

# **United States Association of Cider Makers**

Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 24th, 2015 5pm EST  
Phone Meeting

**Call to Order:** A Board of Directors meeting was held via phone conference. Members in attendance: Trevor Baker, Dan Rowell, Mike Beck, Bruce Nissen, David Cordtz, James Kohn, Scott Donovan, Dan Wilson, Robert Vail. Missing were Eleanor Leger and Justin Kissinger. Also in attendance: Sue Husch and Ellen Serr of QBS Event Management. Special guest was Amy Stinson, head of the USACM Legislative Committee.

## **Item: Accept Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Beck. David made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Scott seconded; motion approved.

## **Standing Agenda Item**

### **Item: Cider CON wrap-up**

James said that CiderCON was viewed as an overall success by the people who had filled out the exit survey. James reminded the board members to fill out the survey if they hadn't already done so. We are still waiting on the final numbers from the hotel and will send out when completed. Next year we are looking at the Hilton in Portland which can easily fit 850 people.

## **Open Issues**

### **Item: CIDER Act Update**

Amy Stinson updated the board on recent activity on the CIDER Act. On February 11<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Finance Committee passed the CIDER Act, which moves it one step closer to a vote on the Senate floor. Amy said we are hoping to have the act re-introduced soon, and will be looking for the Senate to ask for unanimous consent, which is a faster way of getting it passed. It would then move on to the House, and hopefully be added to a suspension calendar there, which is for bills considered non-controversial and thus easier to pass. The Legislative committee has been working with Justin Kissinger and lobbyist Mick Nardelli, who have crafted a press release to be sent out this week.

### **Item: Code of Ethics Wording**

Item tabled.

### **Item: Board Terms and Past Member Thanks**

If the new board structure remains the same, we will have eight out of eleven people up for re-election next year. Mike suggested we look at changing the board structure to either one or three year terms. James suggested that the at-large seats be moved to three year terms, since they serve the entire membership, rather than a region. Sue will send out a questionnaire to the board to gain insight. Sue also requested we send a "thank you" of some sort to the board members who had served last year. QBS will also begin crafting a "member milestone" page to be added to the website.

## **Item: Summer Meeting**

The board typically meets in person during the summer. Sue and James asked if the board would like to meet in Portland or make a trip to DC and meet there, at the same time meeting with legislators. Mike said that we would need to make sure Congress is in session if we plan a trip during the summer. All agreed that it would be a good idea to take advantage of the meeting and have it in DC. Sue will work with Justin to get a summer session calendar.

## **New Business**

### **Item: Wine and Craft Beverage News**

Mike was contacted by the editor of the Wine and Craft Beverage News magazine. They are interested in providing free subscriptions to members of the USACM. It was felt that this was a great member benefit, but David suggests adding a link to the website and e-newsletter so that people can sign up as they wish, rather than sharing our member database. James noted that the magazine be asked to join our organization before we collaborate with them.

### **Item: TTIP Trade Agreement**

No Justin – item tabled.

### **Item: Committees**

During the Strategic Planning Session, it was decided to update the committees to the following:

Executive (named board members); Legislative (already in place); Conference (already in place); Finance (already in place); Marketing; (needs to be formed) and Compliance/Best Practice (needs to be formed - includes Research Grant Committee)

Sue will be sending a note to all board members with a listing of who is on what committee, and the descriptions of each committee. It is requested that each board member be on at least one committee.

### **Item: Executive Director**

James reported that the contract between QBS and USACM expires next month. He wants to form a committee to look at the possibility of hiring an Executive Director for the organization. Duties would include being a liaison between the board and the committees, administrative work, finance work, and other duties yet to be defined. James suggested that the committee put together a job description and present it to the board. QBS will continue to work on the Conference planning committee, and may expand and modify their job duties to encompass the new position. David made a motion to extend the contract of QBS on a month-to-month basis until the committee can come up with a job description and timeline. Bruce seconded; motion carried.

### **Item: James – Time and Expense Reimbursement**

James Kohn would like to be reimbursed for his time and personal finances used to set up the first Cider Conferences. Dan Rowell suggested we wait for the final accounting from this year's conference, but was fine with approving the request. David agreed, as long as there is a clear accounting of what we are paying for, and Scott agreed and asked that at least two members of the finance committee review the request once it is finalized.

Meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 5pm EST.