



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, July 20, 2023  
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:05 a.m.

Announced Madeline Martin's resignation. Introduced Mary Gurries, who has been a part-time Welcome Center employee for over ten years, who is coming aboard Visit Gilroy for additional hours and marketing tasks.

Roll call: Chantelle Mace, Michael Fulcher, Mark Jacobsen, Brent Bonino, Kurt Michielssen, Mike Patel, Eric Gebhardt, Trevor Van Laar, Tom Cline, Don Delorenzo, Victoria Valencia, Sarah Lira (8:12 a.m.)

Absent: Dave Peoples

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, July 14, 2023, at 5 p.m. at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020

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

Guests: Jason Raby, Mary Gurries

June 2023 Google Analytics Report, June Marketing Activities: Website traffic: 8% decrease in users from PY, 4% increase over PM. Top traffic sources: Organic Search, Car Show Google Ads, Direct. Most popular pages: Garlic City Car Show, Homepage, 33 Things to Do, Event Calendar, Garlic Festival, Gilroy Gardens, and Hotels. Hotels page traffic down 65% over PY, Wineries page down 27% over PY, Restaurants page down 8% over PY. Social media: Sent submissions to Visit CA, did monthly posts schedule, lots of interest in the Garlic City Car Show. Car Show ad campaign: Over 10,000 visits to website, 680,000 impressions.

Consent Calendar

Approval of June 18, 2023, board meeting minutes: Motion to approve: Don Delorenzo, Second: Kurt Michielssen. Approved unanimously. Approval of June financial reports: Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Trevor Van Laar. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

Strategic Plan Approval: ED Johnson reported he will create a shorter, four-page summary of the Plan that can be given out to new businesses or people moving to the area.

Motion to approve: Tom Cline, Second: Mark Jacobsen. Approved unanimously.

Report on Lease: The lease with the Gilroy Premium Outlets was finalized in July for a two-year lease, close to the same amount in rent. Does still contain a 30-day notice provision.

New Hires Update: Mary Gurries, a ten-year Welcome Center employee, will be adding hours under Visit Gilroy for additional hours and marketing tasks. Simran was hired in July as another part-time Welcome Center employee.

Audit Update: ED Johnson reported he has uploaded all the required paperwork needed for the first phase of the audit.

## New Business

New Board Members-Discussions and Nominations: Nominees are: Marline Avelar from CordeValle to replace Luca Rutigliano, who resigned from the Board, and Mattie Scariott, Director of the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival and Executive Director of CMAP. Motion to approve Marline Avelar: Victoria, Second: Don Delorenzo. Approved unanimously. Motion to approve Mattie Scariot: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Tom Cline. Approved unanimously. An official resignation in writing will be requested from Jeanine Olsen, formally with CMAP.

Agri-Tourism: Visit Gilroy added a page on the website for Agri-Tourism, which includes a description and contact information for a paid farm tour at Amico Farms in San Martin, based upon appointment. Below this is a list of the local farm stands and markets. The goal is to add more eventually.

New Officers: Updated list of officers on the board: Chair-Eric Gebhardt, Vice Chair-Mark Jacobsen, Trevor Van Laar-Treasurer, Dave Peoples-Secretary, and Past Chair-Kurt Michielssen. At the August board meeting an official item will be listed on the agenda for a motion to approve the officers.

## Staff Reports

Executive Director June 2023 Report: ED Johnson had Chair Gebhardt share that the Hampton Inn & Suites received an award from their hotel group for having the top guest scores and the president of the company will be visiting them soon. ED Johnson also reported that hotel occupancy has been down 5-6% from PY for local hotels, but Gilroy's occupancy has been up 5-6% over PY. This could be due to our lower rates and the many construction workers staying here. Upcoming events: New Ballet San Jose dancers performing at the Third Friday Art Walk (July 21), the Tamal Festival on September 30, a Sidewalk Chalk Festival in fall, the Beer Crawl on October 14, and La Ofrenda Festival/Dia de Los Muertos on October 28. The Visit Gilroy/CWC staff is all completing a sexual harassment training required by the state of California.

CWC Gilroy Manager June 2023 Report and Quarter 2 Report: Monthly report: CWC Manager Childers reported walk-ins-1,604, up 14% over PY. \$4,184 in gross sales, up 30% over PY. At 131% of monthly budget, at 107% of annual budget. 198 retail sales, 29 were international. 175 international guests from 32 countries. Top countries visiting: Mexico, Germany, and Taiwan. Collateral: 1,422. Quarter 2 Report: 4,144 walk-ins. Busiest days: Saturday and Sunday. Up 27% over PY. Retail sales: \$10,039-up 32% over PY. Top vendors: Gilroy logo items, CWC items, and Casa de Fruta.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Report: Madeline reported the monthly e-newsletter highlighted the Car Show and fun summer activities and for Father's Day events, and the article for the

Chamber “Business Focus” highlighted the value of local partnerships and events. Two June blogs: one on local fruit stands and one on horseback trail rides paired with wine tasting. The blogs had 871 new users, up 20% over PY, 1% over PM. Top blogs: Gilroy Fruit Stands, Blog home page, Equestrian Experiences, & Waterfall Loop Trail at Uvas Canyon. Top traffic sources: Google/organic, Direct, Newsbreak app. Madeline reported attending committees for the Car Show, Holiday Parade, and the Third Friday Art Walk, along with the GDBA and WSCV board meetings. Distributed 1,140 pieces of collateral; top brochure distributed was the new summer Gilroy Gardens brochure.

#### Board Member Reports

BM Cline: Attended a meeting that covered more information about the sidewalk vendors and the legalities, and City Council will discuss this again in the first meeting in August. The City Council passed a two-year budget in June. The City will begin doing the prep work for the construction site for two buildings for Sharks Ice in the next year, and street improvements are ongoing.

BM Bonino: The warmer weather has things growing well. Cherries are done and apricots are almost done, corn has started, and tomatoes are a week or two away from being ready. There has been a lot of interest in their sunflowers, which draws people into LJB Farms, which is their goal. Already beginning preparations for three sites this fall for their pumpkin patches.

BM Michielssen: The Gilroy Economic Development Corporation continues its dissolution. The attorney general’s office did not like the transferring of funds to the Chamber because it is not a 501 3C.

BM Valencia: The Chamber has several upcoming events: Monthly mixers return in September. Spice of Life Awards dinner on August 26, tickets are available now. Hired “The Retail Coach” to do an economic development analysis of Gilroy, coming on August 28-29 for a meeting with community stakeholders. Rock the Mock will be November 2-3.

BM Fulcher: The heat brought lots of visitors to Water Oasis. The garlic funnel cake is a recent addition—sharing on social media and website. Halloween event in October. In August-September, Fridays-Saturdays: Gil and Roy’s Slumber Party, which is a backyard-campout style event on Friday nights with s’mores, flashlight activity, etc. Full admission the following day, Saturday, with ticket purchase.

BM Mace: Hired a wine blogger (who normally covers Napa wineries) with 31,000 followers. Will be coming this weekend to meet with 6 women winery workers and post on that. Vine to Wine will be at the Mountain Winery on Sat., November 4. A master sommelier, Evan Goldstein, will be there to lead the VIP tasting. Alex Lucero, a Santa Cruz musician who performs at many local wineries, will be performing.

BM Delorenzo: There have been some large, successful events in June, including the Garlic Festival’s tournament. The Svedal camp group from Morgan Hill had their 65th annual tournament at Gilroy Golf Course (GGC)—longest-standing tournament the course has. BM Delorenzo stepped down from the GGC and will only be operating the Gavilan Golf Course. Jim Torres will take over the GGC. Almost ready to pave next door to the GGC.

BM Lira: Preparing for back-to-school shopping—will include social media posts, ads, special promotions, and an influencer who will be coming. Coldstone Creamery is supposed to open in August. Polo Ralph Lauren is doing a re-design and hoping to open in early September.

BM Van Laar: The Garlic Festival booth at the Car Show was a success. Will be at the Gilroy Rodeo.  
Upcoming farm-to-table dinner in the cherry orchard on August 19.

BM Patel: Reservations picking up since summer. The GF golf tournament helped. Expecting the Rodeo to bring more guests, as well as the Salinas concours car show.

Chair Gebhardt: June numbers solid. Weekdays are still busy with construction workers.

Adjourned: 9:13 a.m.