the Federation.

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## **DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **Increasing Membership Activity and Engagement Strategies**

There was some discussion about ways to increase activity and engagement among FOHBC members. Charlie sent out an email to club presidents urging them to provide more information for the magazine. Michael shared his strategy of removing access to the website for non-renewing members, which often prompts them to rejoin. Michael and Brian agreed to meet to discuss this process so that Brian can take this over as part of his Membership Director position.

### **Financial Recap for September**

Michael presented a financial recap for the month of September. He noted that investments were doing well, but the \$30,000 taken out for Houston 24 was not redeposited. There were significant out-of-period expenditures in September which inflated the normal monthly expenditures. These included several months of Business Manager salaries, significant administrative assistance expenses, and reimbursements to Ferd and Elizabeth for expenses they paid for over the last three years, reimbursements to Michael for a trip to Houston for Expo planning, and reimbursements for various tax and registration payments paid by Alice. Michael stressed the need to keep income and expenses within the appropriate periods as much as possible.

### **Museum Funding Discussion**

Michael noted that the Virtual Museum was running low on funds and would need to push for donations. He also discussed the upcoming increase in expenses due to Miguel's return to Houston and his need for higher

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compensation (\$14/hr. to \$30/hr.) for his work due to the higher cost of living in Houston. Miguel will be seeking full-time employment but would like to continue doing part-time web-based work for FOHBC. The team also discussed the potential for grants to support the Virtual Museum which Alan DeMaison will be pursuing.

### **Houston 24 Expo Account Discussion**

Michael gave a brief overview of the Houston 24 Expo account. He noted that \$53,000 was in accounts receivable, including a large invoice (\$35,000) that needed to be sent to Joel Bartsch, \$15,000 in auction proceeds to come from auctioneer Martin Van Zant, and some souvenir program advertising outstanding invoices. Ferd agreed to submit the invoice to Joel by early next week (October 21, 2024). There is approximately \$51,000 in accounts payable which includes \$30,000 for reimbursement to Michael for purchasing the Drake's commemorative bottles, plus shipping costs for bottles Michael sent out after the Expo, \$9,000 owed to auction sellers, \$7,500 seed money owed back to the Federation, and a \$4,400 expense that was inadvertently paid out of Federation funds. Michael noted that the Drake's brought in over \$70,000 including the raffled and auctioned bottles for a net profit of approximately \$40,000. He noted that \$25,000 of the \$30,000 transferred from investments to Houston 24 has been paid back to the Federation; however, it was used to pay FOHBC expenses rather than being able to return it to the investment account.

Michael discussed the various program expenses required to operate the three FOHBC websites, some of which have been paid by Ferd and Elizabeth and then reimbursed. These expenses will now be paid directly by FOHBC.

### **Federation's Financial Status and Expenses**

Michael discussed the Federation's current financial status, highlighting increased expenses over the past few months which should not be recurring. These include the additional administrative costs due to Elizabeth's illness of approximately \$15,000 in the fiscal year July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024 and another \$3,000 from July 1, 2024 to present. He acknowledged that the board had authorized considerably less than this amount before re-evaluation. He expressed hope that Elizabeth would be able to resume her duties, reducing the need for additional administrative assistance and expense.

### **Federation Income, Expenses, and Funding Strategies**

Michael discussed the Federation's projected income from membership dues and club memberships, with a goal of increasing membership to 1,800. With the increased costs for the magazine editor, webmaster, and social media manager and the continued expense of a Business Manager there will be a shortfall of \$21,000 annually. He emphasized the need for these roles and expenses to ensure the organization's continuation. An approved capital expenditure of \$5,000 for a new website and \$500 for updating the Auction Price Report is not included in this figure.

Michael discussed potential revenue increase strategies for the Federation, including raising membership dues by \$20, increasing the cost for clubs who request insurance coverage for shows, and reaching out to life members (160) to solicit donations. The aim is to increase annual revenue to meet the Federation's projected expenses without having to withdraw funds from investments. Michael and Charlie stressed, however, that invested funds should be used for the benefit of members through program enhancements rather than just seeking to build up our reserves beyond maintaining a reasonable cushion.

Charlie suggested capping the Investment Fund at \$150,000 and the need to keep a balanced annual budget.

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Henry emphasized the need for a compelling reason to justify raising dues, and Richard noted the conflict between benefiting members and raising dues. Ferd suggested a committee would need to explore the effect of a dues increase and bring a recommendation to the board. Eric noted a dues increase could reduce membership. Several other board members expressed disagreement with raising dues.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice J. Seeliger, Secretary, FOHBC

*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.*