

# BJCP Members Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** June 13, 2015

**Location:** National Homebrewers Conference, San Diego, California



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## BOARD AND STAFF ATTENDANCE

**Present:** Gordon Strong, Phil Farrell, Al Boyce, Sandy Cockerham, Travis Hammond, Steve Piatz, Jim Wilson, Brian Eichhorn, Agatha Feltus, Don Blake, Gail Milburn, Randy Scorby, Steve Antoch, James Golovich, Bruce Buerger, Ted Hausotter, Joe Formanek

**Absent:** Ryan Thomas, Ali Kocho-Williams, Dave Houseman, Tom Cannon, Scott Bickham, Mike Lentz, Brian Joas, Bill Bopp, Andy Hejl, Frank Barickman, Jim Koebel, Josh Weikert, David Teckam, Mike Dixon, Jeff Sanders

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) gave a few opening remarks and cited some of the BJCPs accomplishments over the past year:
  - a. Thanks to Alpine Brewing/Green Flash Brewing for supplying a keg of Alpine Duet, a classic commercial example of an American IPA for our members to enjoy during the meeting.
  - b. 2015 Style Guidelines were released in May 2015 and mobile phone Apps will be available soon.
  - c. BJCP Online Judge Records have been updated to include Exam Reports to Participant and scanned copies of recent exams.
  - d. The BJCP Website has been updated (behind the scenes) and will be released after content is reviewed and updated. We are moving to a WordPress-based website and we need to identify members with development and maintenance skills to assist with the new website.
  - e. The BJCP Projects system has been created to inform members of ongoing work at the BJCP, needs, and contacts. It will be released later this year.
  - f. The BJCP Board has been discussing creating Assistant Regional Representative positions to enable more people to participate in running the organization and sharing information.
2. Members were encouraged to ask questions or provide input:
  - a. A member asked when the 2015 Style Guidelines will be incorporated into the exam program. Steve Piatz (Exam Director) indicated that for the Online Entrance Exam, there

will be a transition period through the fall during which an examinee can select to be tested on either the 2008 Style Guidelines or the 2015 Style Guidelines. After November 1, 2015, all exams will use the 2015 Style Guidelines.

- b. Peter Symons (Member - Australia) suggested that the BJCP should consider designating a contact person for each country where we have members and posting them on the website.
- c. Randy Scorby (Education Director) provided an update on the Siebel Institute Off-Flavor Sensory Training kits. The BJCP designed a custom kit of the most common off-flavors and we are now getting the kits shipped from Germany which has actually sped up the process.
- d. Randy Scorby (Education Director) discussed the development of additional Exam Grader Training Modules and Advanced Judge Training Modules which will be made available through the website.
- e. Neal Spake (Member - Texas) asked for strategies the BJCP is pursuing to increase the number of Exam Graders. Steve Piatz (Exam Director) responded that the Grader Training Program is designed to encourage people to become graders by giving them exposure to the process.
- f. Peter Symons (Member – Australia) asked why BJCP National Rank is required to serve as an exam grader. Steve Piatz (Exam Director) indicated that the bar for grading exams was set at the National level in the early years of the BJCP because that level of judge would have the knowledge and skills to evaluate and recognize exams at the higher levels (National and Master). Travis Hammond (West Regional Representative) added that the idea of allowing “Experienced Certified” judges to participate in the Grader Training Program was discussed at the BJCP Board Meeting and the BJCP Staff Meeting and the Exam Directorate will consider this idea as a means to grow the exam grader pool and speed up exam turnaround.
- g. Greg Toothaker (Member – Colorado) encouraged all to review the Exam Grader Training video from 2014 and 2015 when it gets posted to the website and for eligible members to volunteer to help grade exams. In the Denver area, they plan to host grader training sessions as well. Tony Blane (Member – California) asked about developing online grader training. The Education Directorate is evaluating the best approach to offering online grader training. Steve Antoch (Assistant Education Director) encouraged examinees to review the Grader Training videos to understand how to score higher on the exams.
- h. A member asked if the BJCP would consider establishing \_\_\_\_\_@bjcp.org email addresses for judges to include on scoresheets to maintain the privacy of their personal email addresses. A member suggested that any judge with this concern could set up an email

account for such purposes based on their BJCP ID (for example [BJCP-G1000@gmail.com](mailto:BJCP-G1000@gmail.com)) and having it redirect to a personal email address.

- i. A member explained that if his comprehensive legacy exam scores (weighted 70% Written/30% Tasting) were re-weighted according to the current method of calculating comprehensive exam scores (weighted 50% Written/50% Tasting), he would be a National Ranked judge and could grade exams. His tasting exam score is already pretty high, so he keeps re-taking the exam to try to score 1 point higher to allow the re-weighting to occur, which consumes exam seats and grader resources. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) indicated that the BJCP Board will discuss this situation and evaluate if there is a simplified way for members in this situation to advance (potentially contingent upon becoming a grader and satisfactorily completing a particular number of exams).
- j. Bruce Buerger (Assistant Education Director & Cider Exam Committee Chairman) provided an update on the development of the Cider Exam. Held a Cider Tasting Exam trial at NHC 2014 and NHC 2015. NHC 2014 exams were reviewed and approved to allow examinees to become Cider Judges when they complete the Online Cider Exam. The Cider Committee is developing an Online Exam question pool and Study Guide which will be released when completed and reviewed by the Exam Directorate.
- k. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) indicated that a similar Online Exam followed by tasting exam structure will be implemented for the Mead Judge program as well. The Online Exam question pool is currently under review.
- l. Steve Piatz (Exam Director) indicated that the demand for exams has increased 20% per year for many years. We have gone from 300 people per year to over 1,200 people last year, including many from outside of the US. We have exam graders in Argentina and Brazil to grade in their native languages. In an effort to speed up the Exam Program, we reduced the Written Proficiency Exam length and implemented a Quarterly Written Proficiency Exam program to pool exams from across the country for grading. The AHA is helping by scanning exams and allowing us to transmit exams to graders electronically.
- m. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) explained that the BJCP is doing well financially and is looking for ideas for projects that will benefit the membership.
- n. Brian Pylant (Member – New Jersey) asked about training for judges as discussed at Grand Rapids. Randy Scorby (Education Director) responded that the priority has been on developing Grader Training rather than judge training. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) requested that members with ideas for judge training step forward and the BJCP will support them.

- o. Kimberly Charles (Member – Georgia) indicated she is an attorney and she is shooting for a National Rank so she can help grade exams. She is familiar with software that could be used for the Written Proficiency Exam to enable electronic grading. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) indicated that we had looked at that in the past and concluded that it would be too expensive, but that we hadn't looked into it in recent time. Kimberly Charles indicated that she would be willing to look into options, costs, and provide some feedback to Phil Farrell (BJCP VP and South Regional Representative).
- p. Phil Farrell (BJCP VP and South Regional Representative) requested a round of applause because BJCP Judges have evaluated over 1,000,000 in our nearly 30 years of existence as an organization.
- q. Neil Spake (Member – Texas) indicated that to get more members to the National Rank, we should allow more time for the Written Exam to allow examinees to demonstrate knowledge rather than making it a speed writing exam. Gordon Strong (BJCP President and Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative) indicated that the BJCP Board would discuss this idea and request an evaluation from the Exam Directorate.
- r. Mike Wilcox (Member – Kansas) encouraged members to embrace the 2015 Style Guidelines to serve as ambassadors to the BJCP when people have questions.