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 21, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Walters at 3:10 p.m. Board Members present: Jonathan Walters, Pete Dodson, Pilar Luchsinger White, Padraic Sherlock, Jonathan Holzapfel. Board Members absent: Joy Merrilees, Clay Shannon, Andre Guéziec. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom).

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Minutes from the April 11, 2024, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Luchsinger/Dodson, 5-0-3*).

4. Chair Walters gave a brief Executive Committee update. Chair Walters suggested that due to three Board members not in attendance, the agenda items to install new Board Members, to appoint Board officers, and to review Committee assignments all be tabled until the June meeting; Board agreed by consensus.

5. Chair Walters kicked off the Marketing update with details on the three-session Grower Conversation Series to be held at the Mercantile on June 5, June 26, and July 17, noting these will be casual grower and buyer gatherings rather than one more formal dinner, and that personal invitations to buyers have been made by Chair Walters and Marketing Committee Chair Shannon. Other Board Members agreed to assist by making calls to other known buyers.

   Marketing & Events Manager Megan Hoberg provided a PR recap of recent Press Lunch in San Francisco (April 23) and press visit for Laura Burgess (May 13-16), as well as an update on plans for numerous upcoming events including the Volcanic Wines International Conference in New York City (June 18), 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 a tentative social media video project with Lake County Tourism Improvement District (Visit Lake County), as well as buyer outreach and grape/bulk wine sales ad in the Wine Business Monthly daily email.

   Chair Walters and President Sommerfield led a discussion regarding plans to hold a symposium in 2025 or 2026 and possible themes including Sauvignon Blanc, Elevation of Wine, or Volcanics. President Sommerfield to prepare summary of possible cost and suggest timeline for further discussion at June meeting.

6. Research/Education Committee Chair Sherlock provided an update on Lake County Pruning School Year 2, which recently concluded, and led a brief discussion of potential topics for Year 3 including rehabilitating old vines and pruning techniques for head-trained vines. Staff will work with Simonit & Sirch to determine what might be possible.

   Marketing Manager Hoberg provided a recap of the day-long Pruning School visit for UC Davis DEVO (enology/viticulture club) students (May 18), which included an abbreviated pruning demonstration by Simonit & Sirch instructors at Beckstoffer's Crimson Ridge, a surprise guest appearance by Marco Simonit, and an al fresco dinner and wine at the Merrilees' Castilleja Vineyards.

Lake County Crush District 2
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7. President Sommerfield provided an update on LCWC's Future of Agriculture Scholarship Program with the Community & Industry Relations Committee selecting two students – one university-bound and one technical-school-bound – to each receive one $5,000 award. Both are from Kelseyville High School and Vice Chair Merrilees will present the awards at the school's awards night on June 6.

8. Secretary-Treasurer Dodson gave a financial report noting significantly higher revenues than budget estimates and lower expenses due to canceled road show. Board Members reviewed and approved Q3 2023-24 Financials (*Motion #2, Luchsinger/Holzapfel, 5-0-3*) and directed Finance Committee to discuss options to maximize grower dollars with short-term CDs or similar interest-bearing account.

   Board Members reviewed the Proposed Budget for FY 2024-25, which will be updated at the Finance Committee in mid-June into a Recommended Budget to be approved at the June 25 Board Meeting.

   Board Members discussed and approved the assessment rate for the 2024 harvest season at one percent (1%) (*Motion #3, Walters/Sherlock, 5-0-3*).

9. President Sommerfield shared that UC Cooperative Extension is working with Cal Fire on smoke research that includes a control burn situation in Hopland sometime in June. Board expressed concern regarding timing. Chair Walters agreed to contact Chris Chen to clarify. Board then directed President Sommerfield to draft a letter, if deemed necessary, to express concerns to UCCE and CalFire and another to Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.

   President Sommerfield introduced to the Board LCWC's newly hired Outreach & Events Coordinator Summer Brown who gave a short self-introduction.

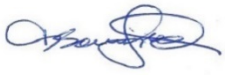
10. Next meeting: June 25 at 3:00 p.m.

11. Adjourned at 4:52 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*	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
Pete Dodson, *Secretary/Treasurer*	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Andre Guéziec	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
Jonathan Holzapfel	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Pilar Luchsinger White	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Clay Shannon	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
Padraic Sherlock	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
FINAL TALLY	**5-0-3**	**5-0-3**	**5-0-3**

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission