



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 9, 2023  
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:04 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, November 3, 2023, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Brent Bonino, Chantelle Mace, Don Delorenzo, Eric Gebhardt, Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Mark Jacobsen, Marline Avelar, Michael Fulcher, Mike Patel, Trevor Van Laar, Victoria Valencia, Michele Campbell, Sarah Lira.

Absent- Dave Peoples, Mattie Scariot, Tom Cline.

Staff present: Executive Director Frank Johnson, CWC Manager Susan Childers, and Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator Mary Gurries.

Guest present: Jason Raby

October 2023 Google Analytics Report and October Marketing Activities – Jason Raby: Website users increased 38.51% compared to PY. Ad campaigns: La Ofrenda, Beer Crawl. Most popular pages: Inaugural Dia de los Muertos Event - La Ofrenda Festival, Downtown Beer Crawl Event, Homepage, 33 Things to Do, Event Calendar. Top traffic sources: Google organic, Facebook ads, Direct/Unknown, Google Ads. Device users: 82% mobile, 16% desktop. The hotel Page is down 75% over PY. Submitted a Yosemite Journal Ad- Pinnacles National Park. The Beer Crawl AD campaign ran 1 month prior to the event converted nearly 10,000 clicks to the Visit Gilroy website, and 1,025 clicks to the ticket webpage, and gained nearly 800,000 impressions.

Consent Calendar

Approval of October 19, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes- Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Jane Howard. Approval of October 2023 Financial Reports- Motion to approve: Trevor Van Laar, Second: Don Delorenzo. October Minutes and Financials approved unanimously.

San Jose Mercury News Co-Op Ad Campaign: With a combined budget between the City of Gilroy, the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce, and Visit Gilroy there will be an Ad launching in print and digital form in the San Jose Mercury news. There will be a QR code leading to a landing page, with the opportunity to garner consumer metrics. The first Ad will celebrate new businesses and opportunities.

Visit California Steering Committee: With ED Johnson representing Visit Gilroy, and Jane Howard representing Gilroy Gardens, Gilroy is an engaged part of the committee.

Website update: The website rebuilding committee had a meeting this week and reviewed the RFP and is now ready to be sent to Vendors. The goal is building a new website, re-working pages, content gathering, and possible re-branding.

#### New Business

Christmas Party: Tempo Restaurant and Bar, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6PM (later changed to 5PM).

New Blog: Kelly Barbazette wrote her first Blog that is now on our website, about Gilroy Holiday activities for the Fall and Winter. Another blog is in the works.

Tourism Summit, November 6<sup>th</sup>: Visit Morgan Hill hosted a tourism summit at MOHI winery on Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, it was a great opportunity to talk with city officials, Visit California leaders, and local industry partners and professionals about different tourism assets and health of the industry.

Welcome Center Meeting, November 14-15: ED Johnson will go to the meeting that's held twice a year, this upcoming meeting is in Ukiah, CA.

CCTC Map: Gilroy is renewing their presence on the map, although "Hidden Gem" markers are filled up already.

Staff active shooter training: ED Johnson and Mary Gurries attended the active shooter training offered through the Gilroy Premium Outlets by the regional VP of Security for Simon Security.

No December Meeting: Our next meeting will be in January 2024.

#### Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director September Report - ED Johnson: La Ofrenda Festival was so well done, and well received, the feedback has been positive and is building for next year. The Renaissance Faire has ended, and our social media posts have all had good interaction, with noticeable activity in Gilroy regarding hotel stays, and after-hours downtown activity on Faire days. Vine to Wine, hosted by the Wineries of the Santa Clara Valley at the Mountain Winery, was a very nice event; thank you for the invitations and opportunity to attend and gain some insight regarding the wineries. ED Johnson was a panel speaker for the Tourism Summit giving Gilroy Tourism insight. He delivered a presentation to the afternoon Gilroy Rotary on Visit Gilroy and will be giving another presentation at Gilroy City Hall on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The Veterans Day Ceremony and Parade is coming up on November 11<sup>th</sup> in Downtown Gilroy. He attended a workshop partnership with Visit California and Google, regarding Social Media tools and planning. We have direct contact again with the City of Gilroy, with Katty as our new contact.

CWC Manager's Report - Susan Childers: Monthly Report- Walk-in's for the month of October: 1,241; up 3.5% over PY. October Gross Sales \$3,858.98. We are 116.56% over the monthly budget for sales, and up 129% of our annual budget. Retail sales: 162, with 25 representing international guest sales. International visitors: 175, representing 29 different countries, a 30% increase from Oct. 2022 for international visitors. Top visiting countries: Germany, South Korea, and Mexico. Deliverables: 961 pieces of collateral were distributed for leads and community outreach.

Tourism and Engagement Coordinator September Report - Mary Gurries: Social Media reach numbers are up; Facebook: up 1.7%, Instagram: up 53%, and Paid AD's: up 625% over previous month. We have a new blog writer; her first blog went live towards the end of October. Top Blogs: "Breakfast Hotspots on

Gilroy”, “Gilroy Fruit Stands”, and “Gilroy Garlic, Spice up your life”. Top Blog Traffic Sources: Google, Newsbreakapp.com, and Bing. Updates on the committees and board meeting attended: Holiday Festival and Parade committee, Wineries of Santa Clara Valley Board Meeting, and Gilroy Downtown Business Association board meeting, and the active shooter training at the Gilroy Premium Outlets. Monthly Webinars: The State of the American Traveler - Traveler Segments Edition, and Traveler Survey Findings for October. 910 Pieces of Collateral went out to our hospitality partners, and the San Martin Wings of History Museum is re-added to our distribution list.

#### Board Member Reports

BM Patel – Best Western Plus Forest Park Inn update: Things have slowed down a bit, preparing for winter and holiday months. Most of the hospitality properties are following a similar trend, as far a lower occupancy.

BM Jacobson – Poki Bowl and Restaurants update: No updates to report.

BM Valencia – City of Gilroy, Economic Development Manager update: Starting this new role with the City of Gilroy, will act as liaison between Visit Gilroy and the City of Gilroy.

BM Bonino – LJB Farms update: The harvest season has ended, and although numbers are down from previous years, it was a strong season.

BM Avelar – Cordevalle update: Getting ready for the festive season now. Condé Nast named Cordevalle as the Number 2 Top Resort in Northern California for 2023. They are in the process of adding 8 more pickleball courts, which is very exciting.

BM Howard – Gilroy Chamber of Commerce update: Many opportunities and challenges currently, talking to other regional Chambers about how they re-engage with their communities after the Covid experience. Acting as interim CEO, she will help in the search for a permanent CEO for the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce. A ribbon cutting ceremony at Rebeka’s Childrens Services will be happening tonight for new children’s therapy rooms. The Retail Coach is in Phase Two of their findings, moving to recommendations and action steps, with a presentation at Gilroy City Counsel in January.

BM Mace – Wineries of Santa Clara Valley update: WSCV Vine to Wine event is done for 2023, numbers are still being finalized, their board meeting is later today.

BM Delorenzo – Golf course update: Gavilan Golf Course received a grant of \$10,000 from First Tee; new mats, dividers, signage, and other range upgrades forthcoming and should be done by the new year. At Gilroy Golf Course, a golf simulator was installed inside offering a remote driving range experience of 50 Golf Courses no matter the outside weather. Last week he attended a social gathering for golf hosted at Cinnabar Hills, where golf professionals, general managers, and media reporters garnered “1848 years of service” all in one place.

BM Fulcher – Gilroy Gardens update: Big Boo has ended, setting a new attendance record of over 63,000 people. Looking forward to the New north Pole Nights, the all-new holiday event for Gilroy Gardens, starting November 24.

BM Campbell – Gilroy Downtown Business Association update: The Veterans Day Parade is this Saturday, with a ceremony at the Veterans Hall starting off the festivities. Small Business Saturday is on November

25<sup>th</sup>. The Holiday Festival and Parade is on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Two positions are open for the Gilroy Downtown Business Association, and their newly hired Admin, Bianca, just started this week.

BM Michielssen – Pinnacle Bank and Economic Development Committee update: Continuing the dissolution of the EDC with the City. Looking forward to the final report from The Retail Coach.

BM Van Laar – Gilroy Garlic Festival Association update: The Garlic Festival Association will be in the Veterans Day Parade, and the Holiday Parade.

BM Lira – Gilroy Premium Outlets update: A new store, Dickies, just opened at the outlets in building A. Getting ready for Black Friday, retailers will open at 6AM; Closed for Thanksgiving.

Board Chair Gebhardt – Hampton Inn and Suites and Hotels update: Things remain status quo, as far as occupancy goes. Weekend leisure travel is tapering off for this period. Construction workers are still making up much of the weekday bookings.

Adjourned: 9:03 AM