



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 15, 2024
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:05 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, February 9th, 2024, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Brent Bonino, Cameron Childers, Dave Peoples, Eric Gebhardt, Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Mark Jacobsen, Michele Campbell (8:10), Sarah Lira (8:10), Tom Cline, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Chantelle Mace, Don Delorenzo, Marline Avelar, Mattie Scariot, 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.

January 2024 Google Analytics Report and January Marketing Activities – Jason Raby: Website Traffic: a 1% decrease compared to prior year. Top pages visited: Homepage, 33 Things to Do, Gilroy Garlic Festival, and the Event Calendar. Top traffic sources: Organic/Google search, direct/no referral, CampaignMonitor/email, and Gilroy Gardens navigation link. Hotel page traffic is down 41% over the previous year. The Restaurant page is up 24% and the Wineries page is up 17%. January was California Restaurant month, so that was a big focus. Device usage for January: Mobile-65%, Desktop-32%. No Ads were run in January, besides promo for the Gilroy restaurants. The Ad for GMH Today Magazine that wasn't included in the Winter issue was updated and resubmitted for the Spring issue. Instagram is up 54% and Facebook is up 70% in Impressions compared to last month. The next San Jose Mercury News Co-Op Ad has been approved and will run in this Saturday's Issue, focusing on the Gilroy Premium Outlets.

Consent Calendar

Approval of January 18, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes- Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Dave Peoples. Approval of January 2024 Financial Reports- Motion to approve: Tom Cline, Second: Trevor Van Laar. January 2024 Minutes and Financials approved unanimously.

Old Business

Website and Branding Update: Five RFP's have been received back, and the website committee has discussed the top three submissions. The next step is presentations from the top selected companies.

Co-op with the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Gilroy update: The Co-op Ad Campaign is shared between The City of Gilroy- 60%, and the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce- 20%, and Visit Gilroy- 20%. The First Ad focused on the Breweries and Taprooms revitalizing Downtown Gilroy. The second upcoming segment will focus on the Gilroy Premium Outlets, running on Presidents Day Weekend.

New Business

Victoria Valencia is the new City contact who handles Visit Gilroy's contract payments. She may assist with inquiries regarding bringing new business or expanding in Gilroy, Gilroy events and projects that stimulate the local economy.

Branding Committee: ED Johnson requests Board approval to form a Branding Committee of volunteer members as a focus group dedicated to building the new Visit Gilroy Branding, saving final-decision approval for the full Board. The City of Gilroy and the Chamber of Commerce will both be involved as advising partners.

Vote to approve the forming of a focused Branding Committee- Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Cameron Childers. Approved unanimously.

Volunteers: Tom Cline, Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Frank Johnson.

Inventory Surplus: The Board discussed ways to discount and move older merchandise in the Welcome Center, and free up over \$500 worth of inventory.

Travel Show, Outlook Conference, IPW: Executive Director Frank Johnson will be at the Outlook Conference in Palm Springs in March, with the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara following, and IPW later in May. Invitations to represent alongside Visit Gilroy in the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show have been extended to the wineries, breweries, and Gilroy Gardens. Board Member Cameron Childers will be going to represent Gilroy Gardens in the Bay Area Show, as well as the IPW. For the IPW Conference, meetings are being coordinated.

New Item in Gift Shop: Board Members reviewed various Garlic-themed sock samples supplied by a woman-owned vendor in San Jose, "Spirit Sox USA". The socks can be custom designed with "Gilroy, California" and garlic features.

Vote to approve Spirit Sox USA as a new vendor in the Welcome Center - Motion to approve: Jane Howard, Second: Kurt Michielssen. Approved unanimously.

New Content Providers: We have contracted with a small business to gather professional-quality content for Visit Gilroy to then purchase and use at our own discretion; this is unlike partnering with influencers that retain ownership of any provided content.

Employee Reviews Completed: All reviews have been completed, and the executive team has been updated.

Closed Session: None today. Postponed.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director January 2024 Report - ED Johnson: Regular meetings with various community leaders and partnering organizations are continuous. The search for a professional company

regarding photo and video content for the new website is ongoing, with interviews and finding locations. Recent discussions with Articulate Solutions include promoting some future blogs through email campaigns.

CWC Gilroy Manager's January 2024 Report - Susan Childers: Walk-In's were up 2.5% compared to the previous year. January Gross Sales: \$2,506.00 bringing us to nearly 102% of the monthly budget, and 125% of the annual budget. January Retail Sales: 117, with 9 from international guests. International visitors: 52 total, representing 18 different countries. The top 3 visiting international countries: Mexico, Brazil, and India. Deliverables: 979 pieces of collateral dispersed in January through Leads and distribution to the hotels.

Tourism and Engagement Coordinator January 2024 Report - Mary Gurries: Meetings in January: The Wineries of Santa Clara Valley Board meeting, The Downtown Gilroy Business Association Board meeting, The Heart of Gilroy Festival Committee meetings. Articles: Celebrating 35 years of Sister Cities - Gilroy California and Takko-Machi Japan" Business Focus article for the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce. Submissions to Visit California, and the California Welcome Centers: Places in Gilroy to watch the Superbowl, Valentines Day Events, "All Things Golden" Sunset wine tastings at Moose Mountain, New Golf Simulator Experience, and golf course features for Gilroy Golf Course, Gavilan Golf Course, and Eagle Ridge Golf Course. January projects: Site visits to the 3 golf courses for submission content, two "Know Your Pourer" interviews at WSCV wineries, one "Behind the Beer" interview in Downtown Gilroy. Collateral Distribution: 926 pieces were brought to the hotels and RV parks.

Board Member Reports

Chair Gebhardt: January numbers show no indication of growth. Weather has impacted many events such as construction work and even major golf events affecting other Central Coast hotels.

BM Campbell: The Heart of Gilroy Festival permit process is the focus right now, not much else at the moment.

BM Bonino: Not much is happening in this slow season. Numbers show a relatively flat progression over the last year.

BM Peoples: Work in restoring the Old St. Mary Cemetery continues. The most recent Sister Cities visitors from Takko-Machi Japan were well received with the event at Old City Hall, and itinerary tours the following days. Talks briefly of other Sister Cities of Gilroy, such as Monticelli d'Ongina, Italy.

BM Childers: Gilroy Gardens is gearing up for the 2024 season. Residents' day is March 17th. For Tour and Travel, submissions for the 2024-2025 CCTC Road Trip Magazine. In Non-Profit efforts, Gilroy Gardens just received a grant to elevate the Natural Science Days, updating equipment and curriculums. Upcoming, The Empowered Program will be coming and gathering professionally filmed content in late Spring to early Summer, gathering 7-10 minutes of content at various locations. The footage will be published on PBS on a platform hosted by Meg Ryan.

BM Howard: The Chamber of Commerce just hosted a successful mixer at CordeValle, with 130 attendees. An article for Gilroy LIFE newspaper has been submitted, beginning a new routine of articles for the Chamber of Commerce. Reminder: the monthly breakfasts are on the 4th Wednesday of every month now,

and the ribbon cutting event for Camino Coffee is on February 29th. The Car Show Planning Committee is meeting next Tuesday, The Buzz has been hired for the event planning. The Gilroy Chamber of Commerce, along with Victoria Valencia from the City of Gilroy, and The Retail Coach will have a presence at the ICSC Conference in Monterey March 25-27.

BM Cline: In the early stages of the 536 Project, where future options are being considered. Three current focuses include Sharks Ice, Downtown Gilroy, and the 536 Project.

BM VanLaar: Working to establish finalized dates for their events for the 2024 season.

BM Jacobsen: No report.

BM Michielssen: The dissolution of the EDC continues with the partnership of the Chamber of Commerce.

BM Lira: A new retailer, Ultease Swimwear, is set to open soon.

Adjourned: 9:05 AM