



RED MOUNTAIN AVA ALLIANCE

May 13th, 2021 Meeting Minutes

This meeting took place via Zoom; contact alicia@redmountainava.com for a recording of the meeting.

The meeting began at 8:00 a.m.

Attendance

Tim Hightower, President
Kathy Cortembos, Vice President
Katrina Cantu, Treasurer
April Reddout, Secretary
Alicia Brown, Executive Director
Kayt Mathers, Play Nice Public Relations

Hannah Coulson, Board Member
Maggie Hedges, Board Member
Will Hoppes, Board Member
Even Johansen, Board Member
Mellissa Whittaker, Board Member
Kristin Adams, Member
Noah Fox Reed, Member
Amy Johnson, Member
Cam Matches, Member
Rebekah Zale, Member
Chris Wright, Guest

Proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm: Request for Official Stance

Chris Wright, a member of the opposition group to the proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm, presented updates on the project.

In February, Scout Clean Energy applied for Site Certification through EFSEC, the state of Washington's Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, for the proposed Horse Heaven Wind Farm. They have since withdrawn a request for expedited approval which provides 6-8 additional months of review. Scout Clean Energy is now being asked to provide an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to EFSEC. Members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. Comments will be accepted through June 10.

After hearing more information, the board made the decision to gather more insight and thoughts from members before moving forward. Information on the project will be provided in *The Dirt on Red Mountain* and Alicia will request information on important deadlines, etc.

Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Draft Meeting Minutes from the April meeting were provided to board members prior to the meeting. Tim noted a variety of small corrections and the board approved the minutes with corrections made.

April Financials

Katrina announced that RMAVAA has officially moved to the new accounting firm, Alegria. Alegria is currently working on getting all information transferred to their systems. Financial reports from April will be provided to the board as soon as possible. Alicia will also work to welcome Alegria as our financial partner on social media and *The Dirt on Red Mountain*; additionally, Alicia will make sure the website reflects the change in firms.

Play Nice Public Relations

Kayt reported that Kelsey Hutchinson and herself were able to visit Red Mountain in early May. The trip better equipped Play Nice Public Relations to represent the region and send pitches to media that manage top wine region lists. While here, Kayt also picked up the remaining Alliance wines to be sent to Oregon-based media partners and the first of two photoshoots with Andrea Johnson took place. The first shoot focused on capturing the red-hued cheatgrass on Red Mountain as well as lifestyle photography and additional images of the vineyards during sunrise and sunset.

Kayt also announced that Jeremy Young and Taylor Wilson, contributing editors of the International Wine Report are set to visit Red Mountain the first weekend of June, with appointments set at seven winery members.

Proposed Zoning Law Change

Tim presented a document outlining proposed changes to the Red Mountain Agricultural District (RMAD) that would allow Agricultural Stands on parcels of at least two acres with a conditional use permit.

The board voted unanimously to approve the change to RMAD; Kathy abstained from the vote and the vote passed. Alicia will work with Benton County to determine next steps.

2021 Board Retreat, Board Elections & Upcoming Board Meetings

Alicia reminded the board that the 2021 Board Retreat will take place on Tuesday, July 20. The board determined they'd like to hire a moderator for the Retreat; Alicia will check with her contacts and put together a short-list of possible moderators.

Alicia also provided a timeline for 2021 Elections:

May 17 – Ballots to be sent via BallotBuddy

June 4 – Ballots due

June BOD Meeting – Elections take place
Late June/early July – New board member orientation takes place
July BOD Meeting – New board attends board meetings & election of executive positions take place

Candidates running for positions include:

Maggie Hedges, Domaine Magdalena – Resident on Red Mountain
Karla Riccobuono, Hedges Family Estate – Winery Production more than 15,000 cases
Mandy Walters, The Duckhorn Portfolio – At Large Position #1
Will Hoppes, Fidelitas – At Large Position #2
Kristin Adams, Upchuruch Vineyard – Vineyard Production less than 20 acres (1 year term)

The board determined that they would like to resume meeting in person beginning in June for board meetings and the retreat. Alicia will look into possible venue options and will provide more information soon.

SR 224 Signage Design & Font of Text

Kathy presented the design for SR 224 signage that was approved by the board in 2019, as well as an updated design created by Christophe. After a discussion on difficulties of the current font used in the Alliance's logo, Will motioned to approve moving forward using Christophe's design for SR 224 signage as well as updating the logo to match the font type, Trajan Pro. Maggie seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

Cam offered Aquilini's assistance on creating a brand style guide for future uses.

Committee Updates

Executive: Tim announced that the PPP loan has been deposited into the Alliance account. Additionally, Kathy and Alicia attended the most recent Regional Association Roundtable meeting, hosted by the Washington Wine Commission.

Alicia reported that the Commission is preparing to launch their new website, which offers a variety of opportunities for the Alliance to promote our members and the AVA as a whole. Two new features include the Map My #WAWine interactive map and the Stories site. In Map My #WAWine, Alliances can create suggested wine trips. Alliances will also have the opportunity to include editorial content in the stories portion of the site. Soon, the Commission will be requesting wineries/vineyards update their information. Alicia will reach out to Brett Rawson include info on how to update in *The Dirt on Red Mountain*.

Events & Infrastructure: Maggie reported that the committee met to identify budget items. The committee will be meeting soon to finalize the event plan and would like to schedule a time to discuss the plan for marketing the event with the Digital Strategy Committee.

Kathy announced that foundation work is expected to begin on the new sign on SR 224 in early May. Kathy is also continuing to meet with Department of Transportation and the Washington Wine Institute on a variety of possibilities for statewide AVA signs.

Partnership Development: Katrina reported that Staci West, an individual that previously committed to a 2021 Friends of Red Mountain sponsorship, has decided to forego a sponsorship in order to support the wineries directly instead.

Alicia presented a timeline for the stakeholder feedback survey:

May – committee drafts stakeholder feedback survey

June BOD Mtg – feedback survey is presented for board approval

June 20 – feedback survey included in *The Dirt on Red Mountain*

July 2 – feedback survey due

July BOD Mtg – present survey results

July 20th – make decisions at Board Retreat based on survey results

Media & Trade Relations: Will noted that the committee will be working on creating a trade and media list for Taste Red Mountain.

Alicia announced that the Alliance secured an extension on the deadline to submit Red Mountain AVA wines to Anthony Mueller, through the Washington Wine Commission.

Will also noted that Jeb Dunnuck reviews came out, with quite a few members scoring high; the Digital Strategy Committee will create posts about the reviews.

Digital Strategy: Mellissa reviewed the Digital Strategy report that was included in the board packet. Mellissa also asked for the Executive Committee to include a request for members to like, comment and share Alliance posts, as well as a reminder on the top hashtags to include in posts.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.