



**LODI WINE**  
WINEGRAPE  
COMMISSION

**Lodi Winegrape Commission  
Meeting Minutes – FINAL  
June 25, 2024**

The Lodi Winegrape Commission met on Tuesday, June 25, 2024

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Diego Olagaray at 12:10PM.
2. Roll was called

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Alternate Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>
Phil Abba	X	Scott Armolea	X
Pieter A den Hartog	X	Garret Schaefer	
Jason Eells		Todd Maley	X
Curt Gillespie	X	Brandon Sywassink	X
Joan Kautz	X	Colton Machado	
Tom Murphy	X	Dirk Heuvel	EX
Diego Olagaray	X	Mitch Spaletta	
Hadyn Schatz		Joe Laranaga	EX
Jacylyn Stokes	X	Art Prudhel	

Also, in attendance was Mirek Wilczek (CDFA Marketing Branch) Gerardo Espinosa, Brett Pieretti, Amy Blagg, and Dawson Lewis. Staff present Stuart Spencer, Jenny Heitman, and Stephanie Bolton. A quorum was established.

3. On a motion by Abba/Maley the minutes of the May 21, 2024 meetings were approved (Exhibit A).
4. Public Comment on Items Appearing on the Agenda – None
5. **Financial Report** – Treasurer Tom Murphy noted that the committee had not met since the last board meeting and that we would be discussing financials as part of the budget discussion.
6. **Chairman’s Report** – Chair Olagaray updated the board that the Executive Committee met with Committee Chairs to work on the budget. They were recommending moving forward cautiously due to market conditions. They also discussed the payable owed from the California Wine Education Foundation for Visitor Center operations. The balance as of May 31, 2024 was sitting at \$139,000 with \$131,000 carried over from previous fiscal years. The balance is for staff time for visitor center operations beyond what the Visitor Center was capable of paying back. They were recommending that the Commission write off the balance

as of June 30, 2024 as a promotional expense. Motion to designate the balance owed from the Visitor Center as of June 30, 2024 as a promotional expense. Murphy/Den Hartog – Carried.

Olagary also wanted to thank outgoing Commissioners Tom Murphy, Curt Gillespie, Phil Abba, and Brandon Sywassink for their year’s of service. He also wanted to welcome new board member, and asked Executive Director Spencer to read off the election results:

		2024			
<u>Commissioners</u>	<u>Term</u>		<u>Alternates</u>		<u>Term</u>
S.Armolea	3rd				
D.Heuvel	3rd				
J. Kautz	3rd		B.Piretti		1st
F. Felten Jolley	1st		G.Espinosa		1st
J. Stokes	3rd		C. Machado		3rd
Term expires in 2024					

It was also noted that the Commission was short of two people to run for board spots. The board could, if desired, appoint people to fill the alternate vacancies. Olagary also announced that he was appointing Curty Gillespie and Tom Murphy to serve as the nominating committee for 2024-25 board officers.

7. **Executive Director’s Report** - ED Spencer updated the board on recent Commission activities (Exhibit B) including the Winery BID, Visit Lodi, Visitation & Sales Data, Delta College and the grape and wine market. He also discussed the continuing impact imports are having on winegrape demand in Lodi and California.
8. **Consideration of FY 2024-25 Budget** - ED Spencer presented the proposed FY 2024-25 Budget (Exhibit C). The Executive Committee and committee chairs met on June 11, 2024, to assemble the budget. Each committee submitted a budget request, and the group developed an income projection (Exhibit D) and aligned expenses with revenue. ED Spencer led the board through each committee’s budget and discussed what was being proposed for the coming year. He noted that the proposed budget was conservative based on the uncertain grape market and potential assessment revenue. The proposed budget an \$83,227.50 surplus. There was some discussion that the assessment revenue projection was too optimistic based on current grape market conditions, and that the proposed expenses could potentially impact programming. Motion to accept the recommended budget with projected income of \$2,391,846.45 and projected expenses of \$2,308618.95 for the fiscal year 2024-25. Stokes/Den Hartog – Motion Carried.
9. **Assessment Rate** – The Executive Committee is also recommending that the assessment rate stay the same for 2024-25 FY at .45%. Motion to set the assessment rate at .45% for the fiscal year 2024-25. Murphy/Stokes– Carried.

10. **Committee Reports:**

Executive Committee – The committee met on June 11 to discuss the budget.

Grower Marketing Committee – The committee is scheduled to meet next Wednesday, July 3. The Commission’s Spring advertising programs are scheduled to wrap up at the end of June. The campaign has featured “A Rising Tide” - eight-part video series. Additionally, on the public relations front the Commission is hosting a writer from Vine Pair in July and will be attending the TexSom conference in August. At this point, based on current budget considerations, we are being cautious with committing to advertising program in 2024-25.

Winery Marketing Committee – The committee is scheduled to meet on July 10. The committee is supporting the Festival of Forgotten Grapes in LA at the end of June. The Commission will be hosting a regional table to vet the event and determine whether broader participation is warranted in the future. Additionally, committee member Todd Maley has revived “Technical Tastings” that brings together winery production staff for themed tastings. Yesterday, we hosted a Social Media Workshop focused on Instagram that included a panel of outside wineries/growers executing well.

Lodi Rules – The committee met on Tuesday, June 18. The committee brainstormed different ideas to create a “living LODI RULES toolkit” to assist growers and vintners in communicating sustainability. Additionally, Stephanie just completed and submitted an exhaustive survey sponsored by the Nordic monopolies to benchmark sustainability programs across the world. The benchmarking is being implemented by a third-party Intertek and is looking more extensively at social practices.

Research, Education, Communication – The Research, Education and Communication committee met on May 8 and is scheduled to meet July 24. Stephanie is finalizing work with an accounting firm on a Return-on-Investment worksheet for growers. Next week’s IPM Breakfast Meeting will take a deep dive into Spotted Wing Lanternfly. Last week viable egg masses were found entering California, and removal of host plant Tree of Heaven will be critical to managing this invasive pest. The Commission is also working on a mechanization field day in early to mid-August.

## **11. Other Organization Reports:**

CWEF – no additional information.

LDGGA – Brandon Sywassink updated the board on recent LDGGA activities including the annual Kris Gutierrez blood drive on July 16 and the annual Harvest Safety Day in late July. She provided a quick update on new indoor heat regulations.

SJCFB – no report

Lodi Grape Festival – no report

CAWG – no report

12. The board went into closed session at 3:50 regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, or dismissal of an employee pursuant to California Government Code Section 11126(a). The board returned from closed session at 4:15. Chair Olagarary noted that the board was happy with the direction of the Commission and the Executive Director. A 5% raise was approved.

13. **Public Comment** – No comment

14. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings** – None

15. The next meeting was set for August 6, 2024 at Noon.

16. The meeting adjourned at 2:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Spencer  
On behalf of Jaclyn Stokes  
Secretary