LAKE COUNTY
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION
NORTH COAST | CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair
Jonathan Walters

Vice Chair
Joy Merrilees

Secretary-Treasurer
Pete Dodson

Andre Gueziec

Jonathan Holzapfel

Pilar Luchsinger White

Clay Shannon

Padraic Sherlock

President
Debra Sommerfield

Lake County Winegrape Commission
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jonathan Walters at 3:03 p.m. Board Members present: Jonathan Walters, Joy Merrilees, Pete Dodson, Clay Shannon, Andre Gueziec, Pilar Luchsinger White. Board Members absent: Jonathan Holzapfel, Padraic Sherlock. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom); Jill England, LCWC Counsel (via Zoom).

2. Chair Walters suggested moving Agenda Items 10, 11, and 12, forward to be taken up right after Public Comment, with consensus by Board Members.

3. Public Comment: Andre Gueziec requested to speak. He stated wineries have consolidated and he would like to see collaboration to find other outlets for grapes. He also stated agriculture is largest industry in Lake County, transportation to/from Lake County is an issue for big-rig access, and he would like to see Highway 29 between Lake and Napa counties be made passable with a tunnel.

4. Minutes from the August 15, 2023, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Walters/Dodson, 6-0-2*).

5. A Closed Session pursuant to Government Code Section 11126(e) was held. Board entered into Closed Session at 3:11 p.m. Board exited Closed Session at 3:44 p.m. No action taken.

6. President Sommerfield gave a brief administrative update noting the technology improvements to move from MediaCom for internet and AT&T for landline to AT&T fiber and Office@Hand software voice-over-IP phones.

7. Board Members held a post-harvest roundtable discussion wherein all Board Members shared input on crop quality and yields and insights on winery demand. Board Members noted one of the largest harvests ever and excellent fruit quality, wineries happy, tanks full, some growers still picking, others still have some fruit hanging, but not nearly as much as in Napa and Sonoma.

   Marketing & Events Manager Megan Hoberg gave an update on registration for Lake County Pruning School with English and Spanish cohorts in both Introductory and Intermediate classes, and noted application was submitted to state DPR for CE Credits. President Sommerfield briefed the Board on a call from the executive director of the British Columbia growers' association seeking advice on hosting and funding similar pruning class for their growers.

8. Marketing Committee Chair Shannon kicked off the marketing report. Marketing Manager Hoberg provided a recap on participation in SommCon in San Diego, noting feedback to event organizers on time attendees spent in sessions and not expo. She gave an update on expanded presence and individual Lake County winery participation at San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival November 10-11, which also includes ad placement in December issue of *Somm Journal*. Shannon noted sommeliers end up in influential positions where they purchase a lot of wine.

   Hoberg provided an update on advertising noting the *Wine Business Monthly* Marketplace placement received 345,000 views and 217 clicks, and PR plans

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include a press release on new AVAs, press lunch in Marin, and spring road show in two markets with input from Board Members to focus on Chicago and Miami, possibly Texas. She also gave a sneak peek of the new home page design to launch by the end of December.

Committee Chair Shannon also gave an update on plans for the November 8 Lake County visit for attendees of the Wine Institute's Global Buyers Marketplace, expecting 25 attendees from countries such as Sweden, Germany, Norway.

He also discussed marketing trends including ChatGPT and the value of subscribing to the M. Shaken Impact Report for LCWC and growers.

9. Vice Chair and Community & Industry Relations Committee Chair Merrilees noted the positive community benefits of support for the Junior Livestock Auction. Manager Hoberg provided a recap of the donation of wine for the annual Lake County Wine Alliance Wine Auction and a recap of the support for the California Women for Ag's AgVenture program.

10. Secretary-Treasurer Dodson noted the annual audit is underway and then stepped the Board through Q1 2023-24 financials, which were approved (*Motion #2; Shannon/Merrilees, 6-0-2*). He also presented documents for line-of-credit renewal with Umpqua Bank, noting a three-year term, interest rate of prime plus .5, a very favorable floor rate of 3.75, and restriction to maintain a primary banking relationship with Umpqua. Board Members approved the renewal of the line of credit and authorized the Chair and President to sign. (*Motion #3; Shannon/Merrilees, 6-0-2*).

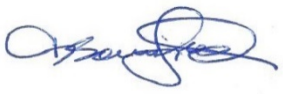
11. Next meetings: December 7, at 5:00 p.m., followed by Holiday Wine Social at 5:30 p.m.; Strategy Session for 1:00 p.m. on either January 12 or 26, depending on consultant availability.

12. Adjourned at 5:00 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	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
Pilar Luchsinger White	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Clay Shannon	**Aye**	**Aye**	**Aye**
Padraic Sherlock	**Absent**	**Absent**	**Absent**
FINAL TALLY	**6-0-2**	**6-0-2**	**6-0-2**

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission