**Minutes**

**Meeting of the Judges Panel of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award**

**Wednesday, August 25, 2021, 10:00 AM–4:10 PM**

**National Institute of Standards and Technology ● Meeting held virtually via MS TEAMS**

**Attendees**

*Judges*: Patricia Skriba, Keith Everett, Cary Hill, Kevin Johnson, Lynda Johnson, Amy Katschman, Christopher Laxton, Brigitta Mueller, Amy Pugh, Bruce Requa, Meridith Wentz, Gary Wilson

*NIST*: Dawn Bailey, Rebecca Bayless, Robert Fangmeyer, Robert Hunt, Darren Lowe, Michelle Pena, Christine Schaefer, Suzanne Sullivan, Robyn Verner, Kelly Welsh

Begin 10 am.

**Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Bob Fangmeyer and Pattie Skriba thanked and welcomed the judges and staff. Bob said examiner teams were provided a considerations-for-COVID document to ensure that team members were sensitive to at least some of the ways that COVID may have impacted an organization.

**Overview of 2021 Award Process**

Rebecca Bayless presented an overview of the award process and the judges’ content book; in 2021, there were 14 applicants, and 231 examiners completed training. During Consensus Review (CR), there were 8–11 examiners per team. There was an increase in the number of senior examiners on teams because after teams were formed there were some conflict-of-interest (COI)-related drops among the returning and new examiners. Rebecca said the program makes sure that each team has a balance of sector experience/NAICS code matches, as well as award process experience (how many years the examiner has served).

Rebecca explained the process for the judges’ review of blinded scoring data and voting with a simple majority rules (12 Judges means 7 yes votes). Judges shared some of their techniques for reviewing data:

* Look at consistency of scores across process and results categories; lack of consistency may indicate a less-mature applicant.
* Focus on consensus scores, as well as the 75-25% median.
* Check experience of examiner, we well as sector experience.
* Consider benefit of the doubt, especially in results.
* Review scoring ranges and titles in Criteria as to importance of each item; e.g., item 7.1 is worth more points than other items.

Judges selected 7 applicants for site visit, and they reviewed potential conflicts of interest, both real and perceived.

**Review of Judges’ Roles: Examining vs. Judging**

Pattie said a challenge for many judges has been the difference between examining and judging. She reviewed the definitions of examining (inspect, ask questions/analyze/observe, test the state of) and judging (appraise, form an opinion, decide after deliberation). She presented guiding principles/assumptions of judging, including trusting that the examiner site visit team has a more in-depth knowledge and insight into the applicant than the judges, not assessing the application or the Consensus Scorebook after site visit, understanding the rationale for the site visit score but not the evolution for how the team got the score, and not rescoring items and categories.

Pattie defined the roles of lead judge, backup judge, and other judges. She said all judges will complete a feedback form for the applicants they review. Judges will follow steps, such as looking for key strengths and fatal flaws/gaps critical to success; role-model results, processes, characteristics/categories; and questions critical to the deliberations.

She gave examples of role-model characteristics: worthy of emulation and learning; manifests the core values of Baldrige consistently; excellent product/service, process, and financial results; extraordinary performance in some areas but relatively high-performing and well-balanced across all other Criteria categories; a culture committed to workforce engagement, development, and well-being; very good at innovating; and agility, resilience, and sustainability.

Pattie described the content of a lead judge presentation, which is developed from a one-page presentation slide provided by NIST. A judge presentation would include priority key factors, those most important to the organization’s current and future success and sustainability (e.g., strategic challenges,

strategic advantages, workforce segments/drivers of engagement, competitive situation, customer groups). The lead judge completes a scoring sheet, provided by NIST, and can add notes to support the score. Regarding the scoring sheet, the judges said it provided a snapshot of the maturity of the organization, clarity of scoring rationale, and hint of where the applicant might be role model in terms of categories. Bob H. added that Baldrige is trying to train examiners not to score on number of strengths/OFIs, getting them more focused on the content of comments and looking at maturity exhibited through comments.

During deliberations, judges may combine, delete, or maneuver questions critical to discussions with the examiner team leader, Pattie said. Judges will also discuss role-model categories. Lead judge will put potential edits in separate document to discuss with the team leader and NIST monitor post-deliberation.

Bob Hunt gave an overview of what to expect at the November judges’ meeting and said he would review the process again at the next meeting. He said the judges are from various sectors which is helpful in getting expertise into discussions. The total time for applicant discussion in November is typically 3 to 3.5 hours. Bob H. confirmed that BOSS access problems should be sent to him.

The following are the judging mentors/mentees: Kevin/Keith, Brigitta/Amy P., Amy K./Lynda, Meredith/Cary.

**Health Care and Education Orientations**

Kevin Johnson and Meredith Wentz reviewed key metrics in health care and education, respectively.

**Suggestions/Action Items**

* Clarify line definitions (the key) in consensus review charts in the judges’ book.
* Consider a one-pager on the examiner’s role, similar to the one pager for judges. (Keith suggestion)
* For 2022 award cycle, consider whether judges can select applicants for site visit without accepting every higher-scoring applicant above.
* Like health care and education, offer presentations for key areas of other sectors. (Gary suggestion)
* Delete the judges’ book and all electronic scoring information from electronic systems/backups.

Meeting adjourned 4:07 pm.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Patricia Skriba

Chair

Judges Panel

X/X/2020

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Patricia Skriba, Chair Date