Special Board Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2026

1:30p

Mike Rennie, President	Yes	Ken Smith, Director	NO.
Bill Wilson, Treasurer	YES	Johnny Leon, Director	Yes
Jeff Carter, Director	Virtual	Leah Ponte, Secretary	Yes
Damian Doffo, Director	Virtual	Joe Wiens, Director	Yes
Phil Baily, Board VP	Yes		

Present TVWA Staff & Guests:

Krista Chaich, Executive Director | Kate Anderson, Operations Manager | Ron Keuhl, Guest| Tricia Keuhl, Guest

CALL TO ORDER:

President M. Rennie called the meeting to order at 1:31p.

ROLL CALL:

K. Anderson completed roll call and verified a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

C. Ponte- stated that he has been here for 42 years and 12 years ago he started working on 2020 plan, one of the things he requested ordinance 348. He took care of business with just Dan Stevenson, Carter, Bill Wilson and the Pontes. In 3 years they had over 100 meetings. There were 3 rules; 75/25 wine produced locally, 75/25 land to houses. Out of those three rules, nobody has been held accountable for breaking zoning, nobody has even checked. There are currently 500-800 illegal Airbnb in wine country and nobody is doing anything about it. We do not have county support and they are not interested in upholding the rules. The EIR cost 1 million dollars with zero value. We as a group have not audited it. C. Ponte questioned if anyone attempted to hire someone to enforce the rules. The only thing we have forced county to do is 75/25 vineyard. He stated that although he appreciates the sentiment, but the result is zero. Why spend time and money to support it. Do not change 348. He requested to find a way to audit 75/25 as not one of the fundamental rules is being respected.

B.Wilson- stated that a legal's opinion is that these codes cannot be enforced.

C. Ponte-stated that if they cannot enforce this than why would anyone agree to this. He asked that before we spend time to improve and expand why are we not working on enforcing the current ordinance? There is no way to enforce anything we are talking about. VTV has had a serious problem within employment. Maybe its time to review if we are doing the best job we can do within our own rules. He feels that nobody is doing great business wise. So maybe the wineries should focus on their business, not on this policy. He followed up saying that he is following the rules, but he still won't sign anything committing to the ordinance. He questioned how many members are following any of the existing rules. He stated that If the 75/25 isn't enforceable, why are we doing this? He said that we have serious marketing problems, we have serious branding problems, we have serious internal problems. We need to do something about this internally. He said that Chuck Washington is a nice guy, but he's not Jeff Stone. He said that Jeff Stone got sewer installed and put 348 through. . Jeff Stone was able to get things done. C. Ponte continued questioning if there is anyone in the county that knows what we are doing in wine country, gives a damn what we are doing in wine country, and is willing to help us?

M.Rennie- thanked C. Ponte and reminded him that his time is up.

R.Steyn-stated that he respects all the time that everyone has spent in wine country. He stated that he has learned a lot. He feels the difference is C. Ponte thinks there isn't a good solution, when there is with the new assessment that we are wanting to change. Bolero is the newest big winery in town, but our assessment revenue has stayed flat. This shows the difference in customer spending. He fears how the county will continue to approve future developments. Ultimately, he stated that only here is only so much more we can add. We can flip the deal on the marketing side, but it's going to continue. Yes, the assessment has gone up, but it's not enough to sustain marketing for the next 5 years. All the wine regions are suffering, so it will cost more. Agriculture preservation is at the top of the list. The ESOP was an attempt to begin the discussion. And if that framework doesn't work and if it boils down to solving things internally first, then maybe we do that. He thinks it is worth our time to continue with the county and preserve agriculture . He stated that he is dealing with a resort right now. They are not invested in this area, they just want to make money. They can easily take a path without involving us and the county would approve it. I'm hoping there is someone that can help. There has to be a solution. I don't think leaving the capacity and development standards should be where they are. He thinks we need to have more conversations.

R. Keuhl- stated that wine country has worked with county on short term rentals. He stated that in his experience being very involved 927.3 what they are struggling with is

enforcement. He stated that it's not enforced even if there's a rave at a house. The equestrian community is now suing the county for lack of enforcement. Every year there's a new staff and we have to train them. They (country code) don't even know their own ordinances. And one of the things that he said he has been pondering is that there are a lot of powerful people in wine country that are not winery owners and he feels that the wine association is missing out in working with them. If all the wineries are sold it will just turn into a bunch of houses and he does not want this to turn into Anaheim. He feels like we all need to work together. People come to wine country to taste wine and then they keep drinking once they go back into the neighborhood. We just need enforcement guys to do their job. He also said that there is a danger if you open 348 you don't know who else is going to chime in and want to mess around with it. You don't know who else wants to fight the fight. It can be nonsense.

C. Ponte- stated that he's (R. Keuhl) 100% right, don't touch 348. He thinks that gathering the troops with marketing is helpful, but it will not change until Chuck Washington is out of office. He does not help us. He feels like we have to find someone that supports wine country. He thinks we need pitchfork and torch type of people. He wants to do an internal audit and then get everyone to be on the same page. It never occurred to him to get the residence involved.

R. Keuhl- stated that they have 100's of friends that will support the cause. When they say this killing our wine country they will listen.

Mr. Rennie- thank you for your comments.

B.Wilson- stated that VTV went and met with C. Washington after our demands and Washington was very pro tourism. If you say it as many time as he did (Washington), maybe he's really not. B. Wilson thinks meeting with him (Washington) and saying there's issues with enforcement. J. Stone and 2020 were going to hold it up, Westfield and Wilson talked to Washington and said that you can do whatever after 2024 (before covid) now that equestrians are suing so they can open it up maybe to do we.

R. Keuhl- stated that their lawsuit is about enforcement on what can or can't do in the area.

B.Wilson-stated that maybe we should jump on the lawsuit. It shouldn't take 3 years to build something that takes 18 months.

C. Ponte- stated that he agreed in principle that adding sq foot is good. The small guys are going to be put out of business. Whomever buys Lorimar is going to go out of business. Europa is going to go out of business in the next 5 years and that winery will be split out.

Large companies can restructure but the small guys will get plowed over. 70% of assessment are from the top 12 wineries.

M. Rennie- stated that when he went to county to even talk about opening it, Juan said we do not want nor can we enforce because it makes the county open it to lawsuits. He said that we can hire a consulting form to do it independently.

R. Steyn- stated that we are all on board and there needs to be a voluntary agreement in place by law the 75% can be challenged. C. Ponte stated that we can't force people to sign it. R.Steyn questioned Ponte won't sign it. C. Ponte stated because he doesn't sign anything.

C. Ponte-stated that this is a local political problem, and we need to get more local people involved.

M. Rennie- stated that if we are all aren't willing to open our books, then it doesn't matter You are supporting a lot of people who don't make their own wine onsite. They need to figure out how to do it without Temecula Valley Management.

R. Steyn- stated that this is good for agriculture. This is Temecula fruit.

C.Ponte-stated that the fundamental way to support wine is for us to lower the cost of the wine so they sell and that supports the wine. He stated that We need to get off the idea that we need to make 75% off of our wine. Doffo started with $100 wine. Sell a few bottles and if you can survive off that for awhile. But $100 wine doesn't build your brand.

L. Ponte- stated that she had a question that we took the time to look at Halter Ranch and put time and money into enforcement, but why don't we look at ourselves. Europa village is having 80-90% of their wine is coming out of the area. She stated that she knows that we have friendships and debts but we have someone on Rancho that is driving that much traffic and they are not abiding we need to have a conversation with them as well.

R. Steyn- said that we are doing okay. We are trying to get them to buy local. It is working but slowly. There is management that wants to move towards Temecula, but you have to have it on your land and wait 5 years. There is a huge imbalance here of what we can buy locally. He stated that if you do what's good for agriculture, it is good for everyone. The goal isn't to make it onsite, but to use Temecula fruit and protect agriculture, then you're contributing.

B.Wilson- stated that he disagrees. He feels that 50% should be made onsite.

L.Ponte- stated that we took a position with Halter and with a Sicilian, but we did not take a position with Europa. The point is we hired legal counsel, we had meetings, but we didn't do that with Europa; or anyone else.

J.Wiens- stated that if there's gray area within the valley, they (the county) aren't going to be willing to go after others. I think the first step is internal audit.

R. Keuhl- stated that the board of supervisors has changed completely over the last few years. Some people just don't get it. It seems like the (county) board now is more intelligent now than was there before.

R. Keuhl-stated that there is a meeting tomorrow talking about 927.3 and hopefully it will be done. Washington is up for reelection. If Halter has a million dollars, maybe we need to come up with our own.

C. Ponte- cautioned to careful who we poke. Halter has endless money and we do not. Right now he's neutralized because he has other problems he's dealing with. The bigger issue is we cannot offer a service that our customers demand. The county has become impossible to deal with and it's at least a 2 year process.

M. Rennie- stated that there's a new winery trying to open but they were told they need to put $100,000 in an advance for a traffic light and we don't even allow traffic lights. It's been 3 years.

C. Ponte-stated that what we really need to see what our competition is around here. Nobody is going to buy around here. There is nothing that is going to appeal to anyone here. The youth are not here. The upper middle class is moving to Nevada, and the older generation are told to drink less. It's not downhill, we need to groom and create new sprouts. Things are going to turn around. If I didn't think it would turn around, I wouldn't be there. Every 17 years it happens. We haven't seen less traffic. We have less purchases. Lower wine and have better sales.

M. Rennie- stated that it sounds like we need to marinate on this.

R. Keuhl- if there's a way that we can help unify all of wine country, we need to get everyone together---all three districts (equestrian, residence and wine).

M. Rennie – stated that we are over 90 minutes. We need to transfer this to our next board meeting. Please continue to talk.

D.Doffo- stated that the association needs to support the wineries that are doing the right thing.

M. Rennie adjourned the meeting at 3:06p.