

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 22, 2024**

A meeting of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) Board was held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 with the following people present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Victor Araiza
Will Carleton
Jason Cole
John Cornell
Quinn Cotter
Maureen Cottingham
Rob Grether
Jessica Hunter
Robert Jackson
Rachael Laenen
Daryn Miller
Peter Shore

ALTERNATES PRESENT

John Berns
Maddie Cook
Jamie Johnson
Ohannes Karaoghlanian
Hayden McIntyre
Jaime Serrato

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALTERNATES ABSENT

None

OFFICIALLY PRESENT

Carolyn Becker, *CL Marketing*
Vickie Carpenter, *USDA*
Ben Kardokus, *CDFA*
Cristie Mathers, *Curious Plot*
Matt Parsons, *Moss Adams*
George Soares, *KSC*
Tim Spann, *Spann Ag*

STAFF PRESENT

April Aymami
Zac Benedict
Dave Cruz
Stacia Kierulff
Ken Melban
Lori Small
Terry Splane
Cristina Wede

GUESTS PRESENT

Jasen Alameda
David Anderson
Tom Antonucci
Elaine Bannatyne
Jennifer Bantle
Kurt Bantle
Laura Bertagnolli
Keith Blanchard
Mike Browne
Wayne Brydon
Mark Buhl
Kasey Cannon
Vickie Carpenter
Danny Cavaletto
Adam Cavazos
Dan Coxe
Michael Craviotto
Paul DeBusschere
Hillary DeCarl
Henry Dominguez
Sal Dominguez
Camille Eaton
Eddie
Enrico
Emiliano Escobedo
Consuelo Fernandez
Nikki Ford
Alejandro Gavito
Gayannah
Alex Gonzalez
Carolyn Granaroli-Frary
John Grether
Daniel Harte
Wolfgang Hoeck
Connor Huser
iPhone
iPhone
Jnaas
Kathi Johnson
Norm Kachuck
-
Karen
Kgrangetto
Maggie Kimball
Danny Klittich
Derek Knobel

GUESTS PRESENT

Kim Kurata
Nick Lahr
J. Link Leavens
Laurie Luschei
John McGuigan
Jim Miller
Terizza Miller
Kaitlin Miroyan
Marji Morrow
Steven Muro
Matt Nelson
Steve Nelson
Doug O'Hara
Gary Ohst
Jeff Onstot
Laura Paden
Mike Perricone
Barbara Pierce
Dan Pinkerton
Susan Pinkerton
Catherine Pinkerton-Keeling
John (Jack) Poe
Matias Purcell
Joanne Robles-Swanson
Steve Roodzant
Connor Rose
Dale Sanders
John Schaap
Matt Schraut
James Shafer
Andy Sheaffer
George Soares
Silvia Standke
Chris Tantau
Thuy-Linh
Duane Urquhart
Ben Van Der Kar
Marquis Vawter
Victoria
Gina Widjaja
Tina Wolford
Charley Wolk
1760XXX4724
1714XXX7744
52Kait Nadine

ITEM #1 CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.

Jason Cole, CAC Chairman, called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. with a quorum present.

Introductions – Item 1.b.

April Aymami, CAC Director of Industry Affairs and Operations, announced the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives, CAC Legal Counsel, CAC staff and known guests participating in the meeting. She asked for all other guests to announce themselves and recorded all participants in attendance.

ITEM # 2 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

District 2 grower Dan Coxe from Avocado Growers of California (AGC) commented that CAC should overhaul the CAC Law because it is a different industry today. He provided a written statement of his full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements - Dan Coxe is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.1.

Norm Kachuck commented on the California avocado growing community, American consumer concerns about food sourcing, environmental and worker protections, and the ethical conduct of businesses. He provided a written statement of his full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements - Norm Kachuck is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.2.

MOTION:

The CAC Board of Directors approves setting a three-minute speaking maximum for individuals making public comment.

(Carleton/Grether) MSC (8 Yea/3 Nay)

MOTION 24-2-22-1

District 3 grower John “Jack” Poe commented on U.S. trade policies, practices and regulations including compliance with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). He provided a written statement of his full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements - John “Jack” Poe is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.3.

Matt Nelson from Avocado Growers of California (AGC) commented that the purpose of the AGC organization is to advocate on behalf of the California grower and only the California grower. He provided a written statement of his full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements - Matt Nelson is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.4.

Joanne Robles-Swanson from Avocado Growers of California (AGC) commented that CAC staff's job is to advocate for the California avocado industry, serve the grower as an unbiased fiduciary representative, create initiatives, measurable goals and objectives that tie to grower and industry priorities. She provided a written statement of her full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements - Joanne Robles-Swanson is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.5.

Robert Jackson commented that he supports legislation SB 490 signed into law by Governor Newsom on January 1, 2024. All public universities and schools in the state of California are required to serve only agricultural food products grown domestically unless there is more than a twenty five percent variance in the price being paid for imported foods.

Gary Ohst, grower in Santa Paula commented that HAB fees should be used to fund a program to expand USDA's presence in Mexico and put a system in place so that importers know that the avocados are grown legitimately.

Catherine Pinkerton-Keeling commented in support of the California Avocado Commission and the good work they are doing. She commended the efforts of Ken Melban, CAC vice president of industry affairs and operations, in his efforts to provide support and assistance to growers impacted by the Thomas Fire.

ITEM # 3 CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Cole introduced the consent calendar items and stated that Item 3.a, Approval of November Minutes, was being removed from the consent calendar at the request of Board Alternate John Berns. Mr. Berns requested edits to the November minutes to provide clarification to comments under Insights Driven Business Enhancements – Item 9.c.

With no other comments on the consent calendar items, the following motion was put forward:

MOTION:

The CAC Board of Directors approves Consent Calendar Items 3.b through 3.e as presented.

(Laenen/Cottingham) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 24-2-22-2

The Consent Calendar is included in the February 2024 Board Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B, Items 3.a through 3.e.

ITEM #4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Cole thanked everyone for taking the time to attend this meeting to express their opinions and concerns. He commented that he sees this Board as a new beginning for CAC with a new year and new members. Mr. Cole introduced himself as the new Chairman of Board and himself as a grower. He mentioned that several of the Board members currently seated are multi-generational avocado growers. Mr. Cole also thanked the Board members and alternates for taking time to serve in these volunteer roles.

Mr. Cole commented on reshaping the Commission and its marketing plans. He mentioned tackling grower challenges, such as quickly getting the USDA to reverse fly quarantines, left better conditions for growers for 2024 and beyond but there is a lot more to do. Mr. Cole commented that he plans to continue to do good work with limited resources through identifying and prioritizing the most critical threats to the industry.

Mr. Cole appointed a Governance Committee to work through a list of items and bring recommendations to the Board for potential action. Some of the items to be reviewed are district lines, assessment rate and structure, Marketing Committee function, , Board composition with the packer role, and is the definition of a producer.

Mr. Cole commented he is impressed with the combined knowledge and experience of our Board members, and he is excited to see what can be accomplished this coming year.

Board Member Robert Jackson requested to give an update on the Code of Conduct and Ethics document. Mr. Jackson stated that Ken Melban, vice president of industry affairs and operations, George Soares, CAC's legal counsel, and himself have been working on revisions to the Code of Conduct and Ethics that were adopted at the last meeting. He commented the revised document should be available to present at the next Board meeting.

ITEM #5 CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF HANDLER MEMBER AND ALTERNATE TO FILL EXISTING VACANCIES FOR THE TERMS ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2024 AND OCTOBER 31, 2025

Handler member (term ends 2024) – Item 5.a.

Handler alternate member (term ends 2025) – Item 5.b.

Mr. Cole stated that CAC had solicited nominations for the vacant seats prior to the meeting and received none. He asked for nominations from the floor to fill the vacant Handler member and alternate seats. There were no nominations.

Mr. Cole stated that this would be discussed again at the next meeting.

ITEM #6 TREASURER'S REPORT

Consider Acceptance of 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements – Item 6.a.

Maureen Cottingham, CAC treasurer, reported that CAC's auditing firm, Moss Adams, had completed the audit of the Commission's financial statements for fiscal year ending October 31, 2023. Moss Adams prepared a draft report on those financials for the Board's review, which was included in the February meeting materials.

Matt Parsons, Moss Adams partner, presented the results of the audit prior to the acceptance of 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements. Moss Adams had no findings in the 2022-23 audited CAC financials.

Ms. Cottingham asked the Board to consider acceptance of the 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements.

MOTION:

The CAC Board of Directors moves to accept the 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements as presented.

(Laenen/Jackson) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 24-2-22-3

The 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements are included in the February 2024 Board Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B, Item 6.a.

ITEM #7 OPERATIONS/INDUSTRY AFFAIRS UPDATE

Mr. Melban offered an update on the USDA management review for the period of May 2021 through October 2023. There were a few findings which included missing approval documentation for a few marketing communications and the USDA's request to receive the CAC budget two months in advance of the start of CAC's fiscal year. Overall, it was a clean review.

Mr. Melban commented that he has been successful in meeting with Board members, working his way from the south to the north to hear what the growers are discussing in their districts.

Mr. Melban commented on the fruit fly quarantines this year in the state of California. He stated that the Commission has been successful in getting Hass avocados removed as a host for the Oriental fruit fly and Queensland fruit fly. CAC is still working on getting GEM removed.

Mr. Melban stated that the Commission has received market access funding each year for export promotions and this year CAC was coordinating a reverse trade mission the week of April 17th. Utilizing the grant funds, CAC will host buyers, importers and retailers from South Korea and China in California and coordinate visits with packers and tour groves with the goal of executing agreements for export programs for the current year.

Mr. Melban commented on a letter that was received from the Avocado Growers of California (AGC) involving a senate letter specific to the deforestation in Mexico. The letter includes the effort underway between USDA and Mexico to revise the operational work plan. The Commission has confirmed that the USDA and Mexico are working to revise the operational work plan to incorporate the concerns raised about deforestation and it should be completed by the end of this year.

Rachael Laenen, CAC vice chair, commented that she attended a meeting in January at the Ventura County Farm Bureau discussing the fruit fly quarantine efforts. She noted that Maureen McGuire from the Farm Bureau was quoted by saying "If you are an assessment paying grower of CAC, you have gotten your money's worth by having the fruit fly removed from the quarantine". Ms. Laenen praised Mr. Melban for a job well done on this issue.

ITEM #8 MARKETING

New Creative Campaign and Marketing Strategy – Item 8.a.

Terry Splane, CAC vice president of marketing, commented that it has been a season of change and marketing has adjusted virtually everything the team is doing - advertising agency, public relations, campaign, messaging, strategy, etc. and all of this with 30% less budget.

Cristie Mathers with Curious Plot provided an overview of the 2024 consumer, media, retail, and trade campaigns for the Board.

A comment was made that a PLU sticker in the shape of the State of California needs to be capitalized on, as it is a way for the consumer to visually see where the product is coming from. The Board engaged in discussion with management on the PLU sticker, packer involvement, brand awareness and point of sale. Mr. Splane commented that avocado packaging and development of a packing strategy would be on the agenda for discussion at a future meeting.

Lori Small, CAC marketing manager, discussed the public relations hyperlocal media approach and outreach.

Carolyn Becker, CAC retail marketing director, provided an overview of meetings with nationwide retailers to present the 2024 CAC Promotion Program.

Zac Benedict, CAC marketing director, discussed retail marketing support and retail communications to reach customers with high-impact content and ads to drive purchase intent.

The Value of a Promotion – Item 8.b.

Ms. Becker went through the value of a promotion and CAC Retail Partner California season performance.

IFPA Financial Attainment – Item 8.c.

Mr. Splane commented on CAC's continued involvement with the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) and the proposed investment reduction strategy.

Marketing Committee Meetings – Item 8.d.

Mr. Splane commented that in conjunction with Mr. Cole, the decision had been made to temporarily pause Marketing Committee meetings. A survey was sent out to the Marketing Committee to ascertain the purpose and the value of the committee and meetings. The two main value points that came out of the survey were: 1) What is the forecast for the upcoming season, and 2) the results of marketing activations. Mr. Splane commented that instead, the marketing team will be meeting with the handlers individually to stay connected and will continue reporting on marketing results during Board meetings. Mr. Splane mentioned that while the Annual Meetings were scheduled for April 2024, the marketing team is committed to connecting with growers again in the fall to talk with the growers and gain insight.

Mr. Cole commented that the fall grower meetings will give more transparency on what the Marketing and Industry Affairs programs are doing and collect feedback on what is working, what's not working, and how to improve for the next year.

The Marketing Presentation is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT C.

ITEM #9 REQUEST FROM AVOCADO GROWERS OF CALIFORNIA THAT “CAC PETITION USDA TO ORGANIZE A REFERENDUM FOR THE HASS AVOCADO BOARD ALLOWING ALL HAB ASSESSMENT PAYING MEMBERS TO EXPRESS THEIR COLLECTIVE POSITION.”

Mr. Cole stated that a copy of the letter sent by Avocado Growers of California (AGC) chairman, Dan Coxe, on January 8, 2024, was included in the Board meeting materials. He reminded the public to keep all comments civil and the Board would adhere to the three-minute time period for all public comments.

Sal Dominguez, a grower in Ventura County, commented in support of the Hass Avocado Board program safeguards and how crucial resources are collected, distributed, and invested to build demand and bolster the value of Hass avocados in the United States. He provided a written statement of his full remarks to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements – Sal Dominquez is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT D.1.

District 2 grower Dan Coxe from Avocado Growers of California (AGC) commented that HAB has been a necessary and excellent program to promote avocado consumption in the United States. He commented that the idea behind the referendum is to give the growers a chance to voice their opinion. Mr. Coxe stated it had been twenty-three years with no referendum for the growers to vote on the continuation of the HAB program and CAC has a referendum every five years. He commented that HAB should be evaluated to make sure everything is going the way it is supposed to.

Joanne Robles-Swanson from Avocado Growers of California (AGC) commented that the AGC has misstated the point of the referendum, and they will make sure and correct that. The reason that the AGC is asking for the referendum is that any healthy organization goes through a review period, and it had been twenty-three years for HAB. Things have changed since HAB was established therefore the AGC is asking for an opportunity to invoke a referendum so that the constituents can charter HAB as was originally intended. The intent is not to get rid of HAB.

Elaine Bannatyne commented that she is on the HAB board for the second time, and she wanted it noted that there are five producer members attending the meeting today and the referendum is not the platform for voicing your opinion.

Ben Van Der Kar, grower in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, commented it has been suggested that a referendum of HAB would provide an opportunity for growers to express their collective positions and review the organization's performance. Mr. Van Der Kar commented that a referendum is designed to ascertain whether eligible producers and importers favor suspension, termination, or continuance of the organization. Anyone that wants to shape the direction of HAB can do this through the nomination process, voting for representatives that share their values, board service, and speaking up during public comment periods at HAB Board meetings.

Marquis Vawter submitted a public comment virtually that the referendum is designed to ascertain whether eligible producers and importers favor suspension, termination, or continuance of the Order. He provided a written statement of his full remarks, to be included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment Written Statements – Marquis Vawter is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT D.2.

Duane Urquhart commented that there should be a metric and that metric is the most important measurement of whether both CAC and HAB have been effective for the California avocado growers. Mr. Urquhart also commented that there is confusion about the referendum. HAB procedures for a referendum allow the opportunity to vote to suspend, terminate, or continue it but it also gives the opportunity to modify provisions in the HAB law. This is an opportunity overdue to review the guidelines that are currently in operation for HAB and measure how they are impacting California growers.

Jamie Johnson, CAC Board member alternate and current vice chairman of HAB, commented that if there is a referendum of HAB, it would be confusing and potentially damaging. If HAB went away and the marketing money was no longer paid by the importers, he would be looking for a new business. Mr. Johnson stated that he is strongly against a referendum of HAB.

Rob Grether, CAC board member, responded to Mr. Urquhart's comments regarding the Hass Avocado Promotion, Research and Information Order. The language that pertains to subsequent referendum was interpreted one way by Mr. Urquhart and Mr. Grether interpreted it in a different way. For the benefit of the Board, Mr. Grether requested to read the paragraph out loud: "Section 7805(d)(2) states "Secretary shall conduct a referendum of eligible producers and importers if requested by the Board or a representative group comprising of 30% or more of all producers and importers required to pay assessments under the order as provided in section 7804(h)(1) of this title, subject to the voting requirements of subsection (b) and (c) of this section, to ascertain whether producers and importers favor suspension, termination, or continuance of the order." Mr. Grether commented that this is specific language and limitations of a referendum. A referendum vote was not a question of if HAB was structured the right way, pursuing the right initiatives, or should be modified over time. A referendum vote was clearly an up or down vote and only that.

Mike Brown with Calavo and previous Chairman of Avocados from Mexico and MHAIA commented in support of HAB. He stated that if we abandon HAB, Mexico already has a plan in place for the avocado market in California. The referendum is not a debate, it is an up or down vote.

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John Cornell, CAC Board member commented that this issue has become more complicated than it needs to be. Mr. Cornell stated there were only two primary questions that needed to be answered regarding this issue: 1) is the California Avocado Commission an honorable institution or dishonorable, and 2) do we live in a democracy, or do we live in a state that people don't get to have their voices heard. Mr. Cornell cited Charley Wolk as instrumental in the formation of HAB and that a referendum was done so that the growers could vote on whether they wanted to start HAB. He commented that Mr. Wolk assured California growers that they would always have control of the future of HAB because there would be periodic referendums to give opportunity to vote up or down or suspend the organization. Mr. Cornell asked Mr. Wolk to speak on this issue.

Mr. Wolk commented that the idea of a federal marketing order had been considered for some time, but an increase in offshore fruit was coming in and California was the only organization spending money on promotion. Mr. Wolk stated that at that time, CAC pursued a federal marketing order. He noted that they wrote into the HAB law that CAC would have the authority to call for a referendum of HAB with no time period stated. Because of the reluctance of the California growers, the referendum for HAB was done first to create the organization. Mr. Wolk commented that if HAB has a referendum, those who have a position will have the opportunity to advocate for whatever that position is.

Mr. Grether responded to Mr. Cornell's comment regarding democracy. Mr. Grether stated that the CAC Board had not done anything to not to conform to the HAB Act. The language is clear in allowing growers to call for a referendum should they choose, not on a periodic basis. The word 'periodic' does not appear in the text. There may have been pledges made by Mr. Wolk to growers initially but there is nothing in the HAB law that there should be periodic referendum.

J. Link Leavens, avocado grower commented that he was supportive of Sal Dominguez's letter.

Mr. Cole asked George Soares, CAC legal counsel, to provide the law verbiage regarding the ability for CAC to call a referendum of HAB. Mr. Soares commented that the responsibility that CAC has is to abide by the statute as the statute is written. CAC has the ability to take no action and has the ability to vote for a referendum.

Mr. Jackson commented that he supports HAB but it is difficult to consider to disenfranchise voters because of the fear that they may reach the wrong result.

Mr. Cornell commented that several attendees present for this meeting received the highest vote count during the HAB election process, yet they were not appointed to the HAB Board.

Ohannes Karaoghlanian, CAC Board member alternate, commented that there were Board Members that have a Board seat with both the CAC Board and the HAB Board. Mr. Karaoghlanian asked if these members should be able to vote on this item or if there is there a conflict of interest.

Mr. Cole referred to Mr. Soares for his comments on Mr. Karaoghlanian's question. Mr. Soares asked if it was correct that there are Board Members that sit on both CAC and HAB Boards. It was stated that Will Carleton is the only member that currently sits on both Boards. Mr. Soares asked Mr. Carleton if he feels conflicted on this issue by serving on both Boards. Mr. Carleton stated that he has his own opinion, but it has nothing to do with serving on both Boards. Mr. Soares stated that Mr. Carleton is entitled to vote but this fact needs to be recorded that Mr.

Carleton serves on both the CAC Board and the HAB Board for future reference if anyone has an issue with it.

Mr. Cole then asked if there were any further comments. Hearing none, Mr. Cole stated there is a motion on the floor for the CAC Board of Directors to write a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture requesting a referendum be held of the Hass Avocado Board within the next six months. Mr. Cole clarified that a 'yea' vote means that you are in support of calling for a referendum of HAB and a 'nay' vote means you are not in support.

MOTION:

The CAC Board of Directors moves to write a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture requesting a referendum be held of the Hass Avocado Board within the next six months. (Cornell/Jackson) MSC (2 Yea/9 Nay/1 Abstain) **MOTION 24-2-22-4**

Mr. Soares commented that there were a number of misunderstandings and mischaracterizations in his opinion, regarding this body of law and how it is executed. At some point, the record needs to be clarified relative to the various assertions that have been made.

Mr. Grether commented that the action of the Board today should not only be to vote against the motion to request a referendum. Mr. Grether made a motion to confirm the Board's position and support for the Hass Avocado Board.

MOTION:

Instruct Chairman Cole to write a letter on behalf of the Board of Directors of the California Avocado Commission to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture stating the following:

- ***"In response to a request from some California Avocado growers, the board of directors of the California Avocado Commission has reviewed and considered the merits of requesting the Secretary to conduct a referendum on the Hass Avocado Board (HAB) pursuant to §7805(d)(2) of the Hass Avocado Promotion, Research, and Information Act.***
- ***The Board of Directors of the California Avocado Commission recognizes HAB as a necessary and excellent program and affirms its support for the continuation of the HAB and recommends against conducting a referendum at this time.***

(Grether/Carlton) MSC (9 Yea/1 Nay/1 Abstain)

MOTION 24-2-22-5

The *Request from Avocado Growers of California Public Comments* is included in the February 2024 Board Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B, Items 9.a and 9.b.

ITEM #10 CONSIDER PRC RECOMMENDATION ON POTENTIAL SALINITY RESEARCH FUNDING WITH UC SANTA BARBARA

Dr. Tim Spann, CAC consulting research program coordinator, commented that the Production Research Committee met on February 8th. The meeting had one item on the agenda, to discuss an opportunity that came to the Commission in late December 2023. CAC was contacted by Jesse Landesman because she is applying for a foundation for food and agriculture research fellowship for her PhD at UC Santa Barbara. She has a bachelor's degree from UC Davis in soils and biogeochemistry and has a background and understanding of soils. Ms. Landesman is interested in salinity and as part of her background research, she discovered that avocados are one of the most salt sensitive crops.

As part of the fellowship program, she must have an industry sponsor. The industry sponsor provides a portion of her financial requirements to do her PhD as well as providing her with

mentorship to ensure the projects that she will be doing address industry needs. Ms. Landesman needs a letter of support from a potential industry sponsor for her to complete her application for funding for her PhD and she is asking for CAC to be her industry sponsor. The commitment from CAC would be \$32,500 a year for 3 years starting in August of 2024.

Mr. Spann commented this was appealing to PRC because this would be the first time that CAC would have the opportunity to be involved and help direct Ms. Landesman's research and mold her research project into something that would directly benefit the California avocado industry. The PRC voted to recommend for the Board to consider that CAC write a letter of support agreeing to serve as Ms. Landesman's industry sponsor if she is awarded the fellowship. If she is not awarded the fellowship, there is no commitment, financial, mentoring or otherwise, on CAC's behalf.

MOTION:

The CAC Board of Directors moves to support the PRC recommendation for CAC to write a letter of support agreeing to serve as Jesse Landesman's industry sponsor if she is awarded the fellowship.

(Jackson/Araiza) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 24-2-22-6

Mr. Cole commented that while on the topic of PRC, he took the opportunity to introduce the new Chairman of the PRC, Daniel Klittich.

ITEM #11 CONSIDER APPROVAL OF HAB BOLD CANDIDATE SPONSORSHIPS

Mr. Cole provided an overview of the HAB BOLD program, noting that CAC had previously sponsored members.

Ms. Aymami commented that the Hass Avocado Board wants to keep the class size of twelve members. Going into the Board discussion, she wanted to make it clear that even if the Board would like to support four members, HAB may not be able to take all four in order to provide member spots for other countries of origin and this should be considered when choosing candidates.

Mr. Melban commented that in the past there was a policy initially that the Board wanted the participants to be a member or alternate on the CAC Board. There is a current alternate on the CAC Board that is one of the BOLD applicants, John Berns.

John McGuigan, HAB director of industry affairs, commented that there are seven California avocado producers that have applied to the program this year on the list. HAB is looking for CAC to sponsor two or three individuals from the list, maximum.

The Board discussed the decision process for sponsoring candidates from the list that are currently seated Board members or alternates.

A few of the previously sponsored candidates spoke in support of the BOLD program, noting they (and CAC) would have greatly benefited had they gone through the program prior to being a seated Board member. There was support for sponsoring participants if they were interested in serving on the CAC Board in the future, and a consensus that should CAC sponsor participants, that they be matched up with mentors on the CAC Board.

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MOTION:

***The CAC Board of Directors moves to sponsor John Berns, Jamie Shafer and Adam Dominguez as participants in the HAB BOLD program.
(Laenen/Jackson) MSC (10 Yea/1 Abstain)***

MOTION 24-2-22-7

The Consider Approval of HAB BOLD Candidate Sponsorships is included in the February 2024 Board Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B, Item 11.

ADJOURN MEETING

Mr. Cole adjourned the meeting at 1:56 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on June 5, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacia Kierulff, CAC Human Resources Manager

I certify that the above is a true statement of the Minutes of February 22, 2024 approved by the CAC Board of Directors on June 5, 2024.

Daryn Miller, CAC Board Secretary

EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES

EXHIBIT A Opportunity for Public Comment Statements
EXHIBIT B February 2024 Board Packet
EXHIBIT C Marketing Presentation
EXHIBIT D Request from Avocado Growers of California Public Comments
EXHIBIT E February 22, 2024 Board Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary



CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary
To be attached to the Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: <i>California Avocado Commission Regular Board Meeting</i>	Meeting Location: <i>Hybrid In-Person – Oxnard Online - Zoom</i>	Meeting Date: <i>February 22, 2024</i>
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<i>Attendees Who Voted</i>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-1</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-2</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-3</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-4</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-5</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-6</u>	<u>MOTION 24-2-22-7</u>
Jessica Hunter	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Abstain
Robert Jackson	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea	Yea
Victor Araiza	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
John Cornell	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea
Jason Cole	Did Not Vote	Did Not Vote	Did Not Vote	Nay	Did Not Vote	Did Not Vote	Did Not Vote
Rob Grether	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Maureen Cottingham	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Rachael Laenen	Nay	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Daryn Miller	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Will Carleton	Yea	Yea	Yea	Abstain	Yea	Yea	Yea
Peter Shore	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Quinn Cotter	Yea	Yea	Yea	Nay	Yea	Yea	Yea
Outcome	8 Yea 3 Nay	Unanimous	Unanimous	2 Yea 9 Nay 1 Abstain	9 Yea 1 Nay 1 Abstain	Unanimous	10 Yea 1 Abstain