



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 22, 2022
Hilton Garden Inn

Call to order: 8:05 a.m.

Report on posting of agenda: ED Howard announced the agenda was posted on Friday, September 16, 2022, at 5 p.m. at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll call: Mary Pastorini, Zach Hilton, Adam Sanchez, Michael Fulcher, Vic Vanni, Brent Bonino, Luca Rutigliano, Eric Gebhardt, Chantelle Mace, Jeanine Olsen (8:13 a.m.)

Absent: Kurt Michielssen, Mark Turner, Nancy Maciel, Mike Patel, Karine Decker, Don Delorenzo, Dave Peoples, Sarah Lira, Tom Cline

Staff present: Executive Director Jane Howard, Retiring CWC Manager Pam Gimenez, Incoming CWC Manager Susan Childers, and Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Madeline Martin

Guests: Katherine Filice and Jason Raby

Public comment: No public comment.

August 2022 Google Analytics Report, SMP Review, August Marketing Activities & Responses to General Questions-Articulate Solutions

August 2022 Google Analytics, SMP Review, August Marketing Activities - Jason Raby: Website had 68% increase in users over prior year (due to Gilroy Rodeo content). Top traffic sources: Google organic search, Gilroy Gardens website, Direct. Top pages visited: Homepage, Hotels, 33 Things to Do, Gilroy Gardens, Calendar. Ad campaigns submitted: *gmhTODAY*, Fall issue of *Food and Travel Magazine*, and *2023 California Visitors Guide*. Visit Gilroy hosted influencer Jorge Reynaga, who posted a YouTube video in addition to his Instagram posts. Social Media: 10.15% increase in Instagram followers. SMP Update: Currently on track to complete identified goals for 2022.

Responses to General Questions, Katherine Filice:

1. Regarding the modification of the website for ADA accessibility: The topic was studied by the Visit Gilroy BOD in-depth, including receiving legal guidance and researching other organizations in the industry for appropriate practices. All options were considered. Ultimately, due to better usability for the truly disabled and more solid legal protections, it was decided to update the website vs. the option of installing a potentially controversial, although less costly,

plug in. Additionally, the budget covered the conversion of dozens of historical PDF and collateral documents embedded within the website into ADA accessible format. The scope of work and supporting detail are a matter of public record and available in the past meeting minutes.

2. Regarding website bounce rates: Bounce rates are a measure of engagement on a website (based on how long a user is in the site and whether they are active within the website.) This is affected by many dynamics—such as how and where we are directing traffic for a given event, whether the user is on a mobile or desktop device, etc. Industry averages for tourism range 40-80% for bounce rates.

On an annual and then monthly/quarterly monitoring basis, website goals are established and evaluated. The BOD looks at many metrics against the Visit Gilroy baseline (prior years), along with industry reports for determining goals. Visit Gilroy primarily measures success as a “conversion” to our community venues (when a website visitor clicks from the website to a venue, such as a winery's website) and most primarily to hotel websites, as a measure of driving overnight-stays. While bounce rate is important and used as one metric, it is not the key metric for this organization.

We use Google Analytics to measure and track success against our goals and report these out, as well as recommendations for improvements, as a small part of marketing agency contract. Configuring, installing, maintaining, using, measuring, reporting on it, and optimizing on it take a staff member time to do. Articulate Solutions is a Certified Google Partner and have two certified staff who do type of work on behalf of Visit Gilroy daily.

3. Regarding CCPA: The Visit Gilroy organization does not meet the baseline required for cookie notices on a website as the CCPA applies to for-profit businesses that meet any of the three requirements below. It does not apply to non-profits according to the CA Department of Justice (<https://oag.ca.gov/privacy/ccpa>).

The CCPA applies to for-profit businesses that do business in California and meet any of the following (CCPA, Section 1978.140(c)(1).):

- Have a gross annual revenue of over \$25 million;
- Buy, receive, or sell the personal information of 50,000 or more California residents, households, or devices; or
- Derive 50% or more of their annual revenue from selling California residents’ personal information.

4. Regarding website security: The Visit Gilroy website is protected through Cloudflare which is one of the top DNS security providers in the world, with exceptional firewalls and security against threats and DDoS attacks.

5. Visit Gilroy owns all the logins and products for social media accounts and the website.

Consent Calendar: Approval of August 18, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes: Motion to Approve: Vic Vanni, Second: Jeanine Olsen. Approved unanimously. Approval of August 2022 Financial Reports: Motion to Approve: Vic Vanni. Second: Adam Sanchez. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

Introduction of New CWC Manager

Retiring CWC Manager Pam Gimenez introduced incoming CWC Manager Susan Childers, who shared a bit about herself and background in the hospitality industry. Board of directors recognized Ms. Gimenez for her 23 years of employment with the Gilroy Visitors Bureau.

Succession Planning Committee Update

SPC Chair Vic Vanni reported recruiter Michelle Carlen is currently interviewing several candidates. The plan is to have 3-4 candidates for the SPC to interview on October 5th.

GEDP Initiatives Update

BM Zach Hilton shared the City Council approved a 12-month Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with Select Contracts, a Canada-based company, to potentially design and build an adventure park in the Hecker Pass Recreation Gateway surrounding Gilroy Gardens. ED Howard reported Sharks Ice is awaiting the outcome of the Design/Build Charter Amendment listed on the November 8th ballot for approval. Surplus Land Act component of the project is near completion. The City has hired the company that will be leading the work on the Gourmet Alley/Railroad St. project.

New Business

City of Gilroy Lodging Report Q2 2022

ED Howard reviewed the lodging report with the board and commented—based on the data Visit Gilroy receives from STR and review of the previous year lodging report for this quarter— it appears there is an error in the gross rent submitted by Hilton Garden Inn. ED Howard brought this to the attention of Hilton Garden Inn staff, and they are researching the issue. Follow-up by the ED and City of Gilroy staff will be done to ensure the report is corrected if inaccuracies are found.

San Francisco Media Reception-Sept. 22, 2022. Visit Gilroy is a participant and will receive the media list that attends. Ed Howard reported she is not attending in person however will be reaching out to the media contacts and providing them with information on three “stories” relating to Gilroy: dog-friendly activities, the three trails (Santa Clara Valley Wine Trail, Taco Trail, & Road to Garlic), and Gilroy Gardens’ “A Bigger Better BOO!”

Collateral Updates

ED Howard reported the Spice Guides have been edited and another 2500 were printed. In addition, Visit Gilroy rack cards were updated and 15,000 printed for distribution.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director August 2022 Report: ED Howard reported a 10% increase in TOT over prior year. Occupancy rate has increased; ADR is up \$13.00, and RevPAR is up \$20 over prior year.

CWC Gilroy Manager August 2022 Report: CWC Manager Gimenez reported 1,931 walk-ins, \$3,433 in retail sales - 111% of monthly budget and 126% of annual budget. 157 retail sales— Visitors from 33 countries visited the Welcome Center and 963 pieces of collateral were distributed during the month of August.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator August 2022 Report: Madeline Martin reported the blog received 1,044 new users, up 368% over prior year. Top blogs read: Mt. Madonna County Park, Coyote Lake & Harvey Bear Ranch, New Santa Clara Valley Wineries, Parts 1 & 2. Top traffic sources: Google/organic, Facebook referral, Direct, Newsbreak app. Coordinator activities for the month including serving on CWC Gilroy Open House committee and Downtown Halloween Beer Crawl committee. Researched and wrote content for 16 Gilroy wineries for social media posts in September.

Board Member Reports

BM Bonino reported they are opening three pumpkin patch locations this year. Added a location at Battaglia Ranch. Hosting a “Fall Pumpkin Boo-tique” at LJB Farms on Oct. 1-2, with 20 local vendors selling unique handcrafted products.

BM Mace: Wineries of Santa Clara Valley are hosting Vine to Wine event on October 23 at Mountain Winery in Saratoga. Tickets on sale on Eventbrite

BM Zach Hilton: The City has entered a contract with W-Trans to do a parking management plan for downtown. Contract is self-funded. A \$300,000 loan from the City’s general fund will be used to develop this plan over the next year. Working to renew our Bicycle-Friendly Community Award with the League of American Bicyclists and to upgrade it from a bronze to a silver award.

BM Fulcher: Getting ready for “A Bigger Better BOO” at Gilroy Gardens. At 70% of full staffing. PY had 61,000 people attend in October. The September “Mystery Event” on Friday nights has averaged about 1,000 people per night (original target was 1,500.) Many are locals.

BM Lutigliano: CordeValle continues to be busy during the summer season.

BM Olsen: CMAP will be hosting one of the locations for the Film Walk and will be a pouring station for the Downtown Beer Crawl scheduled for October 15th.

BM Gebhardt: Hampton Inn experiencing solid September and October bookings. Weekends: Getting additional overnight stays from Morgan Hill Outdoor Sports Complex events, Renaissance Faire attendees, and Gilroy Gardens visitors. Weekdays: construction workers and many international travelers are the main occupants.

Adjournment: 9:09 a.m.