



LODI WINE
WINEGRAPE
COMMISSION

**Lodi Winegrape Commission
Meeting Minutes – FINAL
October 30, 2024**

The Lodi Winegrape Commission met on Wednesday, October 30, 2024

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Diego Olagaray at 12:15PM.
2. Roll was called

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Alternate Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>
Scott Armolea	X		
Pieter A den Hartog	X	Garret Schaefer	EX
Jason Eells	X	Todd Maley	X
Dirk Heuvel	EX		
Farrah Felten Jolley	X	Gerardo Espinosa	X
Joan Kautz	E X	Brett Pieretti	X
Diego Olagaray	X	Mitch Spaletta	
Hadyn Schatz	X	Joe Laranaga	X
Jacylyn Stokes	EX	Colton Machado	X

Also, in attendance was Mirek Wilczek (CDFA Marketing Branch) and Dawson Lewis. Staff present Stuart Spencer and Stephanie Bolton. A quorum was established.

3. On a motion by Eells/Schatz the minutes of the August 6, 2024 meeting was approved (Exhibit A).
4. Public Comment on Items Appearing on the Agenda – None
5. **Financial Report** – Executive Director Spencer updated the board on the Commission budget through September 2024 (Exhibit B). Due to challenging market conditions, unsold grapes and low ball pricing, staff is moving forward were cautiously.
6. **Chairman’s Report** – Chair Olagaray updated the board on his recent activities including the ROI (Return on Investment) workshop. He also updated the board on new committee assignments. Brett Piretti, Finance, Farrah Felten, Grower Marketing, Gerado Espinosa, Winery Marketing, and Daniel Meyers, Lodi Rules. Motion to approve the new committee members. Den Hartog/Schatz – Carried. Additionally, Diego asked each board member to share their thoughts on harvest. The general sentiments were light crop, good quality, most of the uncontracted whites got picked up but at low pricing, while uncontracted reds were left

hanging. Olagaray and Dr. Bolton reviewed the planned LWC Board Retreat planned for November 18-19, 2024 in the Santa Cruz mountains. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

7. **Executive Director's Report** - ED Spencer updated the board on recent Commission activities (Exhibit C) including the Winery BID, the annual audit, staff changes, Delta College, Visit Lodi. He also discussed recent press concerning the wine and grape industry and the California Insider story that continues to generate additional media interest.

8. **Committee Reports:**

Executive Committee – The committee met at 11am today and primarily discussed market conditions and what could be done.

Grower Marketing Committee – The committee met on Monday, October 28. At this point, due to budget concerns, we've held off on contracting for any advertising and instead are leaning in to more public relations and experiential activities. One of the areas we will be pushing is Lodi's accessibility and approachability relative to other regions. Particularly in light of the rising costs of visiting other regions. Just sent out a travel pitch and will be following up with a targeted media send (travel gift package) to select travel writers. Additionally, we have two events in Dallas. Partnering with ZAP for a consumer event and then hosting a media/trade reception at a local restaurant. On the export side, we are hosting the top three individuals from the LCBO (Liquor Control Board of Ontario) for three days in Lodi. Also, working on spring events in Denmark and Poland leading into the ProWein festival in March.

Winery Marketing Committee – The committee is scheduled to meet next week. The committee is working on next year's Lodi Wine & Chocolate event that falls on Valentine's weekend. Ticket sales for the weekend event are scheduled to go on sale this coming Friday. Working on new promotions including new video that we filmed earlier this month. Twelve wineries will be attending the San Diego Wine & Food Festival in early November.

Lodi Rules – The committee met last week. Completed the 2024 certification year without many challenges and it looks like we will not see a decrease in acres. Even in the down market, the program continues to help growers sell their grapes. The Lodi Rules PEAS 2.0 Auto-Calculating Report Template vastly improved grower experience with calculating their PEAS numbers. The template will also make easier to aggregate PEAS numbers on a regional basis. We are working on scheduling the Lodi Rules leadership meeting in December where the Commission meets with Protected Harvest and the auditors to discuss the previous growing season. Additionally, we are beginning to plan for 20th anniversary of the Lodi Rules program in 2025.

Research, Education, Communication – The Research, Education and Communication committee is scheduled to meet November 4. The Lockeford Plant Materials Center will join us to help us create best practices for fallowing to share with growers. Stephanie hosted a successful "Return on Investment Workshop" earlier this month. As part of the workshop, she unveiled a spreadsheet template that would let growers plug in their revenues and expenses

to project a more accurate rate of return. The goal is to help educate growers when making planting, grafting or removal decisions. We continue to focus our activities on grower profitability. We have had many one-on-one conversations with growers and their families helping them navigate these difficult times. Virus Testing Days provide a great opportunity to meet with growers and direct them to resources.

9. Other Organization Reports:

CWEF – no additional information.

LDGGA – no report

SJCFB – no report

Lodi Grape Festival – no report

CAWG – no report

10. **Public Comment** – No comment

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

12. The next meeting will be the Board Retreat, scheduled Monday, November 14 at Noon.

13. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Spencer
On behalf of Pieter den Hartog
Secretary