LAKE COUNTY
WINEGRAPE COMMISSION
NORTH COAST | CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jon Holzapfel

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Joy Merrilees

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Mayra Benitez

Pilar Luchsinger White

Clay Shannon

Padraic Sherlock

Jonathan Walters

David Weiss

President
Debra Sommerfield

Lake County Winegrape Commission
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, June 19, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Jon Holzapfel at 3:08 p.m. Board Members present: Jon Holzapfel, Mayra Benitez, Pilar Luchsinger White, Padraic Sherlock (dep. 4:15 p.m.), Jonathan Walters, David Weiss. Board Members absent: Joy Merrilees, Clay Shannon. Quorum established. Also present: Debra Sommerfield, President; Megan Hoberg, Marketing & Events Manager (via Zoom); Miranda Townsend, CDFA Economist (via Zoom). Guests present: Terry Dereniuk, Stephanie Holdenried.

2. Minutes from the May 13, 2025, LCWC Board meeting were approved (*Motion #1; Walters/Sherlock, 5-0-1-2*).

3. Chair Jon Holzapfel gave a brief Executive Committee report, noting that the Committee was given an overview of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act and Board responsibilities by LCWC Legal Counsel Jill England. The Committee approved the draft of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP) and reviewed financials and cashflow projections.

4. Marketing Committee Pilar Luchsinger gave a recap of the recent Committee meeting noting the discussion included industry challenges like lower event attendance and consensus to focus on events within close proximity/within California. She also suggested an LCWC presence at the Kelseyville Pear Festival.

   Marketing & Events Manager Megan Hoberg gave an update on recent and upcoming marketing activities, including the Grower Conversation Series with a first seminar at Chacewater held on June 4 and second coming up on June 25 at the Mercantile.

   The Board reviewed the staff-prepared memo and list of event opportunities with staff suggestions for a slate of events that works within budget, as well as possibility of on-the-road seminars again, similar to those at MacMurray Ranch and Beckstoffer headquarters in Rutherford, now with volcanics emphasis.

5. Research & Education Committee Chair Sherlock stated the Lake County Pruning School has concluded. He shared initial results from the Beckstoffer demonstration vineyard compared to adjacent conventionally pruned blocks in terms of cluster counts and phenolics, noting the plan for Jett Johannson of Simonit & Sirch to do another comparison.

6. Jonathan Walters gave a brief update on Community/Industry Relations activities, including the two scholarships awarded. He and Secretary-Treasurer Mayra Benitez each shared their experience presenting the awards at Lower Lake H.S. and Upper Lake H.S.

7. Chair Holzapfel led a discussion regarding the Recommended FY 2025-26 Budget and line-by-line review of staff-prepared event list, with Board members ultimately concurring on the specific events to include in the Budget.

   Board agreed to set aside plans to hold a symposium and approved a resolution releasing $50,000 of temporary restricted funds from any restricted use (*Motion #2; Walters/Holzapfel, 5-0-3*).

   Board approved FY 2025-26 budget with added marketing events and Statement of Contemplated Activities (*Motion #3; Walters/Benitez, 5-0-3*).

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8. President Sommerfield introduced Terry Dereniuk of Catspaw Consulting who provided a wrap-up of LCWC's CDFA Specialty Crop Block Grant titled "*Fostering Vine Health Amid Drought: Educating Winegrowers on Cutting-Edge Pruning Techniques for Sustainable Farming*" noting four key projects: three years of spring and winter in-the-vineyard seminars, printed materials and Momentum seminars, press releases and outreach, and photos and videos. She shared the successful outcome measures: 454 participants gained knowledge (goal was 443), and 123 participants expressed an intent to adopt (goal was 60). She noted the benefits to growers included direct benefits of hands-on training and cost reductions, and indirect benefits of press coverage, industry recognition, and an elevated reputation of the region.

President Sommerfield presented a series of agreements for consulting services.

Board approved agreement with Pehling & Pehling CPAs in the amount of $8,600 for services necessary to conduct the annual audit of LCWC financial statements and compliance for FY 2024-25 (*Motion #4; Holzapfel/Weiss, 5-0-3*).

Board approved agreement with Colangelo & Partners PR firm in the amount of $25,000 for public relations and outreach assistance for FY 2025-26 (*Motion #5; Weiss/Luchsinger, 5-0-3*).

Board approved agreement with Western Weather Group at a cost of $1,200 per month for monthly weather forecasting services from July 2025 through June 2027 with the exception of the frost months paid by the Lake County Fruit Frost Protection District (*Motion #6; Weiss/Luchsinger, 5-0-3*).

Board approved amendment to existing agreement with Karen Pavone Photography to produce grower spotlight articles and extend the duration through September (*Motion #7; Luchsinger/Walters, 5-0-3*).

9. Chair Holzapfel suggested the review of committee assignments be tabled to the September meeting.

10. Next meetings: 3:00 p.m. on September 9; 4:00 p.m. on December 9.

11. Adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally

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

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Sommerfield, President, Lake County Winegrape Commission