

Minutes of the 2020 BOD Annual Meeting

Submitted by Larry Olson

The ABFDE Board of Directors met virtually for their annual meeting on October 23 and 24, 2020 via Zoom. Present were: President Ted Burkes, Vice President Gary Licht, Secretary Larry Olson, Treasurer Katherine Schoenberger, Miriam Angel, Lisa Hanson, Alan Kreitl, George Lehman, Meg O'Brien, Tom Riley, and Farrell Shiver. John Barnett was unable to attend.

Agenda - Motion to adopt the Agenda as published was unanimously passed (Motion by Licht, second by Angel).

2019 BOD Meeting Minutes - unanimously approved (Motion by Kreitl, second by Angel).

Treasurer's Report – Katherine Schoenberger

The following comments relate to fiscal activities from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

Filing of IRS 990-N:

Allyson DeHart, an accountant with The Hobbs Group, filed the form on the Board's behalf in November 2019.

Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA):

No filing was due this year. The updated form is required every two years with the next filing deadline of April 1, 2020.

US Patent and Trademark Office:

The ABFDE logo remains actively registered with the USPTO. The next required "continued use" update will be in 2022.

B of D Liability Insurance – CNA Insurance Company:

A payment in the amount of \$2,463 was made to CNA Insurance Company on March 3, 2019. It is a 2-year term policy with the next payment due on March 4, 2020.

The policy was reviewed in September and it was discovered that it does not contain a media coverage clause. Former treasurer Jim Green was the contact person when the policy was created and explicitly requested that the media coverage be included. It is recommended that we shop for another insurance provider as CNA Insurance was not providing us the service we requested. The 2nd policy payment was made via electronic check on March 4, 2020, so we are still covered for another year.

Ames Fund:

During the past year, interest from the CD in the amount of \$3.05 and \$2.80 from the Savings account was added. The prior balance in the fund was \$4,548.41.

The current balance is \$4,554.26.

As a reminder, the Ames account is not a separate fund; it is simply a dedicated balance that currently exists in the regular checking account.

District of Columbia representation:

Payment in the amount of \$121.21 was made to the Corporate Service Company on January 6, 2020 to maintain statutory representation in D.C during 2020. (The ABFDE was originally incorporated in Washington, D.C.)

FSAB Accreditation:

A maintenance fee payment was made to FSAB in the amount of \$821.00 on October 29, 2019. The fee is assessed based on the number of diplomates.

Hilton 2nd Edition Sales:

No sales royalty was received during the year.

Diplomate payments for dues:

2019 – 2020 dues payments totaled \$ 34,300

Actual amount deposited is \$33,538.80 because of PayPal transaction fees.

70 dues paid via PayPal (6 are international)

28 dues paid via check

98 dues paid¹

Bank Account balances (as of 12/31/19):

CD: \$ 7,596.91 (Currently earning 0.04% interest. Expires 8/14/20)

Savings: \$ 30,327.51 (Interest accumulated \$2.80 for the year)

Regular Checking: \$ 23,680.18 (12/31/18 balance was \$47,818.)

On October 28, 2019, \$30,000 was transferred from the checking account to the savings account to take advantage of earning interest.

A 'Profit and Loss' statement for the 2019 calendar year is attached.

¹ In August 2019, Stephanie Kingsley passed her oral boards and was voted in as a Diplomate. Therefore, we had 99 diplomates for the year. However, no dues were assessed for Stephanie.

Banking Considerations

There are no Bank of America branches in my area. In August 2019, I was issued a debit card to allow me to make deposits at the local Bank of America ATM.

In September, I enrolled the bank account in the bank's Preferred Rewards for Business which costs nothing to join. Since we had a combined balance of more than \$50,000 for at least 3 months, we are at the Platinum tier. This gives us certain advantages such as no fees on stop payments and an increase in our saving account interest from 0.04% to 0.05%. This program was beneficial when the check to the Hyatt Regency for the deposit of the BoD meeting got lost in the mail and a stop payment was issued.

To expedite payment to the Hyatt Regency due to the lost check, the electronic Bill Pay option was used where the bank issued and mailed a check directly to the hotel for us.

I suggest we update our SOP to allow for the treasurer to use the bank's Bill Pay option to pay the monthly expenses billed by our administration office Corporate Assets. This is the only consistent expense paid every month. The treasurer would send a copy of the invoice to the President along with a copy of the electronic transaction receipt. There would be some decrease in postage expenses if we used the Bill Pay service.

Audit:

In compliance with the SOP for the Treasurer, The Hobbs Group conducted an "Agreed Upon Procedures" audit on the cash receipts, disbursements and bank reconciliations for the year ended June 30, 2019 to close out the files under the term of former Treasurer James Green. A report was issued on January 13, 2020. The bill was submitted in February 2020 for \$3,000 which is \$1000 less than the last audit.

In summary:

1. Case Receipts: There were no exceptions noted.
2. Cash Disbursements: There were two exceptions noted and two recommendations.
 - a. One disbursement did not have proper co-signatures.
 - b. One disbursement was missing two receipts totaling \$67.72 for travel reimbursement to an employee.

The following are instances noted and recommendations by The Hobbs Group:

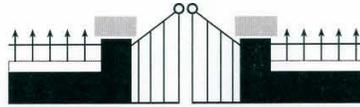
- c. There were two instances when reimbursement requests were submitted 5 to 7 months after the expenses were incurred. It is recommended that reimbursements only be authorized when the request is submitted in a timely manner (within 30 days of the expense).
 - d. They recommend having all directors submit a standard travel reimbursement request form to be reimbursed by the board. They believe having this form will ensure proper approvals are given and all receipts are retained for reimbursements made to the director.
3. Bank Reconciliations: There were three exceptions: three different checks were double-booked causing the general ledger to be understated at year end.
4. The Certificate of Deposit: no interest earned is being booked in the software program.

A copy of the full audit report is attached.

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INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

To the Board and Members of
American Board of Forensic Document Examiners

We have performed the procedures enumerated below, which were agreed to by the Treasurer of the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners (the "Board") on the cash receipts, disbursements and bank reconciliations for the year ended June 30, 2019. The Board's management is responsible for the cash receipts, disbursements, and bank reconciliations for the year ended June 30, 2019. The sufficiency of these procedures is solely the responsibility of the specified parties specified in this report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures enumerated below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

The procedures and the associated findings are as follows:

1. Cash Receipts

- We selected fifteen recorded deposits from the fiscal year for testing.
- We inspected selected recorded receipts to determine if these receipts were properly described and classified in the accounting records in accordance with the Board's policies and procedures.
- We inspected selected recorded receipts to determine if these receipts were recorded in a timely manner and in the proper fiscal year.
- We compared amounts recorded on the deposit summary sheet to those amounts posted onto the deposit slip and bank statements to determine if amounts were in agreement.

No exceptions noted.

2. Cash Disbursements

- We selected thirty recorded disbursements from the fiscal year for testing.
- We inspected selected recorded disbursements to determine if these disbursements were properly described and classified in the accounting records in accordance with the Board's policies and procedures.

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- Ensured that a photocopy of all of the checks disbursed and associated invoices were maintained.
- We compared the date on the invoice to the date of the check to determine if the invoice was paid in a timely manner and recorded in the proper fiscal year.
- We verified that the checks had dual signatures of authorized signors.
- We verified that each disbursement was charged to the appropriate expense account.

The individual transactions selected were chosen randomly. We noted the following exceptions:

- One disbursement selected for testing did not have proper co-signatures as required by the Board's standard operating procedures.
- One disbursement was missing two receipts that totaled \$67.72 for a travel reimbursement to an employee.

In addition to the exceptions noted above during testing we noted two instances when an employee was reimbursed for an expense that was incurred five to seven months prior to the date the reimbursement check was written. We recommend having employee reimbursements submitted monthly and only reimbursing an individual for a receipt within 30 days of the reimbursement request date.

Although not a requirement at the present time, we recommend having all employees submit a standard travel reimbursement request form to be reimbursed by the Board. We believe having this form will ensure proper approvals are given and all receipts are retained for reimbursements made to the employee.

3. Bank Reconciliations

- We haphazardly chose five monthly reconciliations of the checking account and five monthly reconciliations of the business interest account for the fiscal year tested. For the selected reconciliations, we determined if they were performed timely, the amounts recalculated correctly, outstanding items were appropriate, the amount on the reconciliation agreed to the applicable amounts on the Board's general ledger and bank statement.
 - We noted one exception in which a disbursement, check number 1688 in the amount of \$118.11 was double booked in error on the general ledger. This caused the general ledger to be understated at year end by \$118.11.
 - We noted one exception in which two disbursements, check numbers 1721 and 1722 were doubled booked in error on the general ledger. This caused the general ledger to be understated at year end by \$747.50.

4. Certificate of Deposit

- We agreed the balance from QuickBooks with a third party financial institution for the year ending 6/30/2019.

We noted the following exceptions:

- We noted no interest being booked for the fiscal year.

This agreed-upon procedures engagement was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion on or conclusion, respectively, on the cash receipts, disbursements and bank reconciliations for the year ended June 30, 2019. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board and Members of the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

The Holtz Group, P.A.

Columbia, South Carolina
January 13, 2020

Audit Committee:

I recommend an audit committee be created to provide at least quarterly review of the records. It would be very beneficial if at least one member is familiar with Quickbooks Online. Quickbooks Online allows for a total of 3 login names.

Certificate of Deposit

The CD holds \$7,596.91. It is currently earning 0.04% and renews every 9 months. It is a "Risk Free" CD which allows for cashing out at any time. However, it is earning a much lower interest rate than other investments.

In November, at time of renewal, there was an option for a 13-month CD at a rate of 1.35% with a minimum of \$10,000 investment. I propose that we change the CD at maturity in August 2020 to a higher earning option. NOTE: Rates change regularly. As of March 7, 2020, the best option was a 7-month CD at 0.95%. Approximately, \$2,400 would need to be taken from checking to increase the CD investment to the minimum \$10,000.

PayPal vs Authorize.net (through Bank of America)

Currently we use PayPal for online credit card payment of dues and testing fees. The fees assessed by PayPal are:

- 2.9%+0.30 per transaction and
- 4.4% on international transactions.
- No monthly fee.

Transferring money into our bank account requires additional steps. There are also some hassles in identifying each payer in Quickbooks. Also, there is no easy way to create a report on PayPal.

In PayPal, for \$350 dues, the fee is \$10.45 for US payers and \$15.70 for international payers.

Bank of America has a merchant service option to use Authorize.net as our payment portal. Fees are less than PayPal. They are:

- 2.2%+0.20 per regular credit and debit cards
- 2.9%+0.20 per specialty cards
- Monthly fee of \$16 (\$192/yr.) and
- Onetime setup fee of \$49.

This would amount to a total of \$241 in fees the first year.

In Authorize.net, for \$350 dues, the fee is \$7.90 for regular credit card and \$10.35 if AmEx is used. As of March 7, I don't know if there is a higher charge for international payers.

If 70 dues are paid electronically (same number as 2019), it would be about \$32 more in fees for the first year only. However, subsequent years, Authorize.net would save us about \$16 in fees.

Annual Review of Records:

A review of records was not conducted.

ABFDE
Profit and Loss
 January - December 2019

| | Jan - Dec |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Income | |
| Annual Dues - 2019 | 34,300.00 |
| Application Fee | 350.00 |
| Late fee for dues | 150.00 |
| Total Revenue | 34,800.00 |
| Expenses | |
| B of D 2019 | 301.70 |
| Airfare | 4,963.33 |
| Ground Transportation | 1,014.30 |
| Meals | 550.58 |
| Lodging | 5,210.21 |
| Total ABFDE B of D 2019 | 12,040.12 |
| B of D Mtg 2020 | |
| Hotel deposit | 2,500.00 |
| Total ABFDE B of D Mtg 2020 | 2,500.00 |
| FSAB | |
| FSAB Meeting | |
| FSAB Travel | 86.00 |
| Total FSAB Meeting | 86.00 |
| FSAB Membership dues | 821.00 |
| Total FSAB | 907.00 |
| Insurance | 2,463.00 |
| Administration | 5,319.15 |
| Office expense | 3,617.03 |
| PayPal transaction fees | 761.20 |
| Postage and Delivery | 490.28 |
| PayPal deposit (unk source) | -19.10 |
| Legal Fees (CSC) | 118.11 |
| Website | 740.95 |
| Total Expenses | 28,937.74 |
| Net Operating Income | 5,862.26 |
| Other Income | |
| Interest Earned | 2.79 |
| Total Other Income | 2.79 |
| Net Other Income | 2.79 |
| Net Income | 5,865.05 |

Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved (Motion by Riley, second by Lehman).

Website – Miriam Angel

March 2019 to March 2020

The website has been redesigned. Our ISP is still GoDaddy, but all password, PIN, and contact information has been changed. Miriam Angel and Tom Riley have our GoDaddy information.

- GoDaddy hosting fees were paid on 8/2/19 in the amount of \$489.31. This payment covers three years. We also pay for a security package that was added by the Leavers after our website was hacked years ago. The \$251.64 for this package was also paid on 8/2/19, and it covers three years as well.
- There was no cost to redesign the website. The website cover photo was taken by LASD FDE Suji Lee. She is a professional photographer and spent quite some time on the photo shoot.
- At the last BOD meeting, it was agreed that I look out for abfde.com to expire in case the current owner failed to renew it. Unfortunately, abfde.com was renewed, and the new domain name expiration date is 8/23/21.
- Domains abfde.biz, abfde.info, abfde.us were not renewed. They will expire 5/22/26. Those domains will be “parked” with GoDaddy ads until the expiration date.

Credentials Report – Larry Olson

January 1, 2019 to March 20, 2020

No candidates were passed to the Testing Committee during this reporting period.

No applicants failed to pass the Credentials process during this reporting period.

No applicants are in the Credentials process as of March 20, 2020.

A review of the applicant records has been conducted, to ensure that confidential documents have been filed appropriately or destroyed and all candidate files are complete.

Continuing Education Committee Report – Larry Olson for Sean Espley

January 1, 2019 to March 8, 2020

There was a total of 13 ABFDE Workshops that were approved for ABFDE recertification points in the past year. The approved Workshops include the following:

1. *Chemical Examination of Inks and Paper*, MAAFS – May 2019, Gerald LaPorte
2. *Examination of Torn/Cut Edges*, MAAFS – May 2019, Peter Belcastro and Lorie Cousin
3. *Examining Writing on Unusual Surfaces*, MAAFS – May 2019, Peter Belcastro

4. *Is It An Individual Characteristic or Is It A Cultural Characteristic?*, SAFDE – 2019, Lisa Hanson and Marie Durina
5. *Deciphering and Associating Complex Indented Writing Impressions*, SAFDE – 2019, Mark Goff
6. *Fraud and USPS: A Focus on Postal Products*, MAFS – October 2019, Lisa Tolli
7. *Measuring the Frequency Occurrence of Handwriting and Hand-printing Characteristics*, MAFS – October 2019, Thomas Vastrick
8. *Unusual Writing Surfaces*, MAFS – October 2019, Peter Belcastro
9. *Write-On 3.0 – Hands-On Advanced Educational Workshop*, MAFS – October 2019, Pierre Goudreault and Brian Lindblom
10. *Write-On 3.0 – Hands-On Basic Educational Workshop*, MAFS – October 2019, Pierre Goudreault and Brian Lindblom
11. *A Behind the Scenes (and under the covers) Tour of PDFs from Adobe's PDF Architect*, SWAFDE - October 2019, Leonard Rosenthol
12. *Dispelling the Myths about the Forensic Identification of Handprinting*, SWAFDE - October 2019, Linton Mohammed and Lloyd Cunningham
13. *How Chemical Examinations of Inks and Paper Can Corroborate and Supplement Forensic Document Examinations*, SWAFDE - October 2019, Gerry LaPorte

Public Relations Committee Report – Lisa Hanson

April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2020

No Public Relations business was conducted by the committee for this time frame.

Recertification Committee Report – Tom Riley

March 20, 2019 to October 20, 2020

The Recertification Committee consists of the following members: Chair Thomas Riley, Manager George Lehman (A-F), Manager Miriam Angel (G-L), Manager John Barnett (M-R) and Manager Alan Kreitl (S-Z).

1. As of October 18, 2020, the ABFDE has 93 active Diplomates. This number does not include the Diplomates cited below who have resigned, semi-retired, retired or no longer wish to seek recertification.

2. Three (3) new Diplomates completed the testing process and were issued an ABFDE Certificate of Qualification and Membership Card: *Stephanie Kingsbury, Robin Tran, and Gina Hunter.*

3. Eight (8) Diplomates met recertification criteria for the five (5) year in period ending in 2020 and received their Certificate of Recertification and new Diplomate Membership cards: *Diane Tolliver, John Paul Osborn, Kevin Kulbacki, Charlotte Ware, Charles Eggleston, Kathleen Annunziata Nicolaides, Frank Hicks, and Richard Picciochi.*

4. One (1) Diplomate has requested a hardship extension to complete his recertification requirements.

5. Ten (10) Diplomates have resigned, semi-retired, retired or no longer wish to seek recertification: *David Moore, Dave Sexton, Robert Gohl, Michelle Novotny, Bill Leaver, Rich Dusak, Deb Foley, Marie Durina, Daniel Anderson, and William Riordan.*

6. Two (2) Diplomates have passed away since the last report: *Peter Tytell and Dan Purdy.*

7. Two (2) files are being maintained for each Diplomate. The appropriate Manager keeps a digital file containing items pertaining to Diplomate activity, including annual updates with supporting documentation and all significant correspondence relating to recertification; and the Administrative Office keeps a file containing annual Notice of Points Awarded (NOPA) forms, letters, Recertification Applications, and copies of Member cards and Recertification Certificates.

8. The Executive Board will audit a representative sampling of the Diplomate electronic files maintained by the Recertification Committee during the Annual Board of Directors Meeting held virtually via Zoom on October 23-25, 2020.

Rules and Procedures Committee Report – Farrell Shiver

March 25, 2019 to October 22, 2020

Various changes were made to the Rules and Procedures Guide (RPG) during the 2019 annual Board of Directors meeting. On June 12, 2019, ABFDE Secretary Miriam Angel emailed an updated RPG to the directors. Discussions ensued and additional changes were made involving recertification. The final version of the updated RPG was submitted to the directors. A final round of voting taking place, which ended on June 23. The changes were approved.

On September 20, 2020, ABFDE Secretary Larry Olson initiated a discussion regarding changes that were needed to the bylaws. Over the next few days, members of the ABFDE Executive Committee and Rules & Procedures Committee Chair discussed the proposed bylaw changes. As a result, on September 23, 2020, ABFDE President Ted Burkes submitted the proposed changes to the other directors by email as follows:

The following proposed changes to the ABFDE Bylaws have been suggested for discussion and vote for the 2020 Virtual Meeting of the ABFDE Board ([changes are in blue text](#)):

ARTICLE XI. Meetings and Operations

1. Annual Meeting

Paragraph 1 currently reads:

The annual meeting of the Board shall be held at a location designated by the President. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to each Director at least thirty (30) days before the meeting date. An annual meeting may be conducted by mail or by conference upon the written consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors in office.

Proposed change:

The annual meeting of the Board shall be held at a location **as** designated by the President. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to each Director at least thirty (30) days before the meeting date. An annual meeting may be conducted by mail, **email, teleconference**, or by conference upon the written consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors in office.

4. Conduct of Board Business

Paragraph 4.1 currently reads:

4.1 Business of the Board, including that of an annual meeting, may be conducted by mail, by conference, or by a committee of the Board comprised of not less than two (2) persons when authorized by a majority of the Directors in office.

Proposed change:

4.1 Business of the Board, including that of an annual meeting, may be conducted by mail, **email**, by conference, **teleconference**, or by a committee of the Board comprised of not less than two (2) persons when authorized by a majority of the Directors in office.

Paragraph 4.2 currently reads:

4.2 When such business conducted by mail requires a vote of the Board of Directors, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote shall be required to carry a motion.

Proposed change:

4.2 When such business conducted by mail **or email** requires a vote of the Board of Directors, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote shall be required to carry a motion.

Test Preparation and Validation Committee Report – Lisa Hanson

April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2020

There have not been any Written Test Questions submitted during 2019-2020.

Over the past year, the Test Validation Committee received one new multi-faceted Practical Assignment which was evaluated and accepted into the testing pool but has not been used by a Candidate to date.

The Committee is happy to announce Diplomates are accepting requests to be Evaluators for our Candidate's Practical Assignments and also for Oral Panels due to the increase in recertification points allotted during last year's Board meeting.

The Committee has discussed a new idea for the creation of new Practical Assignments as we are still not getting the new Practical Assignments needed. We have formed a "Practical Express", for the lack of a better name. We realized each member of our Committee, plus a couple additional

Diplomates, have different machines and multiple writers, so we decided to take advantage of these resources.

Our first Zoom meeting will be in December, however, prior to the call we will all be brainstorming to design at least 2 Practical Assignments each. During our virtual call we will discuss each of our Practical Assignment “ideas”, the different machines each will need to make the Practical Assignments, and write out the processes for each to be completed, with the fewest number of mailings between the members of the group.

This Committee is concerned that if this process is not conducted, ABFDE will never be able to gather enough multifaceted Practical Assignments from the Diplomat body to have enough for when we have multiple Candidates testing at one time and to make the requested changes requested during our review process with the representative from American College Testing (ACT). Switching to three (3) Practical Assignments has proven to be a difficult task that many Diplomates have not been interested in doing and ABFDE needs new Practical Assignments put in place, sooner rather than later.

In addition, there were also new requirements (formatting mostly) put in place for the development of Written Test questions. ACT recommended there could no longer be “end of book / memorization questions” or “leading questions” and there must be a limitation in the number of questions with “all of the above” and/or “none of the above” answers. Writing these questions is easier than it sounds. I have had several Diplomates reach out to me to discuss what is necessary and/or required to submit new Written Test questions; to date I have only received Written Test questions from two Diplomates.

The Committee will continue to request that Diplomates submit new Written Questions and Practical Assignments, but in the meantime the new “Practical Express” group will be working on creating new multi-faceted Practical Assignments.

Testing Committee Report – Lisa Hanson

April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2020

1. Status of Candidates for Certification

New Diplomates

Two (2) candidates successfully completed the certification testing program and achieved Diplomat status:

1. Stephanie Kingsbury
2. Robin Tran

Current Candidates and their Status

There are (3) candidates currently in the testing process.

2. Candidates Withdrawn from Testing

There were not any Candidates that withdrew.

3. Performance Characteristics

In accordance with FSAB standards, there will be “Performance Characteristics” and “Current Status of Each Candidate” spreadsheets submitted before the end of May. The statistics will be maintained to record and track the performance of testing candidates during the various phases of the certification examination process.

4. Written Examination (100 questions)

2 written examinations have been recorded involving two candidates.

Pass= 2

Fail=0

Average Score= 89.5

5. Practical Examinations

| Problem Description | # Issued (16) | # Passed (16) | # Failed (2) | # Used as a Rework (2) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Practical #1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Practical #2 | 2 | 2 | | |
| Practical #3 | 2 | 2 | | |
| Practical #4 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Practical #5 | 3 | 3 | | |
| Practical #6 | 2 | 0 | 2 | |
| Practical #7 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Practical #8 | 2 | 2 | | |
| Practical #9 | 4 (includes 2 Reworks) | 4 (includes 2 Reworks) | | 2 |

6. Oral Examination

Two (2) Oral Examinations have been conducted resulting in two (2) passing evaluations.

7. Future Testing

Zero Candidate(s) are eligible to take the Written Exam.

Zero Candidate(s) are eligible to take the Practical Assignments.

Zero Candidate(s) are eligible to request their Practical Assignments after their three-month wait.

One Candidate is presently taking their Practical Assignments.

One Candidate is eligible to participate in the Oral Examination Phase.

A Testing Committee Oral Examination Panel will be available during the upcoming Annual ASQDE Conference in anticipation of Candidates who may qualify during the next four months.

Written and Oral examinations will be offered at all upcoming national and regional meetings in accordance with the needs of the candidates and the availability of ABFDE Directors and/or Diplomates.

8. Annual Review of Records

A review of records was conducted. Both digital and paper copies of the Testing Committee Annual Report are on file for future reference. At this time, all of the Testing Committee files/materials are at the Committee Chair's residence. Extraneous notes, documents and digital files have been shredded or deleted.

Historian – Larry Olson

January 1, 2019 to March 20, 2020

The following documents were uploaded to the ABFDE website:

- Diplomate page: 2019 Directory of Diplomates, Minutes of the 2019 BOD Annual Meeting (Diplomate version), and
- Director page: 2019 BOD Minutes (Director version).

Previous versions of all documents have been archived electronically.

The Historian SOP has been updated to reflect that BOD minutes and newsletters are archived electronically. A binder with paper versions of these documents is no longer maintained.

Secretary Report – Larry Olson

January 1, 2019 through October 20, 2020

RPG Updates

On June 21, 2019, the BOD was asked to approve the updated RPG, including changes to Sections G. Assessment Guidelines and H. Recertification Requirements. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached.

Candidate to Diplomate Status

On August 5, 2019, the BOD unanimously voted to award Diplomate status to candidate Stephanie Kingsbury. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached.

On February 20, 2020, the BOD was asked to vote on whether or not to award Diplomate status to candidate Robin Tran. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached.

On August 16, 2020, the BOD was asked to vote on whether or not to award Diplomate status to candidate Gina Hunter. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached.

Director Appointment

On September 10, 2019, the BOD was asked to approve the appointment of Meg O'Brien to fill the term of Director Linda Mitchell who resigned. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached. Meg will fill the term until 2023.

Addendum to Recertification Points Table

On December 23, 2019, the BOD was asked to approve the Addendum of the Recertification Points Table to include points earned through participation in the FBI Black Box Study. A unanimous affirmative vote was reached.

Meeting Changes

On March 12, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the 2020 Board Meeting was rescheduled for July 9-12, 2020, in Houston.

On June 4, 2020, due to continued restrictions, the July Board meeting was cancelled. A virtual meeting was being planned for the fall.

In order not to lose the Houston hotel deposit, on June 23, 2020, the 2021 Board Meeting date was set for March 12-14 in Houston.

On September 1, 2020, the 2020 Virtual Board Meeting was scheduled for October 23-25, 2020.

Updates

The Secretary laptop was backed up onto DVD on October 20, 2020.

Current SOPs, email lists, and Committee assignments can be found in the Director's area of the website. Larry accessed the Website during the meeting and provided passwords for the Diplomates and Directors areas.

Action item: Committee Chairs are encouraged to review and update their SOPs.

Nominations – Miriam Angel

January 1, 2019 through March 20, 2020

The Nomination Committee was not needed this past year (through March 2020); therefore, no business was conducted.

As an addition to the report, Miriam stated that Sean Espley's Director position will now need to be filled, due to resignation. His position was an elected one, so he will have to be voted on by the Diplomates. Two candidates will be on the slate: Robert Lesnevich and Sandra Raudabaugh. An online election will be held after the Board meeting. Miriam is continuing to maintain Bonnie Beal's spreadsheet of potential candidates for future use.

Vice President – Gary Licht

January 1, 2019 through March 10, 2020

No complaints were referred to the Vice President for a Professional Review Committee.

ABFDE Syllabus – Gary Licht

January 1, 2019 through March 10, 2020

The training syllabus is up and running well. It is now time to get keywords associated and approved for each article, and particularly for those articles that are deemed necessary as study material in a training program. This program uses a crowd source approach to maintaining a dynamic bibliographic database. Users are called upon to become classified as a “subject matter expert/practitioner”, “academic researcher”, “statistician”, or “OSAC Task Group Member”. Many people will fulfill more than one classification. The goal is to show that within the profession of Forensic Document Examination, including researchers, there are accepted training documents. Also, the keywords are subject to that same peer review. This database will not be maintained by a few persons, but rather by the profession.

The database was named QDARC at an OSAC meeting, and stands for Questioned Document Article Reference Collection. It consists of a user interface to assist in the process to compile references, and to organize, search, and provide reports of the references in the massive database of articles. The compilation of articles numbers about 8,000. The task before us is to gain momentum among FDEs to decide references are essential for training to competency and to pass the ABFDE certification test process.

This concludes the Committee reports.

OLD BUSINESS

Online Meeting Rules – Ted Burkes and Katherine Schoenberger

A brief familiarization was given of the Zoom dashboard, and the procedure for raising one’s hand for voting. Attendees can share their screens for presenting their reports or other documents. Directors are encouraged to speak out whenever they have a question.

Updates to SOPs and Forms – Larry Olson

None at this meeting.

BFDE Lawsuit – Ted Burkes

The lawsuit which has been a concern to the organization for several years is over and done. President Burkes summarized the situation for new Directors. The BFDE and seven named individuals filed a lawsuit against the ABA and Tom Vastrick over an article that appeared in the ABA journal they claimed was defamatory. When the venue changed, Judge Stephanie Domitrovich and ABFDE were added to the suit. A District Court judge in Chicago ruled against the suit, because the

article appeared to represent only Tom's personal opinion, and the ruling was upheld by the 7th District Circuit Court of Appeals.

OSAC/ASB Update – Ted Burkes and Gary Licht

Ted and Gary updated the Board on the progress of OSAC and various FDE Standards.

OSAC 2.0 went into effect on 1 October. NIST is reducing the number of members in subcommittees, to reign in meeting costs.

Subcommittee makeup:

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) – 70%

- Federal – 20%
- State and Local – 30%
- Private – 20%

Non-SMEs (academics, etc.) – 30%

Subcommittees now include one member from each of the Resource committees (Legal, Human Factors, and Quality Infrastructure) to provide input to the subcommittee during the standard preparation process, rather than after, hopefully to save time and effort.

Due to COVID, the FDE subcommittee has not met in person in 2020 but had a virtual meeting recently and others are planned. An in-person meeting may be planned for next spring. Task groups continue to work on items for OSAB and ASB.

ASB has published the following standards: 1) Examination of Indented Writing, 2) Examination of Alterations, and 3) Examination of Stamp Devices and Stamp Impressions. The Scope of Expertise standard is completed and is under appeal. The following standards have been sent to ASB: 1) Examination of Handwritten Items, 2) Examination of Charred Documents, 3) Examination of Water-Soaked Documents, and 4) Minimum Training Requirements. The Conclusions standard is proceeding with difficulty. The rest of the Standards are in various levels of completion.

ABFDE Insurance Policy – Katherine Schoenberger and Ted Burkes

On the recommendation of the Treasurer (see report), the Board agreed that we need to find a new insurance policy and provider.

Action item: Alan will have his father, a retired insurance broker, review the existing policy for suitability and provide advice on what coverage we might need or where we might go to get it.

NEW BUSINESS

Extension of Terms for Miriam Angel, Lisa Hanson, and Katherine Schoenberger – All

Tom Riley moved to extend Miriam Angel, Katherine Schoenberger and Lisa Hanson for another 4-year term on the ABFDE Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Gary Licht. The motion

passed unanimously. [Note: Lisa Hanson was included in this motion in error. She was elected to a four-year term in 2019.]

New Director Election – Miriam Angel

As stated above, Miriam has two candidates, Rob Lesnevich and Sandra Raudabaugh, to fill the vacancy left by Sean Espley. All Diplomates will be notified of the slate and an online vote will be conducted in the next few weeks. The new Director will be elected to a full 4-year term.

FSAB – Gary Licht

Gary discussed the FSAB inspection that will occur in March 2021. It is currently intended to be an in-person inspection to include a visit to the Houston Office, and either Gary or Ted may attend to observe.

ABFDE's accreditation by FSAB expires in February 2022. The application for re-certification is due around 1 October 2021. Gary intends to start preparing the application next spring; however, he will be rotating off the Board on 1 Jul 2021. Two positions will need to be filled in March 2021 – for Vice-President and for FSAB Committee Chair.

Testing Committee – Lisa Hanson

Any extra expenses she needs to accrue during the testing process because of COVID (e.g., mailing expenses) are approved.

Website – Miriam Angel

The website appears to be working very well. Miriam suggested the access password be changed. She intends to start an ASQDE Facebook group.

Larry reminded committee chairs that SOPs belong to them and are under their control and requested that they be reviewed and updated before the FSAB inspection

Action item: Larry will post/circulate most recent SOP copies that he has.

ABFDE Resource Kit – Miriam Angel

This not been posted on the website. Alan found the files and is sending them to Miriam and Larry for posting/archiving.

Sponsorship for Diplomat presentation at conferences – Ted Burkes

This has been overcome by events since no in-person meetings are expected to be held in the near future.

Recertification points for attendance at OSAC/ASB meetings – Ted Burkes

Meetings are now being held virtually, and it is very difficult to prove attendance and participation in virtual meetings. Therefore, it was decided that, until further notice, the Board will not approve recert points for virtual/online meetings.

Update to Bylaws – Farrell Shiver

The Bylaw changes listed above were voted on individually:

ARTICLE XI. Meetings and Operations

1. Annual Meeting

Proposed change:

The annual meeting of the Board shall be held at a location **as** designated by the President. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to each Director at least thirty (30) days before the meeting date. An annual meeting may be conducted by mail, **email, teleconference**, or by conference upon the written consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors in office.

Proposed change to Paragraph 1 – Proposed by Bylaws Committee, seconded by Meg O'Brien – passed unanimously

4. Conduct of Board Business

Proposed change:

4.1 Business of the Board, including that of an annual meeting, may be conducted by mail, **email**, by conference, **teleconference**, or by a committee of the Board comprised of not less than two (2) persons when authorized by a majority of the Directors in office.

Proposed change to Paragraph 4.1 – Proposed by Bylaws Committee, seconded by George Lehman – passed unanimously

Paragraph 4.2 currently reads:

4.2 When such business conducted by mail requires a vote of the Board of Directors, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote shall be required to carry a motion.

Proposed change:

4.2 When such business conducted by mail **or email** requires a vote of the Board of Directors, a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote shall be required to carry a motion.

Proposed change to Paragraph 4.2 discussed – Question was raised whether there was a good reason to change the number needed to carry a motion from a simple majority to two-thirds just because the vote was not being done in person

Delete Paragraph 4.2 – Moved by Gary Licht, seconded by Miriam Angel – passed unanimously

Update to RPG – Larry Olson and Miriam Angel

Modifications were suggested to the duties of the Secretary/Credentials Committee and the Continuing Education Committee. The following substantial changes were made to Section IV, Policies and Procedures:

- A.3. Duties of Officers – Secretary 3.3 now reads: “The Secretary serves as Chair of the Credentials Committee and is responsible for: coordinating the application for certification process, conducting a vote among the Directors for acceptance if a candidate has passed all of the testing, informing the Administrative Office if a candidate has been voted in, and arranging for the Diplomat’s certificate.”
- B.1. Duties of Committees – Continuing Education now reads: “This Committee encourages and supports continuing education opportunities with various forensic associations. This committee is responsible for approving workshops for recertification points. Committee members advise the Recertification Committee which workshops are approved.”
- B.2. Credentials now reads: “This Committee handles applications from potential candidates for certification and completes the process of a candidate becoming a Diplomat after ABFDE testing has been successfully completed.”
- E.4. Qualifications and Requirements for Certification – Examinations 4.3 now reads: “Upon successful completion of the testing program and a vote of approval by a majority of the Board, the Candidate will be recognized as a Diplomat of the ABFDE.”
- G. Assessment Guidelines – 1.3 now reads: “The Credentials Committee Chair will send a letter to the Candidate concerning the decision of the Committee no later than ten (10) working days of receipt of all ballots pertaining to paragraph 1.2 (above). Copies of this letter will be sent to the President, the Administrative Office, and in the event of an affirmative vote, the Testing Committee Chair.”
- G. Assessment Guidelines – 4.14 now reads: “The Testing Committee Chair shall notify the Board Secretary of the Committee’s recommendation. The Secretary will then transmit ballots to the Board of Directors or conduct a vote via email. All ballots are to be returned to the Secretary no later than ten (10) working days after receipt.”

Acceptance of the RPG changes were by Gary Licht, seconded by Lisa Hanson, and unanimously approved.

Committee Assignments – Ted Burkes

The Committee Assignments document was updated. The following is a list of current assignments. The first name listed is the Chair of the Committee. Changes made at this meeting are in [blue](#).

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Audit | Alan Kreitl |
| Continuing Education | Farrell Shiver , Miriam Angel |
| Credentials | Larry Olson, Miriam Angel, Farrell Shiver |
| FSAB | Gary Licht, Meg O’Brien |
| Historian | Larry Olson |
| Nominations | Lisa Hanson , Meg O’Brien, (Bonnie Beal) |
| Public Relations | Meg O’Brien , Tom Riley, (Kirsten Singer) |
| Recertification | Tom Riley, Miriam Angel, John Barnett, Alan Kreitl, George Lehman |
| Rules and Procedures | Farrell Shiver, Gary Licht |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Syllabus | Gary Licht, Miriam Angel, John Barnett, George Lehman, Tom Riley |
| Testing | Lisa Hanson, Meg O'Brien, Tom Riley |
| Test Preparation/Validation | Lisa Hanson, (Bonnie Beal), (Traci Moran), (Jeff Taylor) |
| Website | Miriam Angel, Tom Riley |

Names in parentheses are Diplomate (non-Board) Members.

Master Diplomate list – Larry Olson

Ted got a copy of the list of Diplomates and their certification numbers from Anne. Larry turned it into a spreadsheet and added columns for the Diplomates' retirements/resignations/deaths to create a Master list. He asked the Recert managers to help with adding info on their Diplomates, and Anne will assist as well.

Retired/resigned status – Larry Olson

Several Diplomates retired or resigned within the last year but continued to submit Directory updates. It was decided to be easiest for the Secretary to contact them to find out if they want to be removed from the Directory list immediately, or when their certification expires.

Action item: Larry will include in Secretary's or Certification Committee's SOP instead of making an RPG change. (See below for new Retired Diplomate policy.)

ADDITIONAL NEW BUSINESS

The agenda was revised after the meeting day on 23 October to include additional New Business items.

Prorated dues for new members

As some Diplomates are credentialed in the middle of a fiscal year, a suggestion was made that dues for a new Diplomate might be prorated for the partial year. After discussion, it was decided that the current policy should remain. A new Diplomate has already paid the equivalent of a year's dues to apply for certification. Prorating dues would require more work for the Treasurer and would bring only a little more to the Treasury.

Allow Treasurer to use BillPay or other electronic means of payment

It was agreed that it was more convenient and efficient for the Treasurer to make electronic payments wherever possible instead of checks. The following substantial change was made to Section IV, Policies and Procedures, A. Duties of Officers:

4.4 now reads: "The Treasurer is responsible for completing all forms that must be completed by law. The Treasurer will ensure that all debts incurred by the Board, or its representatives, are promptly paid and supported by relevant receipts. Checks for payment (except for checks

initiated electronically) will be forwarded to the President for a countersignature before sent to the payee. In absence of the President, the check will be sent to the Vice President for the countersignature. If payment is done by electronic means (including debit card payments), the Treasurer will inform the President and Vice President of the transaction, who will both have access to the account for oversight.”

Acceptance of the RPG changes were by Gary Licht, seconded by Lisa Hanson, and unanimously approved.

Action items: Katherine will ensure that: 1) Ted and Gary are added as users to the Bank of America accounts and 2) outline procedures in SOP.

Reinvestment of the Treasury CD funds – Katherine Schoenberger

Action item: when the CD comes due for renewal, Katherine will research the options for reinvesting the funds and advise the Board.

Implementation of Retired Member status – Farrell Shiver

Farrell Shiver brought up that a Retired Member status had been approved previously (at the 2017 Board meeting), but apparently never added to the RPG or and SOPs. The following substantial changes were made to Section IV, Policies and Procedures, D. General Provisions Concerning Certification as approved by the 2017 BOD:

- 3 now reads: “Individuals holding a valid Certificate of Qualification issued by the Board are entitled to use the designation “Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners.” Diplomates who retire or resign in good standing are entitled to use the designation “Former (or Retired) Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners” as appropriate. Individuals who present themselves as former or retired Diplomates of the ABFDE must cite their dates of certification. Individuals who do not possess active ABFDE certification are prohibited from presenting themselves as current Diplomates of the Board.”
- 4 now reads: “Certificates issued by the Board are not transferable. They remain the property of the Board, but every person to whom a Certificate has been properly issued is entitled to its continued possession unless the Certificate is revoked. Legal action may be used to recover any Board property, to include the surrender of a Diplomate’s certificate.”

Action items:

- the Testing Committee Chair is allowed to accept help from Retired/Former Diplomates in test/practical preparation (Lisa will add wording to the SOP)
- any inquiries about a Diplomate’s status (current or Former) get forwarded to the President for a reply (Ted will add to President’s SOP).
- Larry as Credentials chair will maintain an internal list of Former/Retired Diplomates.

No vote was considered necessary, as these RPG changes were approved by a previous Board and were added verbatim to the RPG.

Diplomates disclaimer statement

During the discussion of the BFDE lawsuit, several suggestions were made: 1) it would be desirable to have Diplomates agree to use a disclaimer when mentioning ABFDE in print, 2) the Board should provide the wording, and 3) the Diplomates should sign an agreement to use it, either annually or when applying for recertification. However, it could not be decided how to word the disclaimer, nor specifically where to put it. The current Code of Ethics outright forbids members from making statements representing the ABFDE. An examination of the Vastrick article which was grounds for the recent lawsuit revealed that no Code of Ethics violation had occurred. It was unanimously agreed that no change to the Code of Ethics was necessary at this time.

Extending subscription to Zoom for a year – Katherine Schoenberger

The Board approved extending the subscription for a year, which can be used for the upcoming Oral Boards and a meeting of the Recertification Committee (as well as any other ad hoc meetings, and if need be, the 2021 Board meeting).

Action item: Katherine will extend subscription.

EC Review of Recertification files – Executive Committee and Tom Riley

During the EC's review of recertification records on 23 October, certain files on the Google Drive could not be opened (e.g., .msg files) or, once opened, were blank (NOPA .xls files). It was recommended, especially considering the upcoming FSAB inspection, that all files needing to be reviewed should be in the same format (preferably .pdf).

Much variety was noted in the way the files were labeled and arranged. It was suggested the committee might review and update the SOP and decide on a more uniform format.

Action item: Chair Tom Riley will hold a Zoom meeting soon with all members of the Recertification Committee, including Gary (as FSAB Inspection Chair).

Administrative Staff Report - Anne Roper

As a result of new business from last year's meeting regarding hardcopy ABFDE files at the Corporate Office, Anne obtained quotes to digitize them. The Board decided it was most economical and secure for Anne and Shelly to do the scanning themselves. They have requested input from the Board on what to scan, and in what format(s). Lisa has some files to be returned to Anne.

Action item: Board needs to decide on what to be scanned.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in Houston, TX, on 12-14 March 2021.