



LODI WINE
WINEGRAPE
COMMISSION

**Lodi Winegrape Commission
Meeting Minutes - Final
October 22, 2020**

The Lodi Winegrape Commission met on Thursday, October 22, 2020 virtually via Go to Meeting.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kendra Altnow at 2:33PM.
2. Roll was called

Commissioner	Present	Alternate Commissioner	Present
Phil Abba	X	Dirk Heuvel	X
Kendra Altnow	X	Mitch Spaletta	
Bruce Fry	X	Joan Kautz	X
Curt Gillespie		Jacylyn Stokes	X
Matt Lauchland	X	Todd Maley	X
Tom Murphy	X	Colton Machado	
Diego Olagarary	X	Garret Schaefer	X
Aaron Shinn		Jason Eells	
Brandon Sywassink	X	Scott Armolea	X

Also, in attendance was Larry Whitted and Mirek Wilczek (CDFA Marketing Branch). Staff present Stuart Spencer, Stephanie Bolton and Gabriella Goode. A quorum was established.

3. On a motion by Olagarary/Fry the minutes of the July 23, 2020 meeting were approved (Exhibit A).
4. Public Comment on Items Appearing on the Agenda – None
5. **Financial Report** – Brandon Sywassink reported that the Finance Committee had met in August and reviewed fiscal year end financial statements and budget. Due to harvest the committee had not met, but was scheduled to meet in November and review current year financial statements and budget.
6. **Chairman's Report** – Chairperson Altnow initiated a roundtable harvest discussion getting input from all board members on how harvest. The general consensus was that the 2020 harvest was light, particularly on some of the earlier varieties. Smoke from the wildfires created challenges particularly will several wineries that rejected vineyards based on their

internal metrics. On a positive note, wineries are already looking for 2021 grapes indicating improved market conditions.

Altnow announced that new board members would be serving on the following committees. Joan Kautz, Jaclyn Stokes and Colton Machado were placed on the Grower Marketing committee. Scott Armolea was placed on the Research, Education, & Communication committee, and Dirk Heuvel was placed on the Lodi Rules committee.

Altnow also announced that the Executive Committee met in September and decided to hold the Commission referendum vote in late March. CDFA will conduct the election and there will be a 30-day balloting period.

The board also discussed the 30th anniversary of the Lodi Winegrape Commission in 2021. It unfortunately looks like we won't be able to host an in-person celebration. The board discussed options including holding the annual meeting at the end of January virtually. It was expressed that continuing to provide the meeting helped create greater transparency with the growers. The board also discussed putting together a 30th anniversary video to commemorate the accomplishments of the Lodi Winegrape Commission over the past 30 years.

7. **Executive Director's Report** - ED Spencer presented and discussed his Executive Director Report (Exhibit B). Of note, was the ongoing smoke exposure/impact related challenges of 2020. LWC is working with the Lodi District Grape Growers Association to survey the grower community to determine financial impacts.
8. **Committee Reports:**

Executive Committee – The committee met in September to discuss the referendum, the 2020 harvest, and ongoing COVID related challenges for our winery community.

Grower Marketing Committee – Altnow reported that the committee had not met and that she was looking to step aside as committee chair after serving in that role for the past five years. ED Spencer updated the board about ongoing marketing activities. Of note, was the virtual Lodi Master Class held the previous week. Over 240 members of the trade registered to watch the two-part class. The event was very well received. In addition, Spencer also highlighted the launch of the Commission's new advertising and marketing campaign focused on telling the stories of Lodi. The fall component features a "Save the Old" campaign around Lodi's distinctive leadership and unique positioning with old vines. The campaign includes partnerships with Wine Enthusiast, Vine Pair, and Wine Business directing traffic to a new savetheold.com website. Campaign elements include digital and print advertising, paid social media, and extensive story telling on Commission-owned channels (website, email, facebook, Instagram).

Lodi Rules – Committee member Dirk Heuvel updated the board on the recent Lodi Rules committee meeting. The program continues to grow with an estimated 56,000 acres being

certified. The committee had submitted a few new standards for review and possible inclusion. Work continues on a new pesticide risk assessment tool for possible implementation in the 2022 growing season. The Commission just signed a new two-year contract with Protected Harvest for administering the certification. There will be an increase in fees of \$100 on returning members and an additional \$300 audit fee for those returning applicants that require an on-site audit. In addition, Protected Harvest will retain \$.20 of the \$2.00 licensing fee per acre paid by out-of-district applicants.

Research, Education, Communication – Committee Chair Larry Whitted reported that the committee met on August 18 and is scheduled to meet again next week. Whitted updated the board on ongoing research projects including an ant trial and the region wide VMB project with Kent Daane. Bolton also updated the board on the Modern Farmer series and reported grower successes from the recent story telling workshop and vineyard tech sheets. The series will continue with future story telling workshops to help Lodi growers better tell their story to potential buyers. The committee is also look at several winter field days around weed management with sheep and pruning demonstrations/instructions.

Winery Marketing Committee – The committee met on October 13 and principally discussed options for the 2021 Lodi Wine & Chocolate Weekend. The committee developed a concept around an exclusive reservation-based weekend spread out over four days. Individual wineries would determine how many guests they could receive at a given time slot. The concept would allow for the event to be conducted safely within current guidelines by controlling the traffic at each location throughout the weekend. The committee is surveying the vintners to gauge their interest in participating and will follow up with a past attendee survey to gauge their interest in attending.

9. Other Organization Reports:

CWEF – Spencer updated the board on Visitor Center operations. Traffic is continuing to increase across the region, and per visitor sales are greater than pre-covid. The Visitor Center completely refreshed the wine clubs and introduced a third club that ships six bottles twice per year. The new clubs and collateral material focus on telling the vineyard and grower stories behind the wines. In addition, they feature a user-choice element that allows the member to select wines from six different options. This feature gives the members greater options and allows the Visitor Center to feature more producers. Staff is also sending targeted emails featuring the new clubs, wine packages that align with Commission marketing initiatives, and Lodi-branded merchandise.

SJCFB – no report

LDGGA – no report.

Lodi Grape Festival – no report

CAWG – no report

10. **Public Comment** – Bruce Fry asked that we recognize Ed Van Diemen’s recent passing and all the contributions Ed made over the year’s to the Lodi winegrowing community. Ed just finished serving eight years on the Lodi Winegrape Commission board last June. Ed was liked by all and praised for his quite wisdom he brought to the Commission.

11. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings** – Annual meeting, 30th anniversary, and annual audit.

12. The next meeting was scheduled for December 10 at 2:30PM.

13. The meeting adjourned at 4:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Spencer
On behalf of Curt Gillespie
Secretary



LODI WINE
WINEGRAPE
COMMISSION

**Lodi Winegrape Commission
Meeting Minutes - Final
July 23, 2020**

The Lodi Winegrape Commission met on Thursday, July 23, 2020 virtually via Go to Meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kendra Altnow at 1:05 pm.

Roll was called

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Alternate Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>
Phil Abba	X	Dirk Heuvel	X
Kendra Altnow	X	Mitch Spaletta	
Bruce Fry	X	Joan Kautz	X
Curt Gillespie	X	Jacylyn Stokes	X
Matt Lauchland	X	Todd Maley	X
Tom Murphy	X	Colton Machado	X
Diego Olagarary	X	Garret Schaefer	X
Aaron Shinn	X	Jason Eells	X
Brandon Sywassink	X	Scott Armolea	X

Also, in attendance was Galen Schmiedt, Ben Kolber, Amy Blagg, Larry Whitted and Mirek Wilczek (CDA Marketing Branch). Staff present Stuart Spencer, Stephanie Bolton and Jenny Heitman. A quorum was established.

On a motion by Olagarary/Shinn the minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting were approved (Exhibit A).

Public Comment on Items Appearing on the Agenda – None

Financial Report – Galen Schmiedt reported that the Finance Committee had not met since the last board meeting.

Report of Nominating Committee

Galen Schmiedt and Ben Kolber comprised the nominating committee and reported that they had talked to all Commissioners and have the following recommendations: Chairman, Kendra Altnow; Vice Chairman, Aaron Shinn; Treasurer Diego Olagarary; Secretary, Curt Gillespie. The bylaws limit board members to serve on one committee, except the officers

may serve on an additional committee besides the Executive Committee. After some discussion, Mirek Wilczek with CDFA administered the election for the Chairperson:

- Motion to nominate Kendra Altnow for Chairman – Fry/Sywassink – Carried
- Motion to nominate Aaron Shinn for Vice Chairman – Abba/Fry– Carried
- Motion to nominate Curt Gillespie for Secretary – VanDiemen/Kolber – Carried
- Motion to nominate Brandon Sywassink for Treasurer – Fry/Olagarary - Carried

Chariman’s Report – Chairperson Altnow welcomed the new board members and looks forward to working with each of them moving Lodi forward. She reminded everyone that each board member must serve on a committee and asked each new member to let ED Spencer know their committee preferences.

Consideration of Agreements between the Lodi Winegrape Commission (LWC) and California Wine Education Foundation (CWEF). Spencer shared the draft agreements for Management Services for 2020-21 (Exhibit B), Promotional Services for 2020-21 (Exhibit C), and Event Management 2019-20 (Exhibit D). Spencer explained that the agreements formalize the relationship between LWC and CWEF concerning the Lodi Wine & Visitor Center and Lodi Row X Row (ZinFest).

- Motion to approve the management services agreement. Shinn/Sywassink – Carried
- Motion to approve the promotional services agreement. Shinn/Olagarary – Carried
- Motion to approve the event management agreement. Sywassink/Abba - Carried

Executive Director’s Report - ED Spencer presented and discussed his Executive Director Report (Exhibit E). Of note, were growing concerns regarding COVID-19 related impacts on harvest and labor. Spencer has been working with the Lodi District Grape Growers on potential testing, outreach, and educational strategies to mitigate impacts within our ag community.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee – The committee has not met but will likely meet in late August.

Grower Marketing Committee – Committee Chair Altnow reported that the committee has not met since the previous board meeting. The committee is scheduled to meet in August and will be reviewing the 2020-21 advertising plan, and upcoming activities.

Lodi Rules – Committee Chair Aaron Shinn reported that the Lodi Rules committee met on Monday, June 20. They are working on updating some standards and beta testing the new PRT (pesticide risk tool). The committee will be meeting again in the August to review final standard change language and forward to Protected Harvest for consideration. Staff is also negotiating potential certification price increase proposed by Protected Harvest. Committee members want to minimize potential increases and feel out-of-district acreage should absorb most of the increases.

Research, Education, Communication – Committee Chair Larry Whitted reported that the committee had not met since the last meeting. Whitted updated the board on recent activities including ongoing distribution of the new virus workbook, development of a new

Modern Farmer outreach series, a virtual rootstock field day, and additional needs for virus testing around sudden vine collapse.

Winery Marketing Committee – The committee met on July 6. Staff will be organizing several listening/brainstorming sessions with the winery community in August to identify and discuss new strategies for keeping their wines and brands present in the minds of consumers across the country.

Other Organization Reports:

CWEF – Spencer updated the board that during the Visitor Center is currently open Thursday – Sunday from noon – 4pm. All tasting is taking place outdoors, seated, and by reservation. Staff has utilized the downtime to reimagine the wine club, creating three separate clubs, and hopefully engaging more consumers. In addition, the online store is getting refreshed, and a new landing page for the Visitor Center is being developed.

SJCFB – no report

LDGGA – Amy Blagg updated the board. LDGGA Blood Drive in honor of Kris Gutierrez is being held today. The legislature is closed but legislation is continuing to move along. She will update the grower community as needed. She also noted that she is working closely with the Commission on COVID related outreach and strategies.

Lodi Grape Festival – no report

CAWG – no report

Public Comment – None

Agenda Items for Future Meetings – None

The next meeting was not scheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 2:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Spencer
On behalf of Curt Gillespie
Secretary



Executive Director Report 8-31-20

BOARD UPDATE

Smoke Exposure – There are several wineries raising concerns over possible smoke exposure issues in Lodi vineyards. At this point, to my knowledge, there are no positive tests for smoke in Lodi based upon the grape berry test method. Unfortunately, ETS labs, the only crop insurance accredited lab, is backed up to the end of the month. Yesterday, they had 6,000 samples waiting to be tested and could only test 250 per day. I'm also hearing from some wineries that the berry sample method is not entirely reliable, and smoke issues can arise after fermentation. These wineries are doing their own internal testing which has the potential to create contract issues with growers down the road. These issues are going to have an impact on the grape market in the more smoke-impacted regions, but some of those issues could potentially impact Lodi growers.

Staff Update – I'm pleased to announce the hiring of Gabriella Goode as our new Administrative Assistant. Gabby is an Ag Business graduate from Chico State and most recently worked for the Napa Valley Farm Bureau. She grew up and lives in Elk Grove and has a passion for Agriculture. In addition, Sherri Cascaden is no longer with the Commission. Sherri has been with the Commission for the past 15 years. She started out as a temporary admin and grew into becoming our Event Manager. She has played a key role in putting on outstanding events for the Commission over the years. She will be missed. When we can host events again, we will evaluate how best to staff and execute on them.

Visitor Center – The Visitor Center is currently open for outside tasting by appointment Thursday – Sunday from Noon -5pm. The heat and smoke of the past couple of weeks have made it a challenge, but guests continue to come. As of Friday, August 28, the State once again moved the goal posts on allowing wineries to serve inside. With the new and more rigorous county metrics we could be serving outside for some time unless they change the rules again. We have also been hesitant to fully promote that we are open due to the ever-changing rules surrounding tasting rooms.

COVID – Harvest

Over the past 6 weeks, I have pursued multiple opportunities to develop a functional and effective COVID testing program for ag workers. Nothing has worked out that is affordable. However, the county has received funding to implement a COVID testing program for ag workers. In conjunction with the San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner's office, San Joaquin General Hospital Clinics, and San Joaquin County Public Health Services, they have secured FREE COVID-19 testing focused on the agricultural community and our workforce. The first testing events will be **Wednesday, September 2 and Friday, September 4 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St.** No appointments are needed.

We also have COVID-19 specific health and safety posters available at the Lodi Winegrape Commission office. The posters are laminated in both Spanish and English and available to pick up at the Commission office. LDGGA is splitting the production cost on the posters.

N95 Masks – We are assisting the San Joaquin Ag Commissioner in distributing free N95 masks to the Lodi winegrape community. We have several thousand masks available at the Lodi Winegrape Commission office at 2545 West Turner Road, Lodi CA 95240. To get your free masks, please stop by the office Monday – Friday from 8:30am – 5:00pm. You will be required to fill out and sign a simple form detailing the entities receiving the masks.

LWC COMMITTEE UPDATE

Grower Marketing – We finalized our advertising plan for 2020-21. Advertising partners include Wine Enthusiast, Food & Wine, Wine Business Monthly, Vinepair and probably Wine.com. We will also be augmenting the campaigns with paid social on Instagram and Facebook. The program will launch this fall with a focused “Save the Old Vines” campaign demonstrated to highlight Lodi’s distinct leadership and unique selling attributes around old vines. Attached is a copy of the marketing and advertising plan detailing spending for the coming year.

We are also spending the first week of September getting photos taken of board members, committee members, and other growers. Moving forward we want to use these photos in telling the unique stories surrounding the growers of Lodi. These will likely be used in email, website, blogs, etc.

Staff has also spent the past couple months retooling the Visitor Center wine clubs. The new format includes three new club options – The Usual Suspects, The Mavericks, and The Cool Kids. The first two clubs are “user-choice” clubs. Club members will be given the option to choose among 6 different wines. Those that don’t choose will be given a default option of three wines. The Cool Kids is a limited 6 bottle shipment twice per year. Membership is limited and the offerings will be extremely limited hard-to-find wines that deliver exceptional quality. The new clubs will provide the opportunity to highlight a greater diversity of Lodi wines and producers and help us tell a more compelling story about the region.

Winery Marketing – Staff is internally discussing how to move forward with the 2021 Lodi Wine & Chocolate Weekend. We will be developing several options that might include small more intimate experiences where the flow of people can be controlled. We will also be polling the winery community, as well as past attendees, to get their input and interest in participating. Additionally, we are exploring ways for our local wineries to participate in the “save the old vines” campaign. Potentially asking them to create unique packages and experiences around old vines where we can drive wine consumers to.

Research, Education & Communication

Modern Farmer Series

Our new educational series designed to help today’s Lodi farmers learn the skills needed to sell winegrapes for a profit has got off to a good start. The initial publication introduced the “Vineyard Tech Sheet” as a tool to help growers promote their vineyard. The Winegrape Commission has worked with a designer to create multiple templates that staff will help the grower create a professional tech sheet.

Our first *How to Tell Your Farming Story to Buyers* workshop on August 20th with Lisa Cantrell went really well. Participating growers got professional help crafting their vineyard story/family farming history in a manner that will speak to buyers and open up niche markets. These stories are a crucial part of the new Vineyard Tech Sheets offered for growers by the Commission. Future workshops will be offered based on demand.

Western SARE Mealybug Biocontrol Video

Dr. Stephanie Bolton of the Lodi Winegrape Commission, Dr. Kent Daane (UC), and five farming operations (Lucas, Vino Farms, Michael David, Starr Vineyard, and Bokisch) teamed up with industry members to demonstrate mealybug biocontrol in Lodi vineyards as part of a USDA Western SARE grant project awarded for \$50,000. Participating growers used SARE funds to implement beneficial insect releases and pheromone mating disruption, and they shared what they learned throughout the project in a professionally produced 8-minute educational video we premiered on YouTube on August 13th. Click [HERE](#) to watch the video, which has had over 550 views so far and is included on the electronic version of our new book, *What Every Winegrower Should Know: Viruses*. Dr. Marc Fuchs from Cornell University passed along these compliments, "The quality of the video and the quality of the message conveyed are outstanding. Wow, wow, wow. Super well done."

Virus Outreach

Interest continues to grow in our new collaboratively produced 138-page book, *What Every Winegrower Should Know: Viruses*. Hundreds of books have been distributed to Lodi growers and others throughout California, across the US, and internationally. The electronic version (a flash drive with a PDF of the book plus bonus materials and educational videos) became available in mid-August. Thanks to grant funding from the American Vineyard Foundation and the CDFA PD/GWSS Board, books are available for free. The feedback has been outstanding, and Dr. Bolton has been invited to share an update on Lodi's efforts at this year's virtual Sustainable Ag Expo in November.

Virus Book feedback:

"I'm impressed with the nice balance of professional presentation and reader accessibility the book delivers so well. I was also impressed with the excellent job done with the Mealybug Biocontrol in CA Vineyards video. We are so grateful for the dedication and sincere enthusiasm behind your efforts advancing the industry through collaborative teamwork." - Scott Deitrick, American Vineyard Foundation

LODI RULES

We're on track to have another record year for LODI RULES - it's estimated that over 56,000 acres will be certified in 2020, including two new vineyards in Washington State. The final numbers won't come in until after harvest. After years of deliberation, the LODI RULES Committee submitted a small set of revisions to Protected Harvest in mid-August to make sure that our farming practices are up-to-date with modern knowledge and viticulture wisdom. In addition, the committee has been brainstorming creative ways to simply and effectively communicate what sustainability means to target audiences. Speaking of communicating sustainability...our *Kids Explain Sustainability* video available on lodirules.org now has over 5,000 views!

UPCOMING LWC ACTIVITIES

September 28-30 – We are partnering with the Guild of Sommeliers to host a Lodi virtual tour for 24 sommeliers and media. The tour will be broken down into two two-hour seminars featuring 12 Lodi wines and several growers and vintners. The seminars will be led by Elaine Brown who hosted our master classes earlier this year in Houston, Washington DC, and Denver. Each participant is being sent a set of 12 wines, along with soil samples from each of the seven AVA's of Lodi, and additional Lodi gear. The goal is to build awareness and respect amongst key influencers for Lodi-grown wines.

October - November – Commission is developing a "Save the Old Vines" campaign around National Zinfandel Day (November 18) highlighting Lodi's history with the variety. We are planning for an entire month of promotions surrounding Old Vines including technical seminars (virtual), vineyard tours, and consumer-focused advertising. We are exploring partnerships with organizations like Historical Vineyard Society (HVS) and Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP). Campaign may include t-shirts, video, digital ads, etc.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

October 19 – Lodi Rules Committee (2:00 pm)

October 27 – Research, Education & Communication Committee (1:00 pm)

November 10 – Finance Committee (Noon)