



**Professional Association for SQL Server
In-Face Board of Directors Meeting**
Thursday, August 19, 9:00am – 5:00pm Central Time
Nashville, TN

Attendees: Rushabh Mehta, Bill Graziano, Rick Heiges, Wayne Snyder, Lynda Rab, Douglas McDowell, Andy Warren, Tom LaRock, Neil Buchwalter, Mark Souza, Judy Christianson, Craig Ellis, Kate Clegg, Nancy Nasso

Absent: Christoph Stotz, Jeremiah Peschka, Brian Moran, Rick Bolesta, Kevin Yam

Agenda

1. Board Welcome – Rushabh
2. SQLRally
3. Summit Activities
4. Global Expansion Plan
5. Strategic Technical Investments
6. Penton Partnership
7. Transparency & Reporting
8. Volunteers
9. Bylaws
10. Board-Only Discussion

Meeting Minutes

1. Board Welcome – Rushabh

- Rushabh welcomed the Board and new member Mark Souza.
- Rushabh suggested that a discussion be held regarding the election slate issue that is currently a key topic in the community.
- Rushabh – Asked what the Board response should be around Steve Jones blogs.
- Andy – Said that the Board should respond but it does not change the perception of the community on how the NomCom arrived at their decision.
- Rushabh – Suggest the Board talk about process to the community and maybe have a LiveMeeting so the community can ask questions.
- Wayne – Before the LiveMeeting option I would want specific direction on how the Board should respond appropriately.
- Rushabh – One issue is when the Board limits the information to the community it fuels the perception that things are being held back.
- Neil – The focus needs to be on the process and not on specific people. It should be communicated that this is the process which will eliminate some people. We can change the process if they want, we will take what they say into account, the process is evolving and the Board will factor everything. We can't make it about one person. (Tom agreed)
- Andy – We need the community to know that we are doing the right thing and it's not an exclusive process. And, the decision was made based on the present process and that we can look at changing it next year. We want the community to trust us and we are willing to listen.

- Andy – Agreed that we should filter but thinks it was too harsh and that the differences between top and bottom guy were not that that great. Suggested filtering with the line of questioning.
- Neil – The message to the community should come from Rushabh.
- Mark – Thought that this could generate more trouble if we publish.
- Judy – We are not for profit in the US – that does have liability so we do run like a business.
- Rushabh – What are we going to publish?
- Tom – The community is saying what is the reason why Steve was not chosen, Steve came up short surprisingly but the process is what it is; important not to get focused on one person.
- Wayne – Suggested publishing the name, aggregate score, yes/no score, and Board vote.
- Andy – The Board vote should be public – we said we would give Wayne the go-ahead to publish the process; we should do LiveMeeting to give the community a voice.
- Lynda – It gives them the chance to respond.
- Andy – Do we think we should give the community a slot?
- Lynda – We should consider it next year for sure.
- Judy – It's not just Board members on the NomCom. There are two community people from the NomCom getting thrown under the bus – we have to support them by responding.
- Rushabh – Aggregate scores and meeting minutes only.
- Douglas – I am not convinced that the process is broken, not everyone is going to be happy.
- Lynda – Broken things are that it is difficult to retain the people we want on the Board, difficult to get a committed person on Board, it should be easier for the Board to appoint. 2 year terms should be looked at too. The community should have a bigger voice.

2. **SQLRally**

- Andy – Explained that the issue is with Marketing in that they don't want to message about SQLRally until after Summit. We have to get to the point where we can multi-message. Would like a vote to decide when we can go out to the community with information about SQLRally.
- Rick – The Summit is our biggest revenue and we only target messages out to the community four months in advance.
- Judy – Marketing is concerned messaging about SQLRally now will take away from the Summit.
- Andy – Waiting until February 1 is too late for a call for speakers.
- Bill – I thought we were going to announce at the Summit.
- Tom – Can we message in an informal way?
- Andy – Don't want to take away from Summit, but need to talk about it to give people time. We want speakers that are "coming up", not speakers at the Summit. We would like to publish the process and open the pre-con call for speakers.
- Rushabh – It is how we differentiate things in the messaging; SQLRally is just as important as Summit and Marketing needs to find a way to do both.
- Andy – There is a risk we will lose some people to the Summit but there are people that can't go to Summit so SQLRally will be choice. I want to send out the process of choosing pre-con speakers but I don't want it to be restricted on how much people can blog about it.
- Andy – We have to give community time; two community members are on the inside during the process and then put it out there to the community.
- Rushabh – Kevin Yam has joined the meeting via telephone.

3. **Summit Activities**

LiveStreaming

- Craig – LiveStreaming proposal request was sent to several companies; quotes were very high so not in the budget. CMC proposed \$5000 production price for keynotes, 12 regular sessions for \$22,000, so PASS would be looking at a total of \$32,785 = keynotes plus one session room.

- Rick – I like the keynote idea and can do a trial in one room – the goal could be to get as many virtual registrations that we can to increase our reach.
- Rushabh – The original goal was to increase numbers and revenue sales.
- Rick – If we charge we will lose lots of attendees.
- Mark – We do this in Microsoft for training and it works really well; love the trial idea.
- Bill – Can we allow people to stream their own sessions?
- Rick – We need to stay away from that because it will cannibalize our attendance.
- Mark – If it is our goal to have huge numbers we have to go the distance.
- Lynda – Stream something like the Welcome Reception or WIT meeting – not sure that keynotes are enough to draw virtual attendees.
- Bill – Do we need a budget exception for this keynote?
- Rick – Yes.
- Andy – Objection. We are making budget cuts here and there and then we make an exception for this?
- Bill – So the budget exception is not supported?

Action: Judy and Craig will research budget options for this including looking into Sponsorship. As well, they will work with Rick and Tom to research the LiveMeeting option.

Networking Events

Decision: Move this item to the next day in order to dedicate more time to it.

4. Global Expansion Plan

- Tom – What is the ultimate goal of going global?
- Rushabh – Advance SQL Server education; how do we do this globally as we are US focused? Germany has been successful and there has been a lot of interest for an Asia Summit – how do we expand?
- Mark – Why do we get so few attendees in Germany?
- Judy – I think it is too high-priced; it is not as successful because the same people attend each Germany event.
- Rick – The common thing with SQLRally and Europe is that we focus on where we have strong presence.
- Douglas – It is true that it is high-priced. Lisbon is a viable market but their income is low just like in other countries. We have to figure out beyond SQLRally or SQLSaturday – how do we populate the Board better, more internationally? What we do now is not going to help us to expand internationally – need to talk about this.
- Tom – Need to go where there are people on the ground; we need people that will be a draw for people to attend. Don't want to jump in somewhere based on numbers.
- Andy – We have to announce what we want to do to the community and let them come back to us.
- Mark – Propose we set a goal in global community.
- Douglas – We are getting the Regional Mentors program back up and running so this will help outside US.
- Rushabh – In a month let's have a proposal with what options there are to do with Germany.
- Kevin – Will own starting the conversations with the Microsoft subs.

Action: Judy to start talking to Charley to review the idea to change the European model.

Decision: Focus on global expansion in communities that have a presence already and work with members of that community to gauge what type of event profile would work best in their region (e.g. SQLRally, SQLSaturday, or Summit?).

5. Strategic Technical Investments

- Andy – We have learned a lot of lessons and we need to reduce our costs.
- Lynda – Getting tools as a priority is key; integration is key; we outsource things like call to speakers so we should.
- Craig – We are making steps with David in building the call for speakers in-house.
- Rushabh – The goal is to have Summit call for speakers next year be done in-house.
- Lynda – We need to do this for registration as well.
- Andy – It will not take much to build registration for SQLRally - we have to take a risk. There is a difference in what we would need for SQLRally registration compared to Summit.
- Craig – Should we aim for 2012 to build the registration system for SQLRally because we need to finish building the speaker management tool first.
- Bill – What is the next important tool to integrate?
- Douglas – Right now we have terrible webhosting for Chapters. IT is working on integrating the tools for example, adding emailing capability for Chapter portals.

6. Penton Partnership

- Rick – Penton came to us last year and wanted to include a track at SQLConnections. This is a strategic decision. Is this something we want to do?
- Judy – The event is a month before our SQLRally which might cannibalize our event.
- Lynda – There is the issue of paying speakers as they do.
- Bill – Doesn't seem to be a priority by taking away from our plans to help them out.
- Rick – I will go back to them and say no.

7. Transparency & Reporting

- Andy – The goal is not to be 100% transparent, opaque in some places and translucent in some places. We need to do this to build trust – the efforts of our volunteers are largely unrecognized and transparency is a way to recognize them; the feedback is part of it. Challenges: we might publish something we shouldn't; there is always a danger of it – not a reason to stop, just a reason to be careful; another is deciding what the voice of PASS is and what the voice of individuals is. Another risk is that people will not like what we're doing and another is that not all volunteers want to be seen or heard. There is no sense of people behind PASS – it is seen just as PASS so we need to learn how to do it better and consider the politics of it.
- Andy – Make the PASS Blog the place where we put stuff and drop the monthly report. This is a way to get credit for all the little things we do and everyone on the Board submits, and committees, etc., just as in the monthly report.
- Judy – Monthly report is very big for us. One of the things that Bettina will do is post on the blog. Does this cover things?
- Andy – I prefer we all contribute and Bettina could post as well more daily. We need to space out the submissions so we have a constant flow. We need to create a short policy to remind everyone what can be said and need to teach people how to write.
- Andy – We are not going to enough events as Board members; ask leaders to block time for you if you are at an event to be asked questions as a Board member. We have to do more with the event leaders. There is so much stuff out there that is not associated to PASS. Our blogging software needs to be updated – blogging makes a big difference and opens up the conversation; let's learn how to diffuse things.

- Judy – We fully support.
- Mark – Have to make sure we monitor so people don't make it only about them; really focus on it being about what PASS is doing.
- Bill – The issue will be getting Board members to do it.
- Judy – This is where we set up the process, system.
- Andy – We need to tell the story about what volunteers accomplished if they don't want to themselves. We need to change the perception of who we are.

Action: Judy and Craig will put a proposal together and send it to the Board.

8. Volunteers

- Douglas – We don't have a director of volunteers and this has left us with significant gaps. We might need to get back to a volunteer portfolio and I see it as a platform. We are inconsistent with volunteers and we cut the volunteer day at the Summit. We need to manage that volunteers are spread across more than one portfolio.
- Lynda – The volunteer day was a great thank you for the volunteers.
- Lynda – We should have a part of the website recognizing the past Board members.
- Judy – Hannes is working on this; we need to take this back to HQ and send out what we have to the Board.
- Douglas – The volunteer day would be a budget exception.
- Bill – We could possibly be up in terms of budget for summit but would have to put it up against the keynote streaming option discussed earlier. HQ, please come back to us with numbers options for a volunteer day or half-day at the Summit.

Action: Judy and Craig to research cost for a volunteer day or half-day at the Summit.

9. Bylaws

- Hannes joined via conference call.
- Discussion ensued regarding changes in the Bylaws, particularly around elections and appointment processes.

Action: Hannes to alter some of his proposed amendments for final Board review and subsequent vote to approve amended Bylaws.

10. Board-Only Discussion

- Internal Board discussion without HQ present.