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Debra Sommerfield

Lake County Winegrape Commission
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
December 3, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
Lake County Winegrape Commission
3865 Main Street, Kelseyville, CA 95451

1. Chair Broc Zoller called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Board Members present: Broc Zoller, Bruce Merrilees, Bonnie Sears, Keith Brandt, Pete Dodson, Cameron Mauritson, Bill Oldham, Jonathan Walters. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Coordinator; Mirek Wilczek, CDFA economist (via phone). Guests present: Mr. Andy Beckstoffer, Mr. Christian Klier.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Minutes from the November 5, 2019, Board Meeting were approved *(Motion #1, Sears/Dodson, 8-0).*

4. Chair Zoller opened up the roundtable discussion by recognizing guests and inviting comments from the group.

   Mr. Beckstoffer kicked off the comments by asking about grower dues. President Sommerfield addressed current income levels from grape sales and the expenditure levels in the areas of marketing, research, and education.

   Mr. Beckstoffer emphasized the need to bring wineries here to show them the quality of the grapes and the need to understand how to sell to millennials.

   Board Member Mauritson expressed the need for more Lake County SKUs and for more involvement in the economic development efforts in the county, perhaps through a partnership with the newly established Tourism Improvement District.

   Board Member Oldham commented on the importance of using social media, especially Facebook and Twitter. Secretary-Treasurer Sears volunteered to work with Ms. Hoberg to increase posts. Chair Zoller suggested reaching out to Weekend Sherpa with activities such as a horseback trip and posting videos that show Lake County's unique beauty such as the Upper Lake waterfall.

   Mr. Beckstoffer suggested encouraging large wineries to "like" Lake County. He also suggested hosting a large party for media and consumers in San Francisco to help sell Red Hills Cabernet Sauvignon. He suggested individual growers could contribute funds. Growers in other areas, such as High Valley, could do the same. He also suggested supporting Konocti Harbor Resort & Spa when it reopens and working to attract a big name chef to the area.

Board Member Dodson suggested promotion of hikes up Mount Konocti and Six Sigma's mountain bike trails to host international mountain biking events. Chair Zoller suggested the generate demand for the hotels and possibly partnering with the tribes on promotion. Secretary-Treasurer Sears suggested partnering with Twin Pine on the electronic billboard and mailers.

Board Member Brandt asked whether the Lake County Winery Association might lead some of these types of activities.

Chair Zoller said it is important to look at where we are ahead and build on that, emphasized the need to continue to publicize the Master Vigneron Academy.

Board Member Mauritson suggested having a conversation with the County Board of Supervisors and having a presence at the Fair with the Master Vigneron Academy. He suggested creating vineyard signs for awareness.

Mr. Beckstoffer suggested AVA signs that say "this is wine country" to get visitors to recognize the vineyards.

Board Member Oldham suggested the Lake County Winery Association could do a road show to strategic areas such as San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento. He stated that the vineyards are one of the biggest employers in the county. He also stated the *Press-Democrat* does not cover Lake County wines in their Wine of the Week feature.

Board Member Merrilees discussed the importance of reaching not just millennials but also Gen Z who are 24 years old and under.

Chair Zoller prompted the group for further discussion by asking how Lake County grapes can remain competitive.

Board Member Walters stated that growers need to know the value of what they are growing.

Mr. Beckstoffer emphasized that growers need to focus on quality, not volume, and that someone needs to tell them they need to be disciplined, focused on growing quality grapes.

Board Member Merrilees suggested LCWC should make a jump to participate in international events for exposure.

Secretary-Treasurer Sears suggested using podcasts and noted that blogging is becoming popular again. She also emphasized the need to engage with the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program.

Board Member Mauritson emphasized the importance of leveraging tourism dollars and suggested LCWC staff should join the boards of the Lake County Economic Development Corporation and Tourism Improvement District.

Board Member Walters pointed to the impact on the local economy, comparing the value of hotels of $17 million against the value of winegrapes of $85 million.

Mr. Beckstoffer stated it is the region on the label that sells and that the AVA has to mean something.

Board Member Mauritson suggested that Step 1 is conjunctive labeling, and Step 2 is requiring California appellated wines indicate the percentage of fruit from a specific region. This would require a statewide initiative through California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) and Wine Institute.

5. President Sommerfield shared miscellaneous correspondence and dates of community and industry events.

6. Next meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2020, at 3:00 p.m.

7. Meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Lake County Winegrape Commission
AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally

Board Members	**Motion #1**
Broc Zoller, *Chair*	**Aye**
Bruce Merrilees, *Vice Chair*	**Aye**
Bonnie Sears, *Secretary-Treasurer*	**Aye**
Keith Brandt	**Aye**
Pete Dodson	**Aye**
Cameron Mauritson	**Aye**
Bill Oldham	**Aye**
Jonathan Walters	**Aye**
FINAL TALLY	**8-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission