



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 20, 2022
Hilton Garden Inn

Call to order: 8:06 a.m.

Introductions: Chair Michielssen introduced new CWC Manager Susan Childers and each board member introduced themselves.

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Howard announced the agenda was posted on Friday, October 14, 2022, at 5 p.m. at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll call: Kurt Michielssen, Nancy Maciel, Mary Pastorini, Zach Hilton, Don Delorenzo, Vic Vanni, Dave Peoples, Jeanine Olsen, Sarah Lira, Brent Bonino, Tom Cline, Eric Gebhardt, Chantelle Mace

Absent: Mark Turner, Mike Patel, Adam Sanchez, Michael Fulcher, Luca Rutigliano

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

Guests: Jason Raby – Articulate Solutions

Public comment: No public comment.

September 2022 Google Analytics Report, September Marketing Activities and Digital Influencers' Campaign Summary Report - Articulate Solutions: Jason Raby reported the website had a 14% drop in visitors from August due to the Gilroy Rodeo campaign . Top traffic sources: Google organic search, direct, Gilroy Gardens website. Top pages: Renaissance Faire event page, Visit Gilroy homepage, hotels. Advertising campaigns: Dog Trekker, Certified Folder digital display, Fall Food & Travel Magazine, Yosemite Journal, CCTC Sunset Co-op ad. Digital Influencer report will be provided at the November board meeting. IG: 224% increase in impressions over prior year. Top posts: Satori Cellars and Fortino Winery wine slushies. In September: 17 Gilroy winery posts for California Wine Month reached over 40,000 viewers. Visit Gilroy co-sponsored the promotion of Downtown Halloween Beer Crawl producing over 300,000 impressions online and directly generated event revenue of \$3,579.

Consent calendar: Approval of September 2022 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve: Vic Vanni, Second: Tom Cline. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

GEDP Initiatives Update: ED Howard reported there are no updates at this time. A meeting with the GM of Gilroy Premium Outlets to discuss one of the future GEDP initiatives is planned for the near future.

New Business

Approval of September 2022 financial reports: ED Howard reported the current cash position is strong. Some advertising campaigns have been on hold in preparation for the new executive director to discuss with Articulate Solutions. Motion to approve: Vic Vanni, Second: Eric Gebhardt. Approved unanimously.

Annual tax returns - FYE 6/30/22: Each board member was provided a copy of the 6/30/22 - 990 Form and tax filings. Following discussion - motion to approve: Vic Vanni; Second: Mary Pastorini; Approved unanimously.

Compilation financial report - FYE 6/30/22: Board members discussed the possibility of conducting a compilation report and directed ED Howard to bring back an estimate for this financial report to be completed for November meeting discussion and possible action.

By-laws Proposed Amendment - Restore title of Executive Director: Recommendation to reinstate the title of Executive Director in the Visit Gilroy By-laws. This action was requested to change the current title of President/CEO adopted earlier in 2022 by the board of directors. Motion to approve: Dave Peoples. Second: Vic Vanni. Approved unanimously.

Visit Gilroy Wedding Expo-March 26, 2023: Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator shared that the Wedding Expo is scheduled for Sunday, March 26, 2023, at the Gilroy Lodge on the Hill with the first committee meeting scheduled for early November.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director September 2022 Report: ED Howard reported lodging performance continues to be trending higher than previous year. TOT collected in September was 16% over prior year. Average Daily Rate & RevPAR have also increased over prior year. Unique visitors on our site for hotels is up over prior year. Lodging conversions are lower than prior year. Jason Raby explained due to pent-up demand for wedding bookings in 2021 and Gilroy Gardens significant increase of visitors from farther away staying overnight. Conversion rate is at 23%--still exceptionally good; normal rate for a DMO is 2-3%. ED Howard reported walk-in visitors in Sept. were less than normal for Labor Day weekend due to the extreme heatwave during that period.

CWC Gilroy Manager September 2022 Report: CWC Manager Childers Sept. reported 972 walk-ins, down from 1,105 in September 2021. Retail sales were \$2,114.51 and continue to be at 104% of annual budget. Top 3 Countries who visited the CWC were from Germany, England, and Norway. 779 pieces of collateral distributed in September through leads requesting information and local hotels and businesses. A big thank you to Brent Bonino and LJB Farms for donating pumpkins used for decorating at the California Welcome Center.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Madeline Martin reported on newest blogs, “Cool Cocktails in Gilroy” and “Halloween Happenings in Gilroy. Blog analytics: 770 new users, up 217% from prior year. Top blogs: Halloween Happenings blog, homepage, Mt. Madonna County Park blog, & 7 Hidden Gems in Gilroy Gardens. Top traffic sources: Google/organic, Newsbreak app, direct. Served on Beer Crawl committee and as check-in booth manager at the event. Madeline is also representing Visit Gilroy at the GDBA and WSCV monthly board meetings. New project: a monthly Vendor Meet-n-Greet on Saturdays with one of our local vendors for the purpose of informing individuals about the California Welcome Center and to encourage retail sales.

Board Member Reports

BM Lira: Gilroy Premium Outlets is planning a Halloween event this year. Black Friday weekend shopping plans are in full force. Store updates: Puma has relocated, Adidas expanded, a second Vans store is opening in Building A and a new store, Journeys is opening soon also.

BM Delorenzo: Leagues and local school golf teams are finished for the season at Gilroy Golf Course. Planning a fundraising tournament coming up on Saturday, October 22nd.

BM Peoples: Participating in a dinner on November 1st at Old City Hall Restaurant for the Mayor and Vice Mayor of our sister city, Angra do Heroismo in the Azores Islands. On November 5th, Peoples is leading the historical walking tour at Old St. Mary Cemetery. A lit flagpole has been added to the cemetery in honor of veterans who are buried there.

BM Maciel: The Downtown Halloween Beer Crawl was a success and sold out-500 people in attendance! Next events include Dia de los Muertos on Sunday, October 30th and Downtown Holiday Parade scheduled for Saturday, December 3rd.

BM Mace: WSCV currently has sold 320-350 tickets for the Vine to Wine event scheduled for October 22nd at the The Mountain Winery.

BM Olsen: The Beer Crawl was a success with CMAP experiencing lines of attendees out the door. Tours of the CMAP facility were provided to beer crawl participants. They have stop-motion workshops for kids coming up.

BM Bonino: Finishing up production. Entering slow season soon. The LJB Farms pumpkin patch is doing well, the other two locations are a little slow. The Fall BOO-tique on October 1 & 2 was successful.

BM Hilton: The downtown ad-hoc committee gave their final recommendations to the city council, and the committee is no longer meeting. Two of the most interesting items from the committee are: 1) Pop-up Park will be set up downtown on the lawn by the Gilroy Center for the Arts; 2) \$100,000 was allocated from the general fund for beautification and lighting for downtown.

BM Cline: Announced he is stepping down from the board of the Garlic Festival Association effective October 31, 2022, New president of the GFA is Trevor Van Laar, and he will be the new board member on the Visit Gilroy board of directors.

BM Gebhardt: September and October have been solid months for hotel bookings. Overnight stays were from attendees of the Renaissance Faire and participants in La Crosse and soccer tournaments in Morgan Hill. Current trend is a short-term booking window, within 1-30 days before arrival.

BM Pastorini: Bookings: similar to BM Gebhardt's comments and pleased to hear the Wedding Expo is being held again. The new management company is improving the landscaping and remodeling the pool with plan to be completed by spring or summer of 2023.

Economic Development Corporation Update: Chair Michielssen reported the EDC is still working on their dissolution. Awaiting approval from the attorney general. Plan to move any funds remaining to the Chamber of Commerce to be designated for economic development purposes. Karine Decker has resigned from the City of Gilroy and that position on the Visit Gilroy board of directors will eventually be filled by the new Economic Development representative from the city.

Correspondence: A thank you letter from retired CWC Manager Pam Gimenez was included in the board packet.

Adjournment of regular board of directors meeting was at 9:18 a.m.

Closed session

Closed session began at 9:22 a.m.

- Personnel Matter – Succession Planning Committee Recommendation – Executive Director Employment Offer

Action taken during Closed Session – following board discussion of Succession Planning Committee Recommendation – Motion/Second to offer Frank Johnson the position of Executive Director of Visit Gilroy effective November 2, 2022. Compensation package included annual salary of \$125,000, three weeks annual paid vacation, \$5,000 reimbursement for relocation allowance and health, dental, vision insurance – up to \$500 monthly for employee. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment of closed session at 9:35 am