LAKE COUNTY
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION
NORTH COAST | CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Joy Merrilees

Secretary-Treasurer
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Jonathan Holzapfel

Pilar Luchsinger White

Clay Shannon

Padraic Sherlock

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Lake County Crush District 2
Winegrape Commission
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Lake County Winegrape Commission
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, August 15, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Walters at 3:05 p.m. Board Members present: Jonathan Walters, Joy Merrilees, Pete Dodson, Andre Gueziec, Jonathan Holzapfel, Pilar Luchsinger White, Padraic Sherlock. Board Members absent: Clay Shannon. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom). Guest: Helena Welsh, Executive Director, Lake County Winery Association.

2. Public Comment: Lake County Winery Association (LCWA) Executive Director Helena Welsh gave an update on LCWA's CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant awarded in November 2022. She noted the goal to attract Gen Z consumers, a tagline of "When You Think Wine, Think Lake County," and objective of a 10 percent increase in sales. Welsh indicated LCWA is working with David Flanagan and using the rebel branding. Board Members discussed attributes of the rebel brand for Lake County, noting it is more about "grit," and asked about lodging and overall guest "experience." Welsh stated grant activities include television commercials on Comcast streaming. Board Member Luchsinger White asked what growers can do to support LCWA's efforts. Welsh stated she is not opposed to collaboration.

3. Minutes from the June 12, 2023, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Dodson/Sherlock, 7-0-1*).

4. Chair Walters updated the Board on Executive Committee discussions regarding staffing in support of grape sales, noting LCWC cannot "transact." The group discussed options for "buyer relations." President Sommerfield noted LCWC's subscription to Wine Analytics OMS database and staff provides buyer lists to individual growers.

5. President Sommerfield updated the Board on recent additions to California's list of states where state employees are prohibited from traveling on state business. Later in the meeting, CDFA Economist Miranda Townsend clarified the prohibition applies to state employees and not to marketing programs.

   President Sommerfield advised the Board of the UC Davis request for a letter of support to fill the vacant UCCE viticulture advisor position at Oakville. The Board directed staff to submit a letter of support.

6. Secretary-Treasurer Dodson stepped the Board through quarterly and year-end financials. Board Members approved FY 2022-23 year-end financials (*Motion #2; Merrilees/Luchsinger White, 7-0-1*).

7. Chair Walters kicked off the marketing report. President Sommerfield gave an overview of the International Bulk Wine & Spirits Show in San Francisco on July 25-26. Vice Chair Merrilees and Board Member Luchsinger White stated that more samples, small lots for tasting would be beneficial. Luchsinger White noted it is difficult to stand out and suggested a digital screen with regional images. Marketing & Events Manager Megan Hoberg passed on comments from Kevin Robinson (AGG) who stated he engaged with several smaller buyers and AGG would be interested in teaming up for future shows.

   Chair Walters updated on the Wine Institute Global Buyers Marketplace in Napa (Nov. 8); Shannon plans to host a Lake County excursion for a subset of exporters, with LCWC presenting and Brassfield and others pouring.

Hoberg gave a PR update and plans for SommCon (Sept. 11-12) in San Diego. She presented a proposal for an expanded presence at San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival in November, to include a large tent and individual winery participation. Board Members agreed and authorized the Chair to sign the contract to participate (*Motion #3; Sherlock/Merrilees, 7-0-1*).

Chair Walters led a recap of the Volcanic Wines International Conference in June, estimating about 200 attendees with 75-80 people attending the Lake County Master Class, and noted a good table location. He noted good engagement with press during the Lake County press lunch put together by Colangelo the day prior. Walters said being in New York is critical to influence wine press like New York Times, Wall Street Journal. Vice Chair Merrilees noted the audience engagement with face-to-face interaction.

8. Vice Chair and Community and Industry Relations Committee Chair Merrilees kicked off the report. Will Weiss of the Lake County Land Stewards provided an update on the Clear Lake hitch, noting a good spring hitch run, recent hitch rescues, and possible groundwater regulations/information order, and LCLS efforts including placement of 11 stream gauges and several well monitors.

Vice Chair Merrilees gave an update on smoke impact research projects, including UC Davis sensor placement in four vineyard locations around Lake County – in north and south county areas and at low and high elevations, UCD research on a color kit for smoke exposure detection, Corvallis on food-grade barriers and on vine health, Washington on micro-scale forecast modeling, and New York on identification of volatile smoke compounds and removal.

She provided a recap on the Monarch Tractor Demo, which had 40 attendees.

Manager Hoberg provided a brief update on plans to host the annual Winegrape Day as part of the AgVenture program.

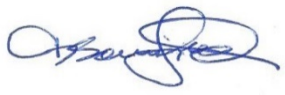
9. Research & Education Committee Chair Sherlock gave a brief recap of UCCE's Grape & Olive Day held at Beckstoffer Vineyards and Chacewater Winery, provided an update on the intermediate class for Year Two of Lake County Pruning School, and led Board Members in a pre-harvest roundtable discussion on fruit size, canopy, and anticipated yields.

10. Adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally

Committee Members	Motion #1	Motion #2	Motion #3
Jonathan Walters, *Chair*	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Joy Merrilees, *Vice Chair*	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Pete Dodson, *Secretary/Treasurer*	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Andre Gueziec	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Jonathan Holzapfel	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Pilar Luchsinger White	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Clay Shannon	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
Padraic Sherlock	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
FINAL TALLY	**7-0-1**	**7-0-1**	**7-0-1**

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission