



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, April 18, 2024  
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:03 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Brent Bonino, Chantelle Mace, Cameron Childers, Dave Peoples, Don Delorenzo, Eric Gebhardt, Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Mark Jacobsen, Marline Avelar, Mattie Scariot, Sarah Lira (8:10), Tom Cline, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Michele Campbell, Mike Patel.

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

Board Advisors and Guests: Jason Raby- Articulate Solutions, Victoria Valencia- City of Gilroy.

March 2024 Google Analytics Report and March Marketing Activities – Jason Raby: Website Traffic: Just over 41% increase compared to prior year, with lots of growth from Organic search, and Gilroy Gardens referrals being up 60% from prior year. The Ad Campaign for the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival also contributed to good web traffic this month. Top pages visited: Homepage, 33 Things to Do, Event Calendar, PJIFF, and Gilroy Garlic Festival. The Restaurant page is up 26%, and the Wineries page is up 7%. Device usage for January: Mobile-65%, Desktop-30%. New window-clings are up in the Gilroy Premium Outlets. An article submitted to Visit California for “Skip-Gen adventures at Gilroy Gardens” will be published. Final result highlights of the Poppy Jasper ads: One print Ad in the Monterey Weekly, and over 200,000 impressions for the Digital Ad, and 1,400 clicks, with over 3.14% click-through rate.

Consent Calendar

Approval of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes- Motion to approve: Mattie Scariot, Second: Mark Jacobsen. Approval of March 2024 Financial Reports- Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Dave Peoples. March 2024 Minutes and Financials approved unanimously.

Old Business

Website and Branding Update: Simple View has been chosen for the Website and Rebranding contract, utilizing their closed-architecture system, and particular DMO history. An email with the full breakdown of cost allocation was sent to the Board Members, and examples of their previous

branding projects can be shared as well. The Rebranding process will require further input from community members. September is the target completion period for the Website and Rebranding. A photoshoot to gather professional video and photos of Mexican food today. Future photoshoots to be scheduled will gather imagery for Hiking, Downtown Gilroy, and Wineries.

Award RFP and Branding to Simple View for \$134,300 plus 10% contingency is \$147,730: Motion to approve the awarding of RFP and Branding to Simple View- First: Trevor Van Laar, Second: Chantelle Mace. Motion approved unanimously.

TBID Budget approval after accountant review: Motion to re-approve the reduction of TBID Budget by 5%, after accountant review- First: Jane Howard, Second: Dave Peoples. Motion approved unanimously.

Co-op with Chamber and City update: The first installment focused on the Beer Scene downtown, the second installment featured Shopping at Gilroy Premium Outlets, thank you BM Lira for working with Simon Premium Outlets to get that approved. The next installment will feature Wineries of Santa Clara Valley.

#### New Business

Report on Photo Library: Over the past year, Visit Gilroy has been compiling a Photo Library with over 40GB of data, in an effort to build our own media source for marketing and other use. In the future, we can explore an option to support library access by the Board and strategic partners.

Sustainability and Ag Tourism Programs: A new voucher will be distributed to the hotels incentivizing sustainable practices during their stay – If guests choose to decline room service for two or more nights, this voucher can be brought to Camino Coffee in downtown Gilroy and redeemed for a cup of premium drip coffee. The goal is a mutually beneficial partnership between Hotels and downtown businesses. Cinnabar Winery is interested in being included as a Gilroy establishment to offer Ag Tours.

New Wraps at the Outlets: Gilroy in a snapshot, the biggest wraps to date are up at the Outlets, with beautiful imagery, info, and a QR code leading to the Visit Gilroy website.

#### Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director March 2024 Report - ED Johnson: A connection has been made with the Michelin chef planning to soon open Petiscos in downtown Gilroy. Currently, we are working with some influencers, and trying a new partnership with a hiking specialist with a large outdoors-focused audience; his hiking video is posted, with wineries, and downtown beer features to follow. The Welcome Center needs a new POS system, thank you BM Jacobsen for the Clover recommendation. It's important to find a system that will help streamline inventory and other operation tasks. Thank you to Heritage Bank for hosting the last Chamber of Commerce Mixer. A new initiative is being worked on between Visit Gilroy and the City of Gilroy to help alleviate parking downtown while promoting downtown visitation during the Gourmet Alley Project with a limited subsidized promotion with Uber.

CWC Gilroy Manager's March 2024 Report - Susan Childers:

The new Gilroy themed socks came in, and sales have been good. Walk-ins were down 7.5% compared to the previous year. March Gross Sales appear to be down compared to prior year because of Wedding Expo event funding. Comparing merchandise sales only, March 2024 figures are 30% greater than 2023 merchandise sales. We are at 102% of the monthly budget, and 115% of the annual budget. March Retail Sales: 166, with 20% from international guests. International visitors: 96 total, representing 19 different countries. The top 3 visiting international countries: Mexico, Canada, and Germany. The new staff at the Welcome Center greatly helps with any language barriers, as certain staff members are multi-lingual. Deliverables: over 7,000 pieces of collateral dispersed in March through Leads as well as the Bay area Trade Show. Quarterly Report: Walk-in's 2,425 visitors, with Sunday's still being the busiest day, followed by Saturday's. Quarterly sales amounted to \$7,301, with our top vendors being the California Welcome Centers items, followed by Gilroy Logo items, and then Casa de Fruta.

Tourism and Engagement Coordinator March 2024 Report - Mary Gurries: First thank you to Articulate Solutions for helping with collateral updates for guides like the Taco Trail and Restaurant Guide during this time of updating resources info for the Kiosk in the Welcome Center. Supplemented the social media calendar with 6 posts Facebook and Instagram, while sharing to Stories and monitoring content. Attended and prepared monthly update reports for board meetings of the Gilroy Downtown Business Association, and the Wineries of Santa Clara Valley. Articles submitted: "Unlocking the Success of Signature Events" - Gilroy Chamber of Commerce Business Focus. All California Welcome Centers Submissions for March were Published; Woman's History Month with Art's Leader Emily McEwan-Upright, Meeting Spaces and Inclusivity at the Neon Exchange, and the Fantastical Flowers and Easter Celebration at Gilroy Gardens. The Know Your Pourer interview with Cinnabar Winery also led to an interest in offering Ag Tours and being added to our webpage. For Behind the Beer, the next feature will be for Bryce at Pour Me. Webinars: Future Partners State of the American Travelers, Travel Sentiments. Blog users are up 45% over prior month. "Organic Social Referral" increased to 101 in March, compared to 29 in February. Top Blogs: "*Moya Art Gallery in Gilroy*", "*Trails Near Gilroy Waterfall Loop*", "*Dine Around the World in Gilroy*", Blog Home Page, and "*Breakfast Hot Spots in Gilroy*". Top Traffic Sources: Google/Organic Search, Direct/No Referral, Email Campaign, and Facebook Referral. For the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show last month, a full debrief report was included in the packet for detailed reference. Thank you to the Gilroy Premium Outlets for supplying tasteful gifts for the raffle box giveaway! The winners have been chosen, and both Gilroy Welcome Center and Gilroy Premium Outlets Raffle Boxes have been mailed to them.

### Board Member Reports

BM Cline: The Gourmet Alley Project is underway, with 2 blocks of west downtown Gilroy under construction, and another community meeting to discuss will be on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 6PM at Council Chambers. Daily project updates have been posted to social media, and weekly updates within the City Newsletter. The State of the City Address will be on April 29<sup>th</sup> at 7PM at Council Chambers. The first look at potential design plans for Sharks Ice Gilroy will be unveiled at the first City Council Meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The Ad Hoc committee is still going through the E&A process with Bay Ecotarium which expires June 13<sup>th</sup>. Gave an update on the sales tax, as well as downtown Gilroy businesses

coming soon. There are 350 public parking spaces, not including street parking, within a 5 minute walk in downtown Gilroy.

BM Jacobsen: Pizza My Heart is coming soon, and the new chicken sandwich place Macacos Spicy Chicken Sandwiches is doing well.

BM Peoples: A TLC clean up day is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> at 7PM and on May 11<sup>th</sup> we will have an add-on tour of Old Sant Mary's Cemetery due to requests. Meet at 10AM in front of Saint Josephs.

BM Lira: Top-a-Lot, soft-serve yogurt will be opening soon next to the Welcome Center in the Gilroy Premium Outlets. Ibizu Collection also will be opening soon, and later on Citizens Equity First Credit Union (CEFCU) will hopefully be opening in building C.

BM Childers: Field trip Natural Science Days kick off on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at Gilroy Gardens, and we'll be having event for Cinco de Mayo, and Mother's Day Weekend. Lakeside Splash will be opening with Premium Cabanas and water experience, open to Premium and VIP members that weekend, and Water Oasis for all, Kicking off Summer water fun. Michael Fulcher went to the Visit California San Francisco Media Reception, pushing the story of the Water experience at Gilroy Gardens. California Grown will be doing a tour of the Gardens on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The PBS program, Empowered, will be at the Gardens shooting content on Memorial Day weekend.

BM Howard: The Chamber has several major events coming up soon; The Legislative Summit at Old city Hall on April 26<sup>th</sup>, The Car Show warm up "Show and Shine" pre-show and combo Chamber Mixer event at Gilroy Gardens on May 16<sup>th</sup>. The Chamber gained 12 new members in March, and the Chamber staff are doing so well, and we work so closely with our partners especially supporting and engaging with the downtown. We are working very closely with the city on an initiative to support the downtown businesses through this time of heavy construction impacting their businesses.

BM Mace: The Wine Auction, at Clos LaChance is on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Thinking ahead for next year, maybe we can figure out a way to have Visit Gilroy as a marketing partner for the auction event. The Vine to Wine event in the Fall is being planned at a new venue for this year, in San Pedro's Square downtown San Jose. Events at some of the wineries will be suffering due to permit issues with the County.

BM Delorenzo: Leagues start up in mid-April, so the Gilroy Golf Course will be playing two times a week, Gavilan will be on Wednesdays. Events are filled up, with Eagle Ridge having three in April and four in May. New Driving Mats will be going into the lower driving range, thanks to the grant from First-T Program. We can finally pour for the new pads, thanks to the recent dry weather. At Cordevalle, BM Marlene and I will attend a "Fireside Chat" with Roger Maltbie, a long-time PGA player, and Mark Soltau who just released his book "Right Place, Right Time". Looking forward to reporting on the conversations had about the book and other stories. Also, recently interviewed for the next Golf Blog being written.

BM Avelar: We have been nominated again for the Conde Naste Readers' Choice Awards, hoping to now beat our #2 spot last year! The aerification of the golf course was completed at the end of March and it's healing nicely; many players have been out enjoying the nice weather. The Pickleball courts are still on track to be completed by August.

BM Bonino: We started harvesting fava beans, artichokes, and some green garlic. We can now look forward to getting things like tomatoes, corn, and pumpkins in the ground.

BM Scariott: The 8-day Poppy Jasper International Film Festival with 74 events, in 4 cities, 18 venues, hundreds of filmmakers and attendees has just come to an end. It was a wonderful year with so many good things said by people. Some filmmakers brought their families and had the opportunity to go to Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park. More tours are being thought of for next year, to give more opportunities to explore the great things in the destinations like wineries and downtown; perhaps working with the Historical Societies to write up a historical background of the cities hosting the festival, since there was such strong interest. The esteemed Susan Feniger attended many of the closing events at the local breweries and restaurants and screened her movie "Forked". Next year, there may be more help available for planning of the Festival.

BM VanLaar: Day on the Ridge will be the first event to kick off this year's event lineup, with an event happening every month until September. We're working on a new "Pasta Feed" event, to be hosted at Gilroy Highschool in July.

BM Michielssen: Economic Development is still alive and winding down. The Sharks Ice idea initially came from the EDC, and Rob Oneto.

Adjourned: 9:26 AM