

Viticultural and Oenology Committee (VOC)

MINUTES – VOC MEETING

Thursday 11 November 2021

8.35 am

Brands Laira Estate

ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES

Present: Hans Loder (HL), Sally Macleod (SCM), Martin Warper (MW), Ockert Le Roux (OLR)

Apologies:

Minutes: Sally Macleod (SM)

MINUTES OF THE VOC MEETING HELD 19 AUGUST 2021

- The Minutes are also available on the website: <https://coonawarra.org/cgwi/>.

BUSINESS ARISING:

- Welfare Health and Safety**
OLR advised members through the weekly communication newsletter in mid-October of the links for Bushfire plans etc.
- Coonawarra Root stock Trial**
No further involvement by CV???
- External Education and training/Coonawarra Rail Siding Project**
Rail trail construction well under way. OLR met with Peter Weinberg, Pete Balnaves and Wattle Ranges Council on site. Peter Weinberg indicated Castella are keen to do a re-vegetation project of the siding and along the trail and are willing to donate funding towards the project. Brian Haywood senior ecologist at Nature Glenelg Trust has good knowledge of species selection etc. for the area. Hans suggested using information from Cate Pahl's PhD re beneficial insects along the railway thoroughfare of which there were many identified. Also, Mary Retallack has all the necessary information re plant species for the area.
ACTION: HL to send OLR details of Cate's PhD and Mary's tree lists to on send to Brian and Peter Weinberg.
- Weather Stations**
Weather data from the weather station at Rymill (northern end of Coonawarra) and 3 Mile Lane (southern end) now available for STEM project which has been given the go ahead by the high school. Martin agreed to take on the communication between VOC and Tim going forward.
ACTION: Martin to contact Tim Powell re progress in the transfer of data to Bushlinks.
- Smoke taint**
This is no longer a VOC project as has been transferred to LCWIC. Limestone Coast will be the first area outside Victoria to have access to the smoke sensors. There will be six sensors spread across the area, one of which will be in Coonawarra.
ACTION: Decide where this is to be located.

PRIORITY PROJECTS:

- Cabernet Characterisation Project**
This project is complete. However, results have not been submitted to individual wine businesses involved in the project.
ACTION: OLR to follow this up with Dimi.

- **Irrigation Optimisation Project (Proximal Sensing Thermography)**
Project nearing completion with the commercialisation of thermographic towers through Athena. No further funding being provided by CV. Going forward, the adoption of this technology will be linked to the berry shrivel project providing ARC funding is allocated – see below. Through the P250 grants program, CV is applying for \$30,000 to fund the purchase of up to 20 towers for member growers. These towers will come with a dashboard that growers can access. The timeline for the purchase and installation of these towers is short as they need to be in place for this year's irrigation season. Adoption of this technology is the key outcome from all the work conducted in this project.
- **Berry Shrivel Project**
All ARC projects need further funding after June 2022. Applications for this funding have been submitted and this project is in a holding pattern until these funds are approved. To further the project, many thousands of dollars are required to fund a PhD student for 4 years. CV have committed \$15,000 to this project over 5 years. Assuming ARC funding is approved, this money is to be used to purchase towers for the three sites in Coonawarra. A tangible outcome relating water deficit information to ethanol levels in berries to predict if berry shrivel will occur is the aim.
- **Coonawarra Biodiversity Enhancement Project:**
Project fully funded with no further input from CV. Landscape Board funded a further 6 growers for the 21/22 season. This round will end in June 2023. CV now has 9 growers involved.
The project is to go national – Mary Retallack has applied for \$250,000 funding to support the national program. CV asked to be involved, and has given verbal support, but will not have any growers signing up as there was no interest. Re-visit after June 2023.
- **Other Projects:**
 1. CSIRO – evaluating canopy size monitoring – sites at Rymill and Katnook. Project completed and results on CSIRO website. Dr Everard Edwards is hoping to have a field day in region to show what the LiDAR technology is capable of – things such as steering guidance and variable rate spraying applications.
 2. ARC (Australian Research Council) funded berry project at Balnaves. Project now closed with results presented by Claire Armstrong at recent ARC workshop in Coonawarra.

ONGOING COMMITMENTS:

- **Water Allocation Plan:** The Primary Producers Sustainable Water Working Group met with premier Steven Marshall on 23 October 2021 in Mount Gambier. The Group, of which Coonawarra Vignerons is a member, presented their collaborative approach on water management to the Premier. Led by the federally funded Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub (GTFIH) the group is currently preparing a funding application seeking support to undertake a study to understand the viability of using water from the Confined Aquifer as part of the state-managed Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan. Premier Marshall has since endorsed Innovative Groundwater Solutions EOI to the Future Drought Fund. This is a very positive step and has the potential to transform water policy.
- **VOC sponsorship – Endeavour drinks.**
No movement
- **Coonawarra Cabernet Symposium**
Delayed until 2023. Ulrich preparing submission for Wine Australia to re-allocate the funds (\$28,500) for the following projects: Under-vine weed control trial at Padthaway, Literature review (Pete Bissell), Porter's Smoke Detectors and a series of short videos spruiking the area.
- **Climate change and the effect on weather.**

BOARD UPDATE:

- Three new board members – Emma Bowen, Dan Redman and Steve Raidis elected at AGM.
- CV wine now in storage at National Trust Building in Penola.
- Masterclass and roadshow going ahead in Adelaide in late November.
- Vignerons Cup will be held on January 13th with reduced tent size and in a cocktail format. 600 guest capacity. 36 degrees South will again be major sponsors.

- E commerce platform – “free” liquor license to extend to June 2022. Will re-evaluate at this time to see if continuing with a paid license is viable.
- WGCSA – AGM poorly attended - 12 participants. Concerns raised that no representative on the board from Coonawarra or Limestone Coast.
- SWA – up to individuals to become members as the viability of their business will be dependent on this accreditation going forward. Webinars presented by AWRI are an excellent platform to familiarise growers with the program.
- Coonawarra Celebrations - Golf day and Decadence Event at Raidis both made \$2000 profit.
- Discussion on Eco Vineyard project as tabled above.

FINANCE:

- No discussion

NEW BUSINESS:

- Water sampling for salinity testing - details to be provided to OLR for circulation to members. Will be an ongoing service. Samples need to be taken pre irrigation season then after the season is finished.
- Discussions with Vladimir Jiranek re changes to ARC funding applications – will now be directed through organisations and not individuals and to be signed off by EO or direct employee of the organisation.
- Mesonet weather network to be rolled out over the state. South east will be included. Great opportunity to set up a “mini” network in the this area linking data from Mesonet towers, frost fan sensors and current weather stations – collect all data on a platform such as Pairee. Grants of up to \$20,000 through the Agri Producers Tech Update Program would be suitable for this project.
- VOC needs more members. Hard to understand what the whole CV community needs if there is not broader representation. Lobby for 2-3 more members preferably from non-viticultural background – i.e. wine makers.

Next Meeting: 8.30 am Thursday 24th February 2022 at Brands Laira

Meeting closed at 10.05 pm

Date	THESE MINUTES WERE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING DESCRIBED AND THE CHAIRPERSON OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE WAS DULY AUTHORISED TO SIGN THEM AS SUCH	
	Name	
	Signature	