

OUTER COASTAL PLAIN VINEYARD ASSOCIATION
Quarterly Meeting Minutes – 02-06-25

The quarterly meeting of the OCPVA was held at Bellview Winery on Thursday, February 6th, at 6pm. Board Chairperson Joe Procopio called the meeting to order at 6:20pm, and the minutes of the November 2024 meeting were approved and accepted.

Treasurer's report

Kelly informed the members of the current bank account balances.

Primary Checking: \$2629.96

Money Market Savings: \$47655.54 (*this includes WIC 2024 Grant Funding-\$30000*)

Total: \$50285.50

** Kelly informed the members that the 2025 membership dues notices were emailed last week. Please reach out to me if you have not received it or have any questions**

New Grant Committee WIC 2024:

Smudge Pots: Jim went over the status out of the smudge pot purchases. (6) wineries have purchased (10) pots each. We have (40) pots still available for purchase. Kelly will send out a final email to the general email and Rutgers will also forward the information. to purchase with a deadline of 2/14/25. After that date wineries who have already purchased can purchase additional smudge pot.

Larry will send out a follow up email in April to the wineries participating.

Part 3 of Grant: Events at restaurants (3-5) partners in urban areas where we will pour NJ Wine with a pre-fix menu. We are planning a committee meeting in the next two weeks. If anyone is interested in joining the committee, please let us know.

Legislative Update:

Jim discussed the partnership we have with Devon Perry and the GSWGA and how we are working together and accomplished a lot speaking for the whole state. There we approximately ten bills being introduced that we are unaware of, so we are working to have a voice in the legislation. Many legislators are unaware of the challenges the wine industry faces and OCPVA along with the GSWGA are working to get our issues heard.

Assemblyman Spearman is chair of the Agricultural Committee was very receptive to what we have we have to say.

Resolution: On Farm Wineries/Breweries/Distillery can sell products from other producers on preserved farm winery aspects and sell two commodities. 51% of your production must be from NJ fruit.

Jim spoke and suggested they take off “on farm “, “preserved farm” and “two”. These changes were made and that is how the resolution passed.

Board Elections February 2025

Dante Romanini and Peter Szerdahelyi will serve two more years on the board and Jim Quarella has been voted in for a two-year term. We still have one open board position open, if anyone is interested, please reach out to Kelly or any board member.

Google Analytics:

Kelly discussed the addition of Google Analytics to our website and presented a snapshot of the homepage which shows data pertaining to the amount of hits to specific parts of our website and where geographically searches of our website originated from. There is a great amount of data that can be obtained from this tool, and Kelly will continue to work with our web consultant to learn more about its capabilities. The OCPVA is also looking into enhancing the home page of the website to include quick access to recent news articles, newsletter and upcoming events.

We will continue to update our members on the progress of website enhancements and Google Analytics.

Tiffany Morey, PhD Teacher of Agricultural Science- Buena Regional HS

Interested in finding out about the industry and how she can get her students involved. She teaches biotechnology which is the process of fermentation and food science which is all lab based. If the wine growers come up with ideas Tiffany would be happy to pitch it and incorporate it into their labs. Always looking for practical aspects to prepare graduates for holes in the job market in agriculture. She knows her colleagues would be interested as well as the students. Tiffany is always interested in new ideas to make learning more exciting for her students and tying in to the agricultural community.

Vineland HS Agricultural Program in its 2nd full year. They have a greenhouse and are also looking for ways to get the students more involved.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- a. The WINEMAKERS co-op- Groundwork: a Vineyard Floor Management Summit- March 10-11th
- b. Webinar Eastern Viticulture- February 18th 12-1:30P
- c. NJ Wine Grape Symposium -Grape Expectations – March 19th
- d. Eastern Wine Expo- March 25-27th – Lancaster, PA
(The OCPVA has rented one table (4) at a table. The consensus is one table should be enough) Sending a follow up email to see who is interested in pouring.

OCPVA Branded Products- Sell & Giveaways

Joe discussed having branded products for anyone representing the OCPVA. Ie. Polo, hats etc with our logo. Also, possibly give out to new members. If anyone can recommend any company, please share.

SWAG to give out at meetings and events.

See if the current grant has room to use funds for marketing.

Demo Day:

Discussed incorporating demo day with another event such as a Twilight Meeting. Hemant suggested we survey the members to see what demo topics they are interested in. Demo day venues will also need to be decided.

Jersey Fresh: \$30/year to be part of the program then you can use their materials. Currently, not a push for our industry but the more grape growers and wineries that are a part of it then we are a bigger part of Jersey Fresh. We have a logo “Jersey Wines from Jersey Vines” that has been approved. Jim is contacting them to see how we can use it. (promotional material and social media)

Jim also encourages everyone to be a member of Farm Bureau who is our lobbying arm. They do a lot behind the scenes for us.

Merlot Tasting and Discussion:

This meeting’s tasting and discussion featured Merlot. Thank you to the members who shared their wines and details on the making of their specific Merlot vintage:

Auburn Road Vineyards – 2022

Autumn Lake Winery- 2015

Bellview Winery-2021

William Heritage Winery-2022

Working Dog Winery- 2021 & 2022

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm