

Board Meeting
June 11, 2025
Zoom

Attendees:

Matt Sokolowski, Vice Chairman
George Halper, Secretary/Treasurer
Frank Schwiep, Member At Large
Chris Bowler, Member At Large
Gentry Pelham, Member At Large
Jacob Benton, Member At Large
Jared Ross, President, FBWA

Vice Chairman Sokolowski called the meeting to order at 10:31am.

Mr. Halper advised the Board that the minutes had been distributed via website and opened the floor for any questions. Seeing none, a motion to approve was made by Mr. Bowler and seconded by Mr. Schwiep, passing unanimously.

Mr. Halper then advised that the quarterly financial report was also available on the website and thanked Mr. Ross and Ms. Wheeler for including the links directly on the agenda. Mr. Halper commented that the association is in a great financial position and a motion was made by Mr. Pelham and seconded by Mr. Sokolowski to approve the report. The motion passed unanimously. Before moving on completely, Mr. Ross gave a brief update on the status of the audit, which should be completed before the next Board meeting in September.

Mr. Ross then moved into the Legislative update, briefly discussing the outcomes of the 2025 Legislative Session. One issue that was discussed was the local bill exempting certain entities from tied house evil laws. There is an expectation that a similar effort will be made during the 2026 session that the association must be prepared for.

The Board then moved into a robust discussion about the issue of intoxicating hemp products. Every member of the Board addressed their position on the issue, which also included a discussion on other intoxicants. It was decided that the entire association should have a Zoom later this summer to discuss the issue further, prior to the Legislature reconvening for 2026 interim committee meetings. Mr. Ross agreed to send a survey out to determine the best time to move forward with this discussion.

After the hemp discussion, the Board held further talks about moving forward with more offensive legislative issues in the future to help protect distributors. It was decided to have time during the summer Zoom meeting to discuss these as well.

Mr. Ross gave a brief update on the bylaws, suggesting moving forward the following folks to be appointed to a bylaw committee by Chair Bear:

Kevin Bowler, Dayton Beverages

John Williams, Wayne Densch

Genesis Smith, Pepin Distributing

Rebecca Maisel, Goldring Gulf

Finally, the group discussed the idea of forming a Foundation, specifically geared towards helping in efforts related to disaster recovery and assistance. While the Board is supportive of exploring the issue, more research needs to be done before anything moves forward.

Mr. Sokolowski adjourned the meeting at 11:53am.