



RED MOUNTAIN
AVA ALLIANCE

Board Meeting Minutes November 11th, 2021

1. Call to Order at 8:02am
2. Attendance & Introductions
 - a. Directors & Staff present:
 - i. Kristin Adams
 - ii. Alicia Brown
 - iii. Maggie Hedges
 - iv. Tim Hightower
 - v. Will Hoppes
 - vi. Even Johansen
 - vii. Karla Riccobuono
 - viii. Mandy Walters
 - ix. Mellissa Whitaker
 - b. Members & Sponsors present:
 - i. Joyce Casad, Casad Family Vineyard
 - ii. Cam Matches, Aquilini
 - iii. Eli Traverse, Avennia
 - iv. Shelly Traverse, Avennia
 - c. Guests present:
 - i. Kelsey Hutchinson, Play Nice PR
 - ii. Kayt Mathers, Play Nice PR
3. **August Meeting Minutes – approved unanimously.**
4. Financial Report – reviewed by Treasurer, Kristin Adams. The following items were noted:
 - Expenses from the Five Pillars of Red Mountain virtual series are now showing under Events: Fall Virtual Event; a second payment to moderator, Julia Coney is anticipated to show in November
 - Refunds from the Taste Red Mountain event are now showing in Events:

Taste Red Mountain

- Lodging costs from media trips taking place in the summer are now showing under Advertising and Promotion: PR Contract; some of these expenses will be reimbursed by the Washington Wine Commission
- Advertising and Promotion: Digital Advertising is now showing all costs incurred from the spring virtual series
- Annual dues to the Washington Wine Institute now show in Operations: Dues
- Supplies for the Board Retreat are now showing in Operations: Supplies
- All annual insurance has been paid and are showing in Other Types of Expenses: Insurance, Liability and D and O
- The majority of expenses incurred on the SR 224 sign are now showing under Infrastructure Investments; SR 224 – east side of AVA sign; some small expenses including solar lights are still expected
- The Alliance had difficulty working with Alegria during this last quarter; Kristin and Alicia will be meeting with Brian Newhouse from Alegria to address concerns and an update will be provided in December

5. Digital Report – reviewed by Mellissa Whitaker. The board noted the large increase in reach on Facebook, mainly due to the Five Pillars of Red Mountain virtual series.

6. Ongoing Business

- a. Events Update – Alicia announced that the Alliance hosted a Red Mountain AVA tasting with the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) on Wednesday, October 20. The event was an opportunity provided by the Washington Wine Commission and allowed Alliance members to reach eleven Canadian wine buyers in attendance. Six member wineries participated including Aquilini, Domaine Magdalena, Hedges Family Estate, Kiona Vineyards and Winery, Muret-Gaston Wines and Palencia Wine Company. This event was for wineries with representation in Western Canada and those interested in setting up representation. It was noted that events similar will take place in 2023 for the Asian markets.

Alicia updated the board on the Five Pillars of Red Mountain virtual series. Four sessions have taken place with the final session taking place on Tuesday, November 16 at 5pm. Recordings of all previous sessions are available on the Videos tab on the Alliance Facebook page. Approximately 100 attendees registered to attend each event with between 40-60 attendees participating in each session. Alicia reported on positive feedback received from attendees and noted the series has been well-received by the audience. Alicia also noted the importance of hosting test sessions with panelists and the moderator prior to each session.

Alicia announced the first member social of 2022 will take place at Pacific Rim Winery on Thursday, February 24 at 4:30-6pm. A save the date will be included in *The Dirt on Red Mountain* and members will be invited to RSVP in January.

Alicia reported that the Events & Infrastructure Committee is recommending updates to the 2022 event calendar to have one event on the west side rather than two and change the dates of the local Taste Red Mountain to the weekend of June

10-12. After discussion, the board approved the proposed dates for the local Taste Red Mountain and hosting a one-day event in Woodinville on Sunday, March 27. The board recommended finding another venue in Woodinville to host larger consumer events due to parking limitations at Purple Café and Wine Bar; Will recommended The Winemakers Reserve. The board noted that Purple could potentially be used as a secondary event space for smaller trade events in order to not lose the deposit paid in 2020.

Alicia confirmed the board dinner will take place on Thursday, December 9 at 5:30pm at Fat Olives Restaurant & Catering. Alicia asked the board to notify her of plans to attend.

- b. Infrastructure Update – Alicia reported that fabrication of the I-82 visitor signs are one to two weeks out. The signs will go to the installers following fabrication; Alicia is awaiting an estimated date of installation from the Department of Transportation. Alicia also reported that the SR 224 sign is nearly complete. Aquilini is putting a water line near the new sign; final touches will not be made until the water line is done. Following this, solar lights will be installed; in the spring, native plants will be hydroseeded around the sign.

Alicia announced that following the August board meeting, the Executive Committee drafted a letter of support of an amendment application on the Red Mountain Agricultural District (RMAD) Ordinance to allow agricultural stands on parcels of at least two acres or more with a conditional use permit.

- c. Updates from Play Nice Public Relations – Kayt reported that following the decision to postpone the 2021 Taste Red Mountain event, several media opportunities arose including a tour with Joe Micaleff and a resulting article on Forbes as well as a sample delivery to Stephanie Forrer, digital content creator. Additionally, Play Nice PR was able to secure Alder Yarrow, wine critic for JancisRobinson.com and founder of well-known wine blog Vinography, for a media tour to take place on November 14-18.

Kayt also reported that work has started on the 2022 Media Familiarization Tour to take place the week of May 16th. Kayt is starting to work with media interested in attending and is looking to secure travel plans for five top media.

Kelsey reported on the digital strategy for Five Pillars of Red Mountain. Kelsey noted a narrowed audience scope to 21-65 year olds in specific locations. Ads ran on Facebook and Instagram for 22 days and \$346.93 has been spent, resulting in 36,205 unique reaches and 859 link clicks.

- d. Members-only webpage – Alicia reported that the Member Resources page is now available at redmountainava.com/member-resources. The page includes the 2021 Organizational Information & Partner Benefits Package, a copy of the Red Mountain AVA Alliance Bylaws, a printable AVA map, the link to the password protected images gallery and Board Meeting agendas and minutes. Information on the Members Resources page will be included in the November *The Dirt on Red Mountain*.

7. New Business

- a. Vacant Board Position – **Maggie Hedges motioned for Jen Porter, Guest Services Manager at Col Solare to fill the vacant board position Winery Production between 5,000 and 15,000 cases. Kristin Adams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**
- b. Membership/Sponsorship – Alicia announced that thanks to the board unanimously approving quarterly pro-rated membership dues with a commitment for the following year at 100% dues, three new members have joined the Alliance including Avennia, Palencia Wine Company and WeatherEye Vineyard. Dues will show in the November financial statements.

Alicia reported that she has started to reach out to 2021 sponsors for renewals. Thus far, five sponsors have renewed their sponsorships for 2022 including
Friends of Red Mountain – Gates Investments
Sustaining – Port of Kennewick and The Lodge at Columbia Point
Leadership – Northwest Farm Credit Services and Trysk Print Solutions

Alicia noted that some board members have discussed extending a complimentary Friends of Red Mountain sponsorship for Craig & Stacy Huff's nursery, given the delay in determining next steps to update the RMAD Ordinance. The board recommended reaching out to Benton County to determine where the Huffs were on this prior to holding a vote.

Alicia also reported that while she has started to receive some information to complete the member info grid requested at the Board Retreat, responses slowed due to harvest. Alicia will loop back around with members and complete the grid by the December board meeting at which time the board will begin to discuss future updates on member dues and the board composition.

- c. 2022 Organizational Information & Partner Benefits Package – Alicia presented the document, which was included in board packets. Alicia noted that she worked with Committee Chairs to update projects listed in the document, working off of the 2021 packet and bullet points from the 2021 Board Retreat. Also added to the packet is a calendar of important dates as well as details on membership and sponsorship. The board approved moving forward with the 2022 Package, updating the number of top media contacts at the May 2022 media tour to five and updating the list of board members to include Jen Porter. Alicia will include the updated package on the November *The Dirt on Red Mountain* and will use it to renew members and sponsors, as well as look for additional members and sponsors.

8. Questions/Comments – Tim noted that in addition to the PPP loan received in 2021, Moss Adams has also applied for an Employee Retention Credit. Tim and Kristin noted that the PPP loan and the Employee Retention Credit cannot be used on the same funds. Kristin will look into this and provide more details at the December board meeting.

9. Adjourn – at 9:27am