



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 18, 2023
Hampton Inn & Suites
5975 Travel Park Cir.
Gilroy, CA 95020

Call to order: 8:03 a.m.

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, May 12, 2023, at 5 p.m. at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll call: Kurt Michielssen, Dave Peoples, Vic Vanni, Tom Cline, Chantelle Mace, Luca Rutigliano, Mark Jacobsen, Brent Bonino, Michael Fulcher, Victoria Valencia, Sarah Lira, Eric Gebhardt, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Mike Patel, Don Delorenzo, Jeanine Olsen

Staff: Executive Director Frank Johnson, Welcome Center Manager Susan Childers, Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Madeline Martin

Guest: Jason Raby

Public comment: No public comment.

April 2023 Google Analytics Report and April 2023 Marketing Activities: Website report: 10,424 users, up 24% over PY. Top traffic sources: Google organic, direct, GG website, & Wine & Art Walk ads. Top pages: 33 Things, Garlic Festival, Gilroy Gardens, & Events. Hotel page traffic up a little since March, but still down 56% over PY. Ad campaigns: Wine & Art Walk ad campaign started in mid-April—social media and Google display. Submitted *gmh*TODAY summer issue ad/editorial format. Article about “Childhood Rules,” which is a Visit California ad campaign. Social media: Impressions: 180,000. Engagement: over 11,550 users. IG: Frank’s reels getting lots of views. Most popular post on FB: spring activities—outdoors, PJIFF, & GG Fantastical Flowers. New ad campaign for Garlic City Car Show—social media and Google Display.

Consent Calendar

Approval of April 20, 2023 board meeting minutes and April financial reports: Motion to approve: Dave Peoples, Second: Vic Vanni. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

Strategic Plan Update: ED Johnson reported it will be a good document for the community and for business development by showing how Gilroy is moving forward. It will create a sense of optimism. Latest changes should be done in a few weeks.

Update on Employee Handbook: BM Valencia reported that the original quote for \$2,500 (for each partner—the Chamber and Visit Gilroy) for the employee handbook only included the review, not the re-write. A Chamber board member is reviewing it based on suggestions from attorney Kevin Courtney. Should have an update in a month or so, hoping for it to be done in July. BM Rutigliano offer to share his employee handbook as a guideline.

Update on Audit: Chair Michielssen reported that he received an engagement letter from the firm Chiang & Youngberg for the first review for an estimate of \$5,000-\$7,000. Motion to approve proceeding with the first review for June 30, 2023: Tom Cline, Second: Eric Gebhardt. Approved unanimously.

New Business

New Videos: ED Johnson shared a few of his short videos for promoting the parks/hikes and wineries around Gilroy. In April of 2022, we gained 6 new IG followers; in April 2023, we gained over 400 new IG followers. ED Johnson shared three videos with the board that highlight: Pinnacles, Coyote Lake Harvey Bear, and wineries. He will be focusing on 45-second videos and 7-second videos. ED Johnson also shared a viral video on Gilroy Gardens from an influencer who came to town for the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival and visited the park. At that time, there were over 709,000 likes, 4 million views, and 5,000 comments.

Visit California Regional Tourism Strategic Plan: VCA is working on a \$3-4 million regional tourism strategic plan that would be for each region in California. They would like to include stakeholders, such as restaurants, hotels, attractions, retail, etc., to take part in the study and surveys.

\$3,500 to the GDBA for the Downtown Wine & Art Walk and \$4,000 to the Chamber for the Garlic City Car Show: ED Johnson reported this funding was applied to advertising campaigns managed by Articulate Solutions for these events. ED Johnson also reported that Nancy Maciel will no longer be working for the GDBA. Our board will fill her spot with a representative from the GDBA.

Gilroy Arts Update & Two-Year Agreement with Silicon Valley Creates for an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for funding the “Elevate Gilroy Through the Arts” program: ED Johnson and BM Cline reported that the City of Gilroy gave \$50,000, with \$25,000 each for 2023 and 2024, towards the arts in Gilroy. The funds were meant to be a collaboration with Silicon Valley Creates in funding a new grant program for the arts called “Elevate Gilroy Through the Arts.” Visit Gilroy has been supporting the 3rd Friday Art Walk with Madeline joining their committee.

Nonprofit status: ED Johnson reported that VG received a letter that requested more paperwork to secure our NP status. That has been taken care of and is secure.

Career Day: ED Johnson reported that he joined the Chamber in a Career Day presentation at Mt. Madonna High School.

Staff Reports

California Welcome Center Managers' Meeting and CWC Gilroy Manager April 2023 Report: CWC Managers Meeting in Torrance: Childers reported that on the way to Torrance she visited the CWCs in Salinas, Pismo Beach, Torrance, and Los Angeles. Ours has the most merchandise. VCA is trying new, interactive kiosks in five CWC locations right now. The top trends on social media: reels & carousels. VCA will introduce a new theme in fall that will replace "Dream big." CWC Childers met other CWC managers and compared notes. April 2023 Report: Walk-ins: 1,160. 9.7% increase over PY. Gross sales: \$2,816, up 40% over PY. Top sale items: CA and Gilroy logo items. Visitors: many families on spring break and college visitors. Met 100% of budget for monthly sales, 106% of annual budget. 134 retail sales, 21 were international. 13% increase in international visitors over PY. International visitors: 23 countries. Top countries: China, Germany, & Canada. Collateral distribution: 566 pieces.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Report April 2023 Report: Madeline reported: April blog, "Winery Dogs of the Santa Clara Valley Wine Trail." Blog analytics: 997 new users. 120% increase over PM, up 21% over PY. Top blogs: Winery Dogs, Uvas Canyon Waterfall Loop Trail, PJIFF. Madeline reported she will be managing the check-in booth at the Downtown Gilroy Wine & Art Walk on May 20. This year's event added fine art/artisan vendors, live music, small bites from downtown restaurants, and a family-friendly activity area. Currently on other event planning committees-Halloween Beer Crawl, Holiday Parade, & Garlic City Car Show, and the 3rd Friday Art Walk. Wedding Expo Updates: 2023 budget update: \$1,967 over budget. Survey feedback: appreciated friendly staff, most vendors and guests liked the second, smaller room at the Lodge on the Hill, preference for March as the month, vendors appreciate networking with other vendors.

Board Member Reports

BM Fulcher: Water Oasis just opened on May 13. He and Sandy Le, Director of Revenue, attended a CalTravel Association board meeting and Advocacy Day and were panel speakers for Event & Attractions committee. Discussed how to enhance guests' experience with food offerings. Networked with staff from other attractions and other small DMOs—many are impressed with Visit Gilroy's partnerships with local organizations.

BM Bonino: things are starting to grow. Strawberries slowed by late rain, should be ready by late May, then cherries, apricots, and more. Prices increasing.

BM Jacobsen: Psycho Donuts has signed their lease downtown—will have donuts on one side, pizza on the other. They are a distribution center. Dutch Bros. Coffee has a pre-application on 10th Street in the motorcycle business parking lot.

BM Rutigliano: highly concerned about corporate groups travel market.

BM Van Laar: The GFA is learning how to be a vendor at events. They will be at the Car Show and are hoping to be at the Gilroy Rodeo. Planning a farm-to-table dinner in September.

BM Gebhardt: Sold out on weeknights to workers. Weekends are not as busy yet. Booking window is 1-14 days. Recently been booking Tesla employees for 2-4 days of training at the Gilroy Tesla.

BM Mace: A record number of winery events in May—91. Working on a date for the Mountain Winery.

BM Valencia: May 20: ribbon cutting/grand opening for Settle Down Beer. June 1: The Joint Chiropractic ribbon cutting. June 17: Garlic City Car Show. Hosting a six-week workshop for Spanish-speaking business owners that have been in business at least three years to provide them with business resiliency tools. Workforce development: Mt. Madonna High School: ED Johnson was a speaker, along with representatives from trades companies such as Cline Glass, Tesla, and more. June 15: job shadowing day at Gilroy Gardens for incoming freshmen and they will also earn service hours.

BM Cline: The City Council on May 15 saw a presentation of what Gourmet Alley will look like in 2024.

BM Vanni: said goodbye, as this is his last meeting before he retires from the board.

BM Lira: Preparing for the Memorial Day weekend sidewalk shopping and National Outlet Shopping Day on June 10-11. Over 60 stores have added special sales to a booklet that can be downloaded that weekend from the GPO website. Gift card giveaways, face painters, balloon twisters, and more fun activities. Every holiday weekend will include sidewalk sales. Beck's shoes just opened.

BM Michielssen: EDC still winding down. Continuing to work with the Chamber to transfer things.

ED Johnson pointed out that VCA shared the video by Penny the influencer and his video of the Mummy Mountain Trail.

Adjourned 9:24 a.m.