



FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL BOTTLE COLLECTORS
FOUNDED 1969

Board of Directors Annual Meeting
July 31, 2025, 12-4 pm Reno, Nevada
FOHBC Reno 25 National Antique Bottle & Glass Convention
Silver Legacy Resort & Casino

Attendance:

Michael Seeliger, President
Alice Seeliger, Secretary
Kathie Craig, Treasurer (via Zoom)
Craig Cassetta, Marketing Director
Doug Simms, Special Projects Director/Webmaster
John O'Neill, Director at Large
Richard Siri, Director at Large
Steve Jackson, Director at Large (via Zoom)
Tom Lines, Southern Region Director (via Zoom)
Eric McGuire, Western Region Director
Henry Hecker, Midwest Region Director (via phone)

Absent: Charlie Martin, Northeast Region Director

Guests: Steve Ketcham, NorthStar Bottle Club (MN); Greg & Elise Eaton, Tennessee Bottle Club & Hosts of 2027 National Event; Gina Pellegrini, FOHBC Photographer

Michael called the meeting to order at 12 pm and welcomed guests. He invited them to enjoy a complimentary box lunch and beverages while the meeting is being conducted.

Financial Summary

Michael provided a review of the Federation's financial status noting that we are still owed some funds from H24. The investment accounts have been reduced but they are still performing well. It was noted that \$10,000 was withdrawn from investments to cover website fees and other expenses. The Federation's investments are about \$136,000.

The Virtual Museum's funds have been depleted due to the high cost of maintenance for hosting on an inadequate server with outdated software. Doug is reviewing all expenses of the three websites and will be providing recommendations to the board. We have lost a major \$500/month contributor to the Virtual Museum, and a promotional campaign was suggested to reinvigorate donations. Doug is confident he can eliminate most of the cost of maintenance, especially of the Virtual Museum, through moving to a new server and updated software.

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Kathie presented the fiscal year financial report for July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. She presented an income statement detailing various income sources and expenses, including website plugins, printing costs, and insurance payments. The organization had about \$8,200 left over at the end of the year, after accounting for the \$10,000 insurance check received for the lost Wannalancet bottle and the additional amount the Federation had to pay out. Doug has already billed for hosting fees through September, which is considerably less than the previous high maintenance costs.

Kathie will finalize the Virtual Museum financial statement after she has received additional information from Alan DeMaison.

Houston 24 National Expo Report

Michael presented a summary of the H24 Expo income and expenditures according to the data available to him. A P & L Statement has not been provided by the Expo promoter. Total Income was \$191,061 and Expenses were \$201,184. This does not include the Federation's payout for the Wannalancet Bitters loss which was added to the insurance payout.

The Federation has additional physical assets from H24 of approximately 2700 Exhibition books and a substantial inventory of H24 t-shirts and other promotional items. The books will be distributed and sold through clubs and individual sales at shows, etc. The merchandise committee consisting of Craig Cassetta, Bill Taylor, Henry Hecker and Steve Ketcham will determine other possible sale opportunities.

The Expo resulted in the Federation receiving a donated asset in the form of 1,400 each of the two Masterpieces and Barber Bottles books from Joel Bartsch. It was agreed to retitle these assets as "proposed" or "eventual" assets to reflect their current market value and potential for future use in member renewals or club incentives. The group discussed the tax implication of the book donation for the donor and agreed to document the current market value for future reference.

The board discussed and rejected Fred's proposal to chair a committee on sales and distribution, with a formal vote to decline his offer.

It was noted that it may be necessary to seek legal counsel to ensure all funds and intellectual property are returned to the Federation before the end of the contract with Peach Ridge Collections in September 2025. Michael and Steve were directed to contact a Texas-based attorney for advice and a cost estimate to prepare a legal document and report back to the board. It is the fiduciary responsibility of the board to ensure funds are handled appropriately so as not to jeopardize its non-profit status.

At the very least, the board will prepare and send an invoice for the amount owed to the Federation from the H24 account of approximately \$8,000, noting that there was no profit on which to pay out a chairperson's percentage, therefore no stipend or percentage of profit should have been withdrawn from the account.

Transfer of Intellectual Property/AB&GC magazine

The Board addressed ongoing issues with control of certain assets, including membership lists and advertising spreadsheets, which had been withheld until recently. The board noted that while Michael had downloaded a membership list in early June, his access to the Google document had then been denied. Alice was unable to access advertising records for some time, which hampered her ability to invoice or seek new advertising for AB&GC.

Doug will review the Dropbox account files, investigate which files are stored in Ortery, analyze other programs and add ons and determine which to cancel and which to maintain in the Federation's name. He continues to work on getting all accounts into the Federation's name as sole owner. Doug will ensure that administrative controls have been turned over to him for all Federation-related programs and software.

Doug and Alice will follow up to ensure that all elements to prepare the AB&GC magazine have been transferred to us before September 21 so there is not a significant delay in producing the November-December issue. Alice will review submitted article archives and work on updating articles if appropriate. She will be working with Martin Van Zant to prepare the November-December issue of AB&GC. The Federation is seeking a new Graphic Designer/Layout Artist to begin with the January-February 2026 issue.

Legal Action for IP Recovery

The group passed a motion for the President and Steve Jackson to contact an attorney in Texas to estimate the cost of writing a letter requesting the Federation's intellectual property and disputed funds. Charlie emphasized the need to take action and avoid further discussion, as the Federation has been wronged and needed to either act or remain silent. The motion carried unanimously, with Eric joining the call after the vote to confirm his agreement. The offer to transfer IP after the end of the contract at the rate of \$150/hour was rejected by the board as it is felt this should be accomplished before the end of the contract.

Financial and Operational Status Review

Alice provided an overview of advertising revenue from AB&GC, noting that she is collecting approximately \$8,000 in accounts receivable with about \$5,000 collected in the past two months. For magazine advertising goals, Kathie suggested a target of \$6,000-\$7,500 per issue, though current income is around \$3,000 per issue. Membership numbers have decreased from a peak of 1,600 to around 1,200. It is hoped that a new website will improve membership and renewals. The magazine accounts for the most significant expense in production and mailing costs. The other significant cost has been in website maintenance services but this is anticipated to be reduced considerably very soon.

Reno 25 National Event Success

Richard Siri and Craig Cassetta were acknowledged for their efforts in producing Reno 25. Craig's postings on social media were instrumental in bringing attention to the show. They have successfully sold out of tables and have met the requirements of the hotel room

block. The agenda for the event is exciting, and overall attendance is better than expected. There is no doubt it will be a financially successful event. 60 of the 150 Reno Red Drake's have been sold, which is enough to cover costs.

2026 and Future National Event Potential

Michael discussed the possibility of organizing a 50th anniversary show in conjunction with the St. Louis Club show in April, though concerns were raised about its proximity to the Nashville show. The group also explored potential locations for future shows, with Bob Strickhart of the Baltimore club mentioned as a possible organizer for an Eastern event.

The group discussed the success of a recent show in Nashville, which will serve as a template for future events. They reviewed plans for upcoming shows, including potential locations in South Carolina and discussions about the frequency of national shows. Michael and Doug shared experiences about collecting bottles and the challenges of organizing large events. The conversation also touched on the use of social media and websites to promote their activities and share information with collectors.

FOHBC National 2027 Nashville Expo

Greg and Elise Eaton reviewed the progress for the Nashville Expo, noting a strong response already and the potential for 400 tables, with plans to record seminars due to limited seating. Additionally, they discussed hotel arrangements, emphasizing the need for early booking, and mentioned the huge yard sale event that follows the Expo.

Insurance Policies and Coverage Updates

John O'Neill explained insurance policies carried by the organization, including a business package policy underwritten by Hartford Insurance Company and a directors and officers coverage policy with Great American Insurance Company. He presented an option for additional cyber liability coverage, including social engineering protection, which the board approved. The discussion also covered liquor liability insurance requirements for future events, with John agreeing to consult with the National Nashville venue about their requirements and explore options for coverage.

FOHBC Social Media Strategy

The Federation's social media presence and management was reviewed by Michael and Doug who discussed its current social media accounts, including Facebook and Instagram, highlighting the success of their Reno-related content. They identified issues with the FOHBC Instagram account, which was largely inactive and filled with Houston-related posts, and discussed the need to regain control of it. The group also explored options for integrating content from different regions and events, with Michael expressing the need to find a way to represent all regions effectively.

Regional Updates and Future Initiatives

Additional key topics covered included regional directors' reports, where Henry shared

details about a significant historical bottle discovery in Wisconsin. Alice discussed the process for selecting national show locations, emphasizing the need to spread shows across regions. Michael outlined future projects including a potential collaboration with the Corning Museum of Glass and improvements to the reference library in the Virtual Museum. The conversation ended with a discussion about merchandise, clarifying that the organization is not in the business of selling T-shirts and similar items, focusing instead on selling the significant quantity of Exhibition books now in its possession.

Auction Price Report Expansion

Doug discussed his conversation with Fred Holabird, a prominent auctioneer, who expressed interest in participating in the Auction Price Report project without any financial obligation. Doug plans to connect Holabird with Bill Meier and other relevant contacts to bring more auction results into the APR.

New Federation Website Launch

Doug explained his role in managing the organization's websites and domain names, highlighting his efforts to improve website performance and reduce costs. He discussed plans to enhance the Auction Price Report by adding pictures and making it more easily accessible to members. He also addressed challenges in obtaining auction data from various sources and outlined potential solutions. The board discussed the timeline for implementing these improvements, with a goal of launching the updated Auction Price Report before the new year.

Doug then presented and demonstrated the new Federation website, highlighting its improved functionality and design. He demonstrated features such as the Virtual Museum, membership directory, event calendar, and bottle club map. The website aims to better educate the public about bottle collecting and provide resources for members. Doug also discussed plans to integrate online payment options and a member-managed directory in the future. The website is expected to go live in 1-2 weeks after the Reno show.

Action steps

- Michael and Steve to contact Texas attorney to get cost estimate for writing demand letter regarding intellectual property and funds. A \$1,800 limit was established to move forward with this.
- Michael and Steve to report back to board with attorney's cost estimate and recommendation
- Michael and Steve will draft a letter from the full board requesting repayment of H24 expenses paid by the Federation
- Federation to consider pursuing small claims court action if needed
- Michael to follow up with Joel Bartsch regarding the disposition of his final payment/stipend
- Michael to update the asset valuation *notation* for the Exhibition books to reflect their true market value versus the original cost
- Michael to continue selling Exhibition books to clubs at \$40 per book with the 50/50 profit-sharing arrangement

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- Michael and Board Members attending shows to continue offering H24 t-shirts as membership incentives rather than trying to sell them
- Michael and Doug to update the website with pricing information for the Exhibition books
- Board to prepare a response declining Ferdinand's request to serve as chair of a committee for Exhibition book sales and distribution
- Bill Taylor to continue research on potential booksellers who might be interested in purchasing 300-500 books to sell
- Alice to continue managing the magazine advertising spreadsheet, collect the remaining \$3,000 in advertising accounts receivable and pursue other auction houses for advertising contracts.
- Doug to review Dropbox account files next week
- Doug to investigate what files are stored in Ortery
- Doug to verify control of the "Issuu" system and PDFs for magazines
- Doug to complete loading all member information into the new website
- Doug to implement the new website system to automatically track memberships and send renewal notifications
- Michael to continue recruiting new members at shows and renewals through emails and postcard reminders
- Alice and Doug to work on getting magazine information and templates transferred before the September end of Peach Ridge Collection's (PRC) contract for magazine production
- Alice to work with Martin Van Zant to produce the November-December magazine
- Alice to distribute the magazine article pipeline list and gather input on outdated articles
- Federation to seek new graphic designer and editor for future magazines
- Doug to follow up with Fred Holabird and Bill Meier regarding obtaining auction results and potential collaboration for the Auction Price Report
- Doug to merge the Auction Price Report website with the main server to eliminate the cost of a third server
- Doug to continue working with Bill Meier to include pictures in the Auction Price Report
- Doug to follow up with auction houses about providing data in compatible format for the APR
- Board to decide whether to proceed with the APR with just Heckler's auctions pictures or wait for all auction houses data
- Doug/Craig to post weekly announcements on Facebook and website featuring bottles from the Virtual Museum
- Alan to Coordinate with collectors at the Nashville show to bring special bottles for Virtual Museum imaging
- Doug to integrate a "Need a Certificate of Insurance" link on the website for Clubs to request COI
- Doug to archive the old website once the new one has been launched
- Doug/Craig to investigate whether the Instagram account for the Reno show can be rebranded for future National events

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- Michael to continue monitoring and following up on Reno Red Drake's orders
- Team to review and decide which VM information should be retained on the website
- Doug to train volunteers on how to create spins for the VM
- Doug to create a system for contributors to add descriptions to the 700 new bottle spins waiting to be added to the VM
- Board to develop a campaign to recruit contributors for VM bottle descriptions
- Doug to launch the APR with available pictures before the end of the year
- Doug to verify that Miguel has been removed from any VM listings
- Doug, Michael, Alice to develop a plan for hiring a new business manager

Motion to adjourn by Tom Lines, seconded by Doug Simms, motion passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 4 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice J. Seeliger, Secretary
Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors