# Minutes

# Judges Panel of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

**Baldrige Performance Excellence Program ● National Institute of Standards and Technology**

**Wednesday, June 5, 2019**

## Attendees

*Judges:* Allison Carter, Glenn Crotty, Eric Fletcher, Amy Katschman, Christopher Laxton, Kevin McManus, John Molenda, Brigitta Mueller, Bruce Requa, Patricia Skriba, Kristin Stehouwer, JoAnn Sternke

*NIST:* Dawn Bailey, Rebecca Bayless, Jacqueline Deschamps, Robert Fangmeyer, Ellen Garshick, Robert Hunt, Darren Lowe

## The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

## Welcome and Meeting Overview

Baldrige Program Director Robert Fangmeyer and Chair of the Judges Panel Kristin Stehouwer welcomed the judges. After introductions, Stehouwer thanked the judges and the Baldrige staff for their work on the 2019 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award process, noting the judges’ unique viewpoint on the process. She stressed that, at all meetings, every member of the Judges Panel needs to participate for the panel to be effective.

The minutes of the November 2018 Judges Panel Meeting were approved as written.

## Judges Panel Roles and Process

Stehouwer noted that the purpose of the meeting was to set the broad background for the judges’ work during 2019. She reviewed the Judges Panel’s key roles and responsibilities: to (1) work as a team, (2) select applicants to advance to Site Visit Review, (3) recommend award recipients, (4) work with examiner team leaders on the site visit process and feedback report, (5) recommend process changes to the Board of Overseers, (6) provide input into the development of the Baldrige Criteria, and (7) serve as ambassadors. She noted that the first-year judges had been assigned third-year judges as mentors to ease their integration into the panel.

Robert Hunt reviewed the judges’ responsibilities, key dates, and deadlines for the rest of the 2019 award cycle. In June, the judges review and agree on expectations and work processes, and report to the Board of Overseers on judging process improvements. On August 21, the judges will identify applicants to advance to Site Visit Review and review their conflicts of interest. Hunt emphasized that judges do not receive applications or reports for applicants with which they have a conflict, and conflicted judges leave the room during the discussion of those applicants at the November 4–8 meeting.

Hunt said that in November, judges will review applicants that have received a site visit and make recommendations on which should receive the Baldrige Award. He reviewed the process, forms, and tools designed to help the judges with their work and ensure a fair, rigorous process. Hunt, Stehouwer, Fangmeyer, and panel members also responded to judges’ questions and comments, including those on the difference between being an examiner and being a judge.

## Improvements to the Judging Process

Stehouwer led the judges in a discussion of strengths and opportunities for improvement in their 2018 process. The panel agreed that the process overall was effective in identifying role-model organizations to recommend; the judges also noted that 2018 changes in structuring and scribing the calls between the panel and the site visit team leader at the November meeting were effective.

The judges agreed to (1) make minor changes to the November meeting process flowchart prepared by the program, as well as the process check sheet used by the judges during their deliberations; (2) prepare and circulate a sample of the judge’s presentation for the November meeting; (3) make minor changes to the scoring profile included in that presentation; (4) encourage judges to group potential questions for the team leader by topic; (5) eliminate the sending of Consensus Review scorebooks to the judges, as this information is in the Site Visit Review Scorebook; and (5) collect feedback from site visit team leaders on their preference for two longer calls or three shorter ones during the November meeting.

## 2019 Baldrige Award Process

Hunt reported on the number and distribution of applicants in 2019: 26, including 16 health care organizations, 5 nonprofit organizations, 3 small businesses, 1 education organization, and 1 service organization. He reviewed examiner team size and makeup, other roles fulfilled by examiners, the makeup of the Board of Examiners, and criteria for selection as an examiner.

Hunt noted that alumni examiners who completed their 2018 assignments are now called “master examiners,” with a key responsibility for developing new team leaders as well as new and returning examiners. Beginning this year, examiners who have at least seven years of service and who have successfully led a site visit team will receive this designation.

## Baldrige Program Updates

Fangmeyer reported on engagement scores for the 2018 award applicants based on the Survey of Award Applicants. Net Promoter Scores for respondents’ likelihood to recommend the Baldrige Criteria, their relevance, likelihood to reapply, and satisfaction with participation all show improvement since 2010, when the program began using this measure. Fangmeyer noted that satisfaction with the feedback reports received by applicants has increased.

Fangmeyer explained the steps the program is taking in 2019 to address opportunities for improvement: (1) in training, a continued emphasis on key factors, Criteria relevance, the scoring process, and scoring calibration; (2) continuation of the initial call early in the award process between the team leader and the applicant’s highest-ranking official; and (3) the continuation of efforts to increase the survey response rate. He noted that aspects of the award process pilot also address opportunities.

## Award Process Pilot

Fangmeyer reviewed the main elements of a pilot revision of the Baldrige Award evaluation process that is now underway. He noted that it was designed to maintain the effectiveness of the process while increasing its efficiency and its value to applicants. Specifically, the pilot focuses on (1) maintaining the integrity and rigor of the process; (2) reducing the cycle time between application submission and receipt of feedback; (3) leaning out the evaluation process to better utilize examiner resources and enhance the value added to examiners and applicants; and (4) improving the timeliness, clarity, transparency, and overall quality of feedback to applicants. A key feature of the pilot process is a virtual site visit for all applicants, in which examiners explore key questions in a series of conference calls with the applicant.

Fangmeyer asked the judges to consider the impact of the potential award process changes on judging. After examining draft samples of the judging materials and scorebook under consideration, the judges agreed that the addition of a virtual site visit may decrease the cycle time for selecting applicants for site visits while increasing the judges’ confidence in the accuracy of the examiner teams’ work. The judges also stated that, with a minor addition, the proposed pilot scorebook format would be sufficient for them to use for deliberation and recommendation of award recipients.

## Preparation for the Board of Overseers Meeting

The judges reached agreement on minor judging process enhancements for Stehouwer to report to the Board of Overseers at their meeting the following day. They also agreed to share their perspective on the potential for the pilot award process to increase effectiveness and efficiency while maintaining rigor.

After a discussion of meeting strengths and opportunities for improvement, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

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

Kristin Stehouwer

Chair

Judges Panel

X/X/2019