LAKE COUNTY
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION
NORTH COAST | CALIFORNIA

**Lake County Winegrape Commission**
**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**
Tuesday, June 25, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.


BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair
Jonathan Walters

Vice Chair
Joy Merrilees

Secretary-Treasurer
Pete Dodson

Andre Guéziec

Jonathan Holzapfel

Pilar Luchsinger White

Clay Shannon

Padraic Sherlock

President
Debra Sommerfield


1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Walters at 3:08 p.m. Board Members present: Jonathan Walters, Joy Merrilees, Pete Dodson, Pilar Luchsinger White, Andre Guéziec, Jonathan Holzapfel. Board Members absent: Clay Shannon, Padraic Sherlock. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom).

2. Public Comment: Andre Gueziec discussed supply and price of Lake County Cabernet Sauvignon.

3. Minutes from the May 21, 2024, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Luchsinger/Merrilees, 6-0-2*).

4. Chair Walters gave a brief Executive Committee update. He noted a Workplace Violence Prevention Program policy is under review in draft form.

5. President Sommerfield provided results of the 2024 Annual Board Member Election results tallied by CDFA. The Board installed Clay Shannon, Pilar Luchsinger White, Padraic Sherlock, and Jonathan Walters as Directors to serve the 2024-2026 term (*Motion #2; Walters/Merrilees, 6-0-2*).

   Board Members accepted the proposed slate of Board Officers of Jonathan Walters as Chair, Joy Merrilees as Vice Chair, and Pete Dodson as Secretary-Treasurer for the 2024-25 term (*Motion #3; Walters/Luchsinger, 6-0-2*). Board discussed need to think about options for a public member and for a Secretary-Treasurer when Pete Dodson terms out in 2025.

6. Chair Walters gave a brief update on the restart of the Master Vigneron Academy® in 2025 with Miguel Garcia serving as lead instructor.

7. Community/Industry Relations Committee Chair Merrilees provided an update on several university-led smoke research projects with key determinations that ash on grapes during a smoke event showed no effect and adding wet clay products are not recommended. She noted LCWC's Future of Agriculture Scholarships were presented to Kelseyville High School students Kyrston Pence and Jesus Adan Serrato-Hernandez at the school's awards night on June 6. She expressed interest in hosting a winemaker roundtable tasting. President Sommerfield noted AgVenture 2024's Winegrape Day is scheduled for September 13 with LCWC hosting lunch and making a presentation on LCWC activities.

8. Chair Walters kicked off the Marketing update with a recap of the International Volcanic Wines event in New York City in June, noting a slightly smaller crowd and influential restaurant group buyers. Board Member Gueziec noted LCWC's table display was well organized and wine cards were useful.

   Marketing Manager Hoberg provided an update on the Grower Conversation Series events and noted the next two scheduled for June 26 and July 17. The first was successful with good turnout and mix of growers and a few buyers.

   Marketing & Events Manager Megan Hoberg provided a PR update noting upcoming press visits with Layne Randolph and Tonya Pitts. Chair Walters noted meeting with Gino Colangelo, Irene Graziotto, and Michelle Erland in NYC.


**Lake County Crush District 2**
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She provided a rundown of upcoming events including International Bulk Wine Show in San Francisco (July 23-24), TEXSOM in Dallas (August 25-27), SommCON seminar with John Szabo in San Diego (October 6-7), and San Diego Food & Wine Festival (November 8-10).

She provided an update on the video project with Lake County Tourism Improvement District (Visit Lake County) and Brown Barn Films, social media posts crafted by David Flanagan, and grower spotlight articles by Karen Pavone to include Dancing Crow, Andre Gueziec, and Kaj Ahlmann. She noted Colangelo's support and reports on social posts, media opportunities, and other efforts.

Chair Walters and President Sommerfield led a continued discussion regarding plans to hold a symposium in 2026 noting the need to hone in on the theme. Possible locations included Chacewater, Mercantile, Wild Diamond, Konocti Harbor, Boatique, Domaine Helena, Brassfield, Ceago, and Cache Creek. Board directed the Marketing Committee to meet soon to decide on topic, format, and make a recommendation back to the Board regarding location.

Secretary-Treasurer Dodson gave a financial report and presented the Recommended Budget for FY 2024-25 and President Sommerfield noted the Statement of Contemplated Activities, which is required by CDFA, and Board Members approved both as presented (*Motion #4; Walters/Holzapfel, 6-0-2*).

**9.** Secretary-Treasurer Dodson gave a financial report and presented the Recommended Budget for FY 2024-25 noting the addition of a category for the 2026 Symposium. President Sommerfield noted the Statement of Contemplated Activities, which is required by CDFA. Board Members approved both as presented (*Motion #4; Walters/Holzapfel, 6-0-2*)
Dodson also advised the Board of the Finance Committee's recommendation to increase the reserve from $75,000 to $100,000, which the Board approved (*Motion #5; Walters/Luchsinger, 6-0-2*).

Dodson also advised of the Finance Committee's recommendation to set aside funds for the 2026 Symposium. Board approved and authorized LCWC Chair to sign a resolution a) temporarily designating $150,000 of currently available funds to present an industry symposium in 2026; b) temporarily restricting use of said funds to expenses solely related to the symposium, as deemed by LCWC President; and c) authorizing LCWC President to open a temporarily restricted interest-bearing account for the temporarily restricted funds and to access those funds as needed to cover expenditures related to the symposium (*Motion #6; Merrilees/Luchsinger, 6-0-2*).

**10.** President Sommerfield presented a series of agreements for consulting services. Board approved agreement with Pehling & Pehling CPAs in the amount of $8,100 for services necessary to conduct the annual audit of LCWC financial statements and compliance for the upcoming fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 (*Motion #7; Merrilees/Holzapfel, 6-0-2*).

Board approved agreement with Miguel Garcia in the amount of $28,000 for educational services to deliver the Master Vigneron Academy® foundational series of classes in 2025 (*Motion #8; Walters/Dodson, 6-0-2*).

**11.** Board approved agreement with Brown Barn Films in the amount of $25,000 for video production services to produce 10 finished short-form videos and additional raw video footage (*Motion #9; Walters/Merrilees, 6-0-2*).

Board approved three agreements with Colangelo & Partners PR firm for a) public relations and outreach assistance for fiscal year 2024-25 in the amount of $39,000; b) strategy, media relations, and participation fee for a Lake County-focused Master Class at the 2025 International Volcanic Wines Conference in New York City in the amount of $14,000; and c) media relations and sponsorship support for 2026 Symposium in the amount of $20,000 (*Motion #10; Walters/Holzapfel, 6-0-2*).

**12.** Next meetings: September 10, November 12, December 5. Meeting time 3:00 p.m.

**13.** Adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

**AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally**

| Committee Members | Motion #1 | Motion #2 | Motion #3 | Motion #4 | Motion #5 | Motion #6 | Motion #7 | Motion #8 | Motion #9 | Motion #10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jonathan Walters, *Chair* | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Joy Merrilees, *Vice Chair* | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Pete Dodson, *Secretary/Treasurer* | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Andre Guéziec | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Jonathan Holzapfel | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Pilar Luchsinger White | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** | **Aye** |
| Clay Shannon | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** |
| Padraic Sherlock | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** | **Absent** |
| **FINAL TALLY** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** | **6-0-2** |

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission