



FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL BOTTLE COLLECTORS

FOUNDED 1969

Board of Directors Meeting

June 18, 2025, 7 p.m. CT - Zoom

Present:

Michael Seeliger, President

Alice Seeliger, Secretary

Kathie Craig, Treasurer

Craig Cassetta, Marketing Director

Doug Simms, Special Projects Director

Steve Jackson, Director at Large

Richard Siri, Director at Large

Charlie Martin, Northeast Region Director

Henry Hecker, Midwest Region Director

Eric McGuire, Western Region Director

Proxy Vote: John O'Neill, Director at Large

Proxy Vote: Tom Lines, Southern Region Director

No visitors were present.

Michael called the meeting to order at 7 pm CT. He noted that there was a quorum present of 12 including the proxy votes of John O'Neill and Tom Lines.

Michael noted that this meeting was specifically called to address the FOHBC websites including the progress Doug has made in migrating the sites to his company's high-speed server, his proposal for designing a new FOHBC.org website, authorization to pay Doug's invoice for extensive work he has already done, and progress on transitioning the website and social media responsibilities to Doug and Craig, respectively.

Website Proposal

Doug presented his proposal for a new website and shared his background with the Federation, including his appointment as Special Projects Director, Webmaster, in April. He has been operating DNS Computer Services for over 30 years and has designed, hosted and maintained websites for many diverse clients. He has been a bottle collector his whole life as he was

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introduced to the hobby by his father. He has a unique skill set that has been very valuable to the Federation.

The board reviewed the website proposal featuring state-of-the-art e-commerce practices, enhanced security measures, and flexible membership options. Doug outlined a timeline for completion by the end of 2025 and discussed various features including a responsive design, easy navigation, and integration with Member Press for membership management. The cost for building the website was set at \$5,000, with additional expenses for optional features like a self-maintained directory and moving the Auction Price Report to the new platform. The board voted to accept the proposal at a cost of \$5,000. The board had previously decided to rescind the agreement with Ferd and Miguel for website development, as the agreed-upon timeline had not been met.

Doug will begin work on a new website on Monday and requested that no changes be made to the existing Federation website, as he would handle all updates to ensure system stability.

Federation Website Migration Update

Doug provided a detailed update on his recent work, including migrating three Federation websites from the Fat Cow server to his own dedicated server, setting up Google Analytics, and implementing security measures. He discussed ongoing tasks such as transferring domain names and ownership and administration to the Federation for all of the online accounts. Doug also mentioned that the Virtual Museum website, which runs on a 10-year-old framework, currently has malware and backend issues, but these are not a priority since a new website is planned. He presented an invoice for \$1,800 for 20 hours (a reduction from actual) of work at his old rate of \$90/hour, along with additional charges for domain registration, Immunity 360 software, and website hosting. The board approved the payment of this invoice.

Virtual Museum Issues

Michael and Kathie praised Doug for his efforts in managing plugins and website issues. They noted that Miguel's monthly invoices for maintenance were extremely high with Kathie reporting that they ranged from \$1,200/month to almost \$4,000/month. Doug noted that no new spins have been added since November 2024. Since transferring the Virtual Museum to his high-speed, dedicated server, Doug has been able to maintain the site with minimal effort/expense.

Doug explained he would handle spinner creation and content layout, and Ferdinand could provide content/descriptions. Doug discussed image quality and costs for the Virtual Museum website explaining that high-resolution images are currently required due to Ferd's preference for print-quality images, though he suggested this might be unnecessary. Doug will explore

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options for improving efficiency, including a new image spinner plugin that could reduce manual coding.

The board explored potential fundraising strategies for the Virtual Museum, with Eric suggesting comparisons to other organizations like the Corning Museum of Glass, though Michael noted challenges in securing consistent funding.

Website Hosting and User Feedback

Doug explained the hosting and maintenance costs for the website, clarifying that the \$50 monthly fee for each of the three sites includes server maintenance, security, and unlimited mailboxes. He emphasized the importance of feedback from the team to improve the website's usability, particularly for older members who may not be computer-savvy. Charlie suggested involving a younger bottle collector to provide technological and generational insights. Doug proposed ideas to make the website more engaging, such as local showcases and user-generated content about bottles. The board agreed to provide feedback and consider involving a younger collector for additional input.

Website Management Transition Plan/Social Media Operation

Doug has taken over the Webmaster duties at the same compensation included in the Peachridge Collections contract but he will not begin charging until the end of Ferdinand's contract.

Craig has taken over the social media duties and is actively posting to the FOHBC Facebook page, Instagram, and Reno25 Facebook page. The board also discussed moderating the Facebook page, deciding to allow relevant comments while removing off-topic posts with explanations to the posters. Craig indicated he is willing to do this on a volunteer basis as long as he can handle the workload.

Account Ownership Transfer Discussion

Doug expressed frustration with Ferd's reluctance to transfer ownership of various Federation accounts, including Mailchimp, and discussed potential solutions with the board. Doug and Kathie will create a comprehensive list of accounts, assess which ones allow multiple owners, and develop a plan to reassign ownership and administrative rights.

Contract Review

The board discussed Ferdinand's (Peachridge Collections) current role and compensation, with Kathie raising questions about his contract and whether it should be rewritten to reflect his reduced responsibilities to include only magazine editor/publisher. The board agreed to give Ferdinand/Peachridge Collections the 90 days notice of contract dissolution outlined in the

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contract. The board decided to maintain the current compensation through the end of the contract period which would be September 21, 2025. They authorized offering Ferdinand/Peachridge Collections a new contract for just the Editor/Publisher position with the same compensation and other details to be worked out.

Response to Ethics Complaint

The board also discussed the need to make a formal statement regarding the ethics violation case, as they had been holding off on other decisions pending the outcome of the ethics letter.

Miscellaneous

Kathie noted that Elizabeth had sent four letters via 2-day express mail at a cost of \$40 and wondered if this was appropriate. Michael emphasized the importance of this method due to mail delivery issues. It is important to get membership applications as quickly as possible. Elizabeth is sending these no more than once a week. She often copies the applications and payments and emails them to speed things up.

Actions Authorized with Board Approval

- Michael: Draft formal notice to Ferd dissolving the current contract with 60 days' notice (corrected to 90 days) and option to enter into a new a contract for editor/publisher position
- Board: The board also discussed the need to make a formal statement regarding the ethics violation case, as they had been holding off on other decisions pending the outcome of the ethics letter
- Doug: Start building the new FOHBC website with Member Press integration within 2-4 weeks
- Doug & Kathie: Create comprehensive list of all online accounts/services and analyze transfer requirements from Ferd to Federation
- Doug: Set up separate hosting for FOHBC, Virtual Museum, and APR websites at \$50/month each
- Doug: Provide banking information to Kathie for invoice payment authorized by board
- Kathie: Process payment for Doug's invoice via ACH transfer
- Doug: Look into the current Issuu.com magazine hosting to check for third-party advertising

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- Doug: Continue to work with Bill Meier on integrating the updated Auction Price Report data into the new website after main website completion
- Doug: Continue working with auction houses to get direct auction data for the Auction Price report
- Craig: Take over social media responsibilities on a voluntary basis
- Doug: Report on websites visitation statistics at each board meeting through the use of Google Analytics
- Doug: Provide training for website content updates once the new site is completed
- Charlie: Connect with Kevin Cantrell to get feedback on website design from younger generation perspective
- Board: Determine if Ferd should be paid per spinner description for Virtual Museum if he chooses to continue working with the VM
- Doug: Create proposal for spinner article preparation costs
- Kathie: Review and confirm current payment status with Issuu.com for magazine hosting
- Doug: Handle all website updates including show notices and magazine uploads during transition
- Doug: Investigate and implement a new spinner plugin solution for Virtual Museum to improve efficiency
- Board Members: Provide feedback about current website likes and dislikes
- Doug: Investigate ways to optimize image sizes for Virtual Museum
- Craig: Monitor and moderate Facebook comments, removing irrelevant posts

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice J. Seeliger
Secretary

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.