Call to Order
The spring Council meeting of the Indiana Wine Grape Market Development Program was called to order at 10:02 am by Council President, Kim Doty.

Minutes and Financial Reports
Minutes of the April 13, 2015 council meeting and financial information were sent out ahead of the meeting. The minutes were approved as read. Dr. Marshall Martin, Director of the Indiana Wine Grape Program, discussed the current fiscal year financial statement including a review of the excise tax collection from sales of wine and alcohol in general. Wine Grape Program revenue continues to be flat to slightly declining and costs (such as salaries/wages and supplies and expenses) continue to increase, but the program is on track at present to not overspend.

Program Updates and Updates to Old Business
Dr. Bruce Bordelon, Professor of Viticulture gave his viticulture program update to those in attendance. Bruce reviewed his participation with the fall wine and grape and pruning workshops in addition to other field events including sprayer calibration and application talks. Weekly contributions to the online wine grape team newsletter is also a task that he, along with our team members, are working hard at. He also has invested a lot of time working to update the spray guide (2016 Midwest Fruit Pest Management Guide). Bruce’s involvement with this guide extends back to around 1992.

Bruce continues with cultivar evaluations trials at two locations, but has downsized efforts at the Southwest-Purdue Agricultural Center near Vincennes. Due to adverse winter weather, the variety, Traminette, really took a hit up in the northern part of Indiana. Invasive pest monitoring is ongoing as Bruce is working with Dr. Rick Foster in Purdue Entomology. Bruce also worked to nominate Traminette for an outstanding fruit cultivar award from the American Society of Horticultural Science. For 2015, this society gave two awards which included Traminette. A nice accomplishment that happened because some in the Indiana industry wrote letters of support for the nomination. Kim Doty then asked Bruce about who is attending workshops… new winery staff or a mixture of new and established? A lot of new(er) staff attend the workshops and Jill Blume added that they see more attendance and overall contact from new winery staff who have had a visit from the wine grape team.

Dr. Christian Butzke, Professor of Enology, then shared his enology program update. Christian touched again on the team’s monthly newsletter and also the ongoing winery visits – he encourages council members to visit these new wineries that may be in their area. Christian talked about the 2015 Indy International Wine Competition. This past year was the 24th. Christian spoke about the judging process and his effort to try to have one Indiana judge on each panel. Teaching responsibilities with the wine appreciation course continues and Christian appreciates the willingness of those in the industry to serve as guest speakers. 2016 Hort Congress meeting planning is all but completed and wine grape sessions should include several interesting session topics for those planning to attend.
Christian ended his update with a brief discussion about the Vin Sense LLC start-up effort that he is involved in – this is a computer technology-oriented service to assist growers with vineyard or orchard mapping, water availability, harvest decisions, and other applications.

Jill Blume, Enology Specialist, discussed in detail recent winery visits using a state winery map. There are a few small winery start-ups that are focusing on making seasonal wines in modest quantities. Such efforts look, at times, to be more of a hobby-level undertaking. Jill was asked about the number of winery visits the team has made to date - she responded that around 50 visits to date with more planned.

Jeanette Merritt, Marketing Director, began her marketing update with a review of the June 2015 Vintage Festival event. Attendance ended up being around 8,400 which was down from the previous year. That first weekend in June is a busy one for many with high school graduations and other events competing with the Festival. It was still a very good event with the early admission-VIP effort having positive ticket sales. Jeanette has already met with Purdue Conferences in an effort to plan the 2106 Festival. She desires to see the entrance gate set-up modified due to long lines and, at times, many attendees lined up along West Street. Moving pre-paid ticket holders to a different gate area may be something to look at, but that may be problematic if all in a party do not have tickets. Jeanette heard from wineries that participated that wine sales were good with minimal problems or issues.

Jeanette then turned her update to last summer’s Indy International Wine Competition. She noted that Easley Winery won “wine of the year” which generated much local and state-wide interest. A lot of media requests come in following the competition event and that also led to good coverage. The Indiana State Fair included about 17 days of effort – the wine and beer garden went more smoothly this year. A lot of state fair staff does the wine pouring in the garden area, but she along with others wonder if wineries should have more of a presence in the garden. Jeanette and Dr. Bruce Bordelon did met with Ted McKinney, Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), at the state fair and discussion included how the wine grape industry/agritourism can be a part of the ISDA’s developing strategic plan. Jeanette is in her second year of participation in the “Indiana Grown” commission – their charge is to develop marketing strategies to promote Indiana-produced agricultural products. This initiative was officially launched this past spring and some benefits are already being seen. Kroger is looking to feature Indiana grown wines in their stores. Jeanette announced that 3 new wineries are now open… Little Creek Winery in the Evansville area, Peace Water Winery in Carmel, and Iron King Vineyards in South Bend. Peace Water’s wine making operation is in California, but they do plan on also making wine in Indiana. They are recognized as an Indiana Winery as they have an Indiana farm winery permit. These 3 new wineries takes the state winery count up to about 85.

Jeannette finished her report with the announcement of her departure as Marketing Director for the program which began in December of 2004. At that time, there were about 32 wineries in the state and, as noted previously, there are now 85. He last day on the job will be December 18th as she will then become the Marketing/check-off Program Director for Indiana Pork. It was a difficult decision as it was great to work with the wine grape team. Jeanette and her husband are 4th generation hog and grain farmers so this new position fits well her personal and professional interests. Jeanette noted that she will continue to assist with 2016 Vintage Festival planning and is available to the wine grape team to answer questions to help make next year’s Festival a success. Areas for the next marketing person to consider engaging in include the restaurant and agritourism industry in the state and an understanding of implications of a limited budget for promoting the industry. Director Marshall Martin thanked Jeanette for her years of service to the wine grape program, the council, and the entire industry across the state.

New Business

Drs. Bruce Bordelon and Christian Butzke updated the council on the planning efforts for the 2016 Hort Congress meetings which will be held on January 19-21st. A full program has been put together
and has now gone to press. There will be a sweetness session that will focus on a number of issues related to sweet wine production. There will also be a rosé wine session in addition to concurrent sessions on offered Thursday, January 21st. Bruce wondered if a winery landscaping and design session should also be scheduled for this meeting as he feels there is interest in such a presentation.

**Indiana Winery and Vineyard Association (IWVA) Update**

On behalf of the IWVA president, Rick Black, Eric Harris gave an association update which included highlighting successful passage of a bill for wine direct ship to consumers (effective July 1, 2015). 2016 may be a light year of discussion and advocacy efforts with the state legislature. Jim Butler talked about the Indiana Alcohol & Tobacco Commission’s interpretation of excise tax payments, possibly through the state’s online INtax Center. That system is not currently set up for smaller (winery) businesses. The summer IWVA meeting was held at Country Heritage Winery and Vineyard and included special presentations by industry members related to shipping direct to consumers per the new state law. IWVA’s new website is nearly completed and should be more user-friendly. The format and logistics for the IWVA evening banquet was then discussed – it was noted that, like last year, the banquet will feature food stations that offer a grazing-like format for food and drink selection.

Following a working lunch with topical discussion, Purdue agricultural economist Dr. Maria Marshall discussed her efforts to develop a business planning Extension education series tailored to Indiana wineries. She shared an example of some power point information on things to consider when developing a financial and marketing plan for a winery. Dr. Christian Butzke followed with an update on his effort to secure funding via a Purdue AgSEED grant – this internal competitive funding source is aimed at strengthening research and Extension work at the field or community level. Christian is looking at funding for instructional videos on industry-relevant issues.

Discussion then moved towards the future of the marketing/promotion position that Jeanette will soon be vacating. In terms of the workload for the Vintage Festival, Kim Doty wondered if this event should be led by wine grape team staff or another entity like IWVA? Talk ensued about the structure and usage of the winery brochure. Is the current format outdated and/or is the cost for hard copies worth it? Kim Doty then focused Council discussion in the area of the purpose and role of the Council – has such a role changed? Are Council efforts on target given that the number of wineries in the state has grown from 12 in the 1990’s to about 85? This is an issue that will require further thought and input from Council members and the industry as a whole.

Council members ended the meeting with a brief discussion of a date and location for a spring meeting. Council member Kevin Tonne is hopeful that his winery expansion project will be done by early 2016, so he may be able to offer to host the spring 2016 meeting at Tonne Winery. A late March meeting should work. Jerry Fankhauser will follow up with Kevin about the spring meeting being held at Tonne Winery.

At 2:00 pm, there was a motion and second to adjourn the Council meeting.

Prepared by: Jerry Fankhauser