



WINERY MARKETING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 1, 2025

The Winery Marketing Committee of the Lodi Winegrape Commission met at 9:00am on Wednesday, October 1, at the Lodi Winegrape Commission office, 2545 W. Turner Rd., Lodi, CA.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am.

Roll was called. Committee members Steve Felten (Klinker Brick Winery), Dan Panella (Oak Farm Vineyards), Jorja Lerner (Harney Lane), Jacob Woodworth (Michael David), and Todd Maley (Maley Vineyards) were in attendance, as were guests Steve Carson (Drava Wines), Wes Rhea (Visit Lodi), JP Doucette (Lodi Chamber of Commerce), and Kelly Sheridan (Peltier Winery & Vineyards). Staff Stuart Spencer, Jenny Heitman, and Dr. Stephanie Bolton were also in attendance.

A quorum was established.

Minutes (Exhibit A) from the September 3, 2025, meeting were reviewed and approved. Panella/Lerner – carried.

Public Comments on Items Appearing on the Agenda

No public comments.

Winery Marketing Committee Activities

Winery BID – Lodi Winery Business Improvement District continues to move forward. On September 9, 2025, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors held the first of three hearings regarding the intent to form the district. The next meeting with SJC BOS will be on October 7, 2025, with the final hearing scheduled for November 18, 2025. A dedicated and elected board of directors will oversee and manage BID budget and activities. One seat on the BOD will be reserved for a community representative. Wes Rhea, Visit Lodi, has agreed to fill this position.

No Reservations Campaign – Staff updated the committee on timing and rollout of the initiative. Previously scheduled for October 6, 2025, rollout may be delayed to coincide with exclusive press coverage. Staff presented the committee with the No Reservations Winery Toolkit (Exhibit B), which will provide wineries with messaging, visuals, and social media tools to promote the initiative.



Wine & Chocolate 2026 – Event planning is in motion. Staff are inventorying event supplies (wine glasses, wristbands, and chocolate) and are reviewing a proposal for paid advertising from Hearst Media. The projected ticket sales launch is scheduled for the beginning of November. The committee requested the distribution of a winery toolkit of marketing materials ahead of ticket sales launch.

Educational Programming – Educational programming is pending implementation of the BID.

Technical Tasting Program – Technical tastings are on hold until March 2026.

Roadshows

The committee reviewed the following roadshows under consideration for 2025-2026:

- **San Diego Bay Food + Wine Festival (November 7-9, 2025)** – Final negotiations are underway. Lodi will be sponsoring SDFWF in November. A notice will be sent to interested wineries the week of October 6.
- **Festival of Undiscovered Grapes San Jose (January 31, 2026)** – A proposal for participation at both FOUG SJ and LA is being evaluated.
- **Palm Desert Food & Wine Festival (March 21-22, 2026)** – Participation hinges on budget and interest. Staff will send a survey to Lodi wineries to gauge interest.
- **Festival of Undiscovered Grapes Los Angeles (March 28, 2026)** – A proposal for participation at both FOUG SJ and LA is being evaluated.
- **Dress Up Wine Down Sacramento (May 16, 2026)** – No updates.

FY 2025-2026 Budget Review

The budget through August 2025 (Exhibit C) was reviewed. There were no questions.

Reports from Other LWC Committees

Grower Marketing Committee

Cynthia Smoot Lodi Visit (October 22-25, 2025) – Dallas-based writer and publicist Cynthia Smoot will be visiting Lodi in October. Cynthia contributes regularly to several publications, serving as the Dallas Society Editor and Travel Contributor for *Curated Texan* and *Katy Trail Weekly* newspaper, and Special Contributor for *Park Cities Lifestyle* and *Dallas Hotel* magazines. Cynthia attended the Lodi Wine Travel Media



Reception in Dallas, Texas, in November 2024 where she was exposed to several Lodi brands.

Global Buyers Marketplace (October 26-30, 2025) – California Wines will host its annual Global Buyers Marketplace at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) Copia in Napa Valley at the end of this month. The gathering connects California wineries with international buyers through curated tastings, masterclasses, and networking sessions. The Commission will host a regional tasting table during the Grand Tastings on Monday and Tuesday, October 27 and 28. Stuart Spencer will attend.

The Old Vine Conference (October 31-November 4, 2025) – The 7th edition of the conference coincides with the culmination of California Wines Global Buyers Marketplace. The conference begins in Sonoma and concludes in Lodi on November 3 and 4 with sessions and vineyard tours. An international audience of trade and media is expected to attend the conference.

Research, Education & Communication Committee

PBS Deep Look – Working with Dr. Stephanie Bolton, PBS will be filming a story about how canines and beneficial insects can combat vine mealybugs in vineyards. Deep Look is distributed via YouTube, PBS.org, the PBS App, select PBS stations, and educational platforms, reaching over 2.5 million subscribers and 300 million total views across digital channels.

Winery Mocktail Educational Happy Hour (October 14, 2025) – Dr. Stephanie Bolton and Jake Des Voignes (Heleje Wine Co.) will be co-hosting an educational happy hour for Lodi winery owners and key staff at the Lodi Wine Visitor Center later this month. Attendees will learn how to craft and market non-alcoholic grape-based beverages for their tasting rooms.

Public Comment on Items Not Appearing on the Agenda

Terra Madres Americas Recap (September 26-28, 2025) – Wes Rhea recounted Visit Lodi's experience at this year's Terra Madre Americas, Sacramento – a three-day food, drink, sustainability, and culture festival. As the U.S. edition of the Slow Food movement's flagship Terra Madre Salone del Gusto event, Terra Madre Americas will take place in Sacramento on alternate years for the next 9 years.

Destination Lodi – Annual State of Tourism: Growing Together (October 29, 2025) – Visit Lodi is hosting its annual state of tourism event at Durst Winery later this month. The program features a panel discussion with local leaders Wes Rhea (Visit Lodi), JP Doucette (Lodi Chamber of Commerce), and Stuart Spencer. The event highlights shared progress and the collective effort to elevate Lodi as a premier destination.



Agenda items for Future Meetings

No agenda items were requested to be added to future meetings.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held at 9:00am on Wednesday, November 5.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30am.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Felten, Committee Chair

Questions or requests for further information should be directed Steve Felten (209-333-1845) or Stuart Spencer (209-367-4727).

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