LAKE COUNTY
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION
NORTH COAST | CALIFORNIA

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

Lake County Winegrape Commission
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Walters at 3:06 p.m. Board Members present: Jonathan Walters, Joy Merrilees, Jon Holzapfel, Clay Shannon, Pilar Luchsinger White, Padraic Sherlock, Andre Guéziec. Board Members absent: Pete Dodson. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom); Mayra Benitez.

2. Minutes from the February 4, 2025, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Shannon/Luchsinger, 7-0-1*).

3. Marketing Committee Chair Shannon gave a recap of Momentum, noting the Lake County Pruning School (LCPS) session and wine tasting focused on innovation. Marketing Manager Hoberg stated the turnout was similar to Momentum 2023 with a few no-shows, but down from Momentum 2017 which sold out.

   Board Member Holzapfel asked about the process for developing the marketing portion of the proposed budget and questioned the Marketing Committee Chair's decision to not hold a committee meeting during budget preparation. Marketing Committee Chair Shannon stated the budget is a proposal and given current uneasiness about income, suggested the need to regroup. Holzapfel suggested ideas to attract a younger consumer group including a music festival in Bend, OR. Chair Walters suggested handing the marketing budget discussion to the Marketing Committee. President Sommerfield to schedule as soon as possible.

   Marketing Manager Hoberg provided an update on the press tour for three members of the media this week in conjunction with LCPS. She noted an ad will run in Wine Business Monthly's grape/bulk wine sales section for the month of June. She shared good responses to the rollout of social media video campaign and the rollout of grower spotlights with articles and photos by Karen Pavone. She noted the Grower Conversation Series is scheduled for June 4 at Chacewater and June 25 at Mercantile.

4. Research & Education Committee Chair Sherlock stated the three-year Lake County Pruning School program is concluding with the final classes this week. Manager Hoberg noted a low turnout with some employers attributing recent workforce reductions. She also mentioned the Vineyard Tailgate set for the end of May with UCCE Chris Chen has no signups yet.

5. Vice Chair Merrilees gave an update on Community/Industry Relations activities, including the two recipients of LCWC's Future of Ag Scholarships – one student from Lower Lake H.S. and one from Upper Lake H.S. Vice Chair Merrilees and Board Member Luchsinger plan to present at the two awards nights. Upcoming plans include participation in Kelseyville Elementary School's Vehicle Day, as slight reduction in expenditures for CWA's AgVenture Winegrape Day.

6. Chair Walters led a brief review of the Q3 2024-2025 Financials, which the Board approved (*Motion #2; Shannon/Holzapfel, 7-0-1*). He stated all revenues are in and President Sommerfield will be exploring ideas for another grant application.

   Board Members discussed and approved the assessment rate for the 2025 harvest season at one percent (1%) (*Motion #3, Walters/Shannon, 7-0-1*).

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Board Members reviewed the Proposed Budget for FY 2025-26 and accompanying memo prepared by Secretary-Treasurer Dodson regarding the budget structure and operating deficit.

7. President Sommerfield presented proposed amendments to the LCWC Employee Handbook prepared by LCWC Legal Counsel Jill England to address recent labor-related legislation (*Motion #4; Shannon/Sherlock, 7-0-1*).

President Sommerfield shared official results of the 2025 Annual Board Member Election results tallied by CDFA. The Board installed Jon Holzapfel, Joy Merrilees, and David Weiss (in absentia) as Directors to serve the 2025-2027 term (*Motion #5; Walters/Shannon, 7-0-1*).

At the new Board Chair Holzapfel's nomination, the newly seated Board appointed Mayra Benitez to serve as Public Member for 2025-27 (*Motion #6; Holzapfel/Merrilees, 6-0-1*).

Board Members accepted the proposed slate of Board Officers of Jon Holzapfel as Chair, Joy Merrilees as Vice Chair, and Mayra Benitez as Secretary-Treasurer for the 2024-25 term (*Motion #7; Walters/Shannon, 7-0-1*).

Board Members agreed by consensus that past-Chair Walters would continue serving on the Executive Committee, that Board Member Luchsinger would serve as Marketing Committee Chair, and Board Member Weiss should be asked to serve on the Finance Committee.

Past-Chair Walters thanked Andre Guéziec for his two years of service on the Board and presented him with an award recognizing his contribution.

8. Next meetings: 3 p.m. on June 19, 2025, and on September 9, 2025; Marketing Committee Meeting to meet at 10 a.m. on May 27, 2025.

9. Adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally

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

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission