



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 21, 2024
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:05 AM

Chair, Eric Gebhardt, running late. Past Chair, Kurt Michielssen standing in for beginning of meeting.

Report on posting of the agenda: ED Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, March 15th, 2024, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Brent Bonino (8:06), Chantelle Mace, Cameron Childers, Dave Peoples, Don Delorenzo, Eric Gebhardt (8:38), Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Marline Avelar, Mattie Scariot, Michele Campbell (8:10), Sarah Lira (8:10), Tom Cline, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Mark Jacobsen, 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.

February 2024 Google Analytics Report and January Marketing Activities – Jason Raby: Website Traffic: relatively flat with a .2% decrease compared to prior year. Top pages visited: Homepage, 33 Things to Do, Event Calendar, Gilroy Garlic Festival, and Outdoor Adventures. Hotel page traffic is down 66% compared to prior year. The Restaurant page is up, and the Wineries page is down. Device usage for January: Mobile-59%, Desktop-40%. The Ad for GMH Today Magazine that wasn't included in the Winter issue was updated and resubmitted for the Spring issue. New window-clings will be going up in the Gilroy Premium Outlets very soon - the largest yet. Poppy Jasper International Film Festival Ad started this week. Instagram and Facebook numbers have increased compared to prior month. California Welcome Centers published a submission from prior month for Women's History Month.

Consent Calendar

Approval of February 15th, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes and February 2024 Financial Reports - Motion to approve: Don Delorenzo, Second: Dave Peoples. February 2024 Minutes and Financials approved unanimously.

Old Business

Website and Branding Update: we had two interviews yesterday and have one tomorrow. All have a different approach. The committee will watch recorded presentations and decide.

Co-op with the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Gilroy update: Three insertions promoting the Gilroy Premium Outlets ran the last 3 weeks, followed with a LinkedIn post. Data will be available soon and will be reported next month.

New Business

Addition to budget payroll not to exceed \$3,900: Motion to increase payroll amount for part-time staff, and adjust the budget, largely due to inflation and state-of-living costs. Motion to approve: David Peoples, Second: Jane Howard. Approved unanimously.

Tax Return: Received last week, and some names needed correcting.

Travel Show, Outlook Conference, IPW: The Palm Springs Outlook Conference Was three days, giving presentations in breakout groups, with much positive feedback about Gilroy. The head of Visit California was there. Board Member Childers also went to represent Gilroy Gardens. Connected with an influencer that we plan to have visit in the Fall when new branding is hopefully ready.

The Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show was this past weekend was a large success, with a presentation to be proud of, a display showing video clips, some many valuable collateral types for people, and showing people how much there is in Gilroy. Engagement was 50% DMO operations, and 50% public relations, connecting with locals and neighbors unfamiliar with Gilroy. Board Member Childers adds that most guest feedback was outdated, and it was nice to see interest in what is new. Mary talks about the interest in the wineries and Santa Clara Valley Wine Trail, unheard of by many, but not all. Over 4,000 pieces of collateral were dispersed, 1,500 freebie gifts, and 191 new emails to add to our database. Many personal reviews from guests about their experiences at Gilroy businesses.

IPW is a big trade show in May. Appointments and schedules are being made now.

TBID Budget: Reduce the budget by 5%. Gilroy has been averaging within 5% over the past few months, with March and May looking better. Also keep in mind future spending on content for Culinary, Winery, Beer and Outdoors when branding is more final. Motion to approve: Tom Cline, Second: Michele Campbelle

Visit Santa Cruz and possible relationship: Terence Concanon from Visit Santa Cruz County had a lunchtime walk through downtown Gilroy. Opportunities for partnerships in the future are all agreed to be beneficial, and Mary can do a site visit in Santa Cruz to learn from their team.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director March 2024 Report - ED Johnson: We were down 6% compared to last month and getting ready to spend money on content and branding. A possible eco-friendly promo between hotels and local coffee shop, incentivizing guests to have "green practices" during their stay. Sports tourism is becoming increasingly more relevant regarding tourism, with proximity to other sports draws, and Sharks Ice coming the Gilroy in the Future. Victoria Valencia talks about potential partnerships with the San Jose Earthquakes. Just to know, in Monterey 1,000 new hotel rooms will be

built in Monterey. San Benito County may be starting a DMO presence. Saudi Arabia and Dubai is now the biggest competitor to US travel. International travel is expected to grow in the coming year, with many flights reinstated. AI is heavily integrating into search engines, and travel planning. We have a new employee, Olivia, thanks to Susan opening the door even though the door was closed for after-hours.

Chair Eric Gebhardt in at 8:38AM

CWC Gilroy Manager's February 2024 Report - Susan Childers: The new Gilroy themed socks came in, and sales have been good. Walk-ins were up 6.6% compared to the previous year. February Gross Sales were only slightly down, keeping us at 116% of the annual budget. February Retail Sales: 99, with 14 from international guests. International visitors: 102 total, representing 14 different countries. The top 3 visiting international countries: Mexico, China, and Taiwan. Deliverables: 273 pieces of collateral dispersed in February through Leads.

Tourism and Engagement Coordinator February 2024 Report - Mary Gurries: Supplemented the social media calendar with 11 Facebook posts and 9 Instagram Posts. Attended and prepared monthly update reports for board meetings of the Gilroy Downtown Business Association, and the Wineries of Santa Clara Valley. Articles submitted: "Data Driven Decision Making with Transform Your Business" - Gilroy Chamber of Commerce Business Focus. Thank you to Articulate for helping structure submissions for Visit California, and California Welcome Centers, which were picked up. Ongoing Projects: Know Your Pourer and Behind the Beer interviews or ongoing. The Welcome Center Kiosk Project is in data gathering and entry stages for the Kiosk coming in May to the Welcome Center. Attended the Camino Coffee ribbon cutting. Webinars: Future Partners State of the American Travelers, Travel Sentiments. The top Visit Gilroy Blogs are "Gilroy is a Great Place to Say I Do", "Valentines Day Events at Wineries", "Moya Art Gallery in Gilroy", and "Breakfast Hotspots", and "Trails Near Gilroy – Uvas Waterfall Loop". Blog users are down 13% this month.

Board Member Reports

Chair Gebhardt: This weekend has overflow hotel stays due to a conference in San Jose, also the Spring Trials at Syngenta. people in town for the Conventions haven't reached pre-covid amounts yet, so overflow traffic from those sources isn't where it used to be. Morgan Hill Sports Park is coming along with events, and Poppy Jasper International Film Festival will help hotels as well. The Film project recently in San Juan Bautista proved to be beneficial as well.

BM Cline: The City of Gilroy has entered a 120-day term of exclusive negotiations with a company interested in the 536 Project, containing Gilroy Gardens. At 5:30 on April 3rd at City Council Chambers, there will be a community meeting with further information regarding the downtown construction.

BM VanLaar: The Gilroy Garlic Festival Association will be providing food at events such as Day on the Ridge, and the Gilroy Rodeo. Challenges in planning and permitting for events continue to be strenuous, in line with the past several years. Concerns include the equal rules and requirements across different entities planning events using public property. Hopefully the events and dollars they

bring into the community and businesses can withstand the new process of successful event planning.

BM Peoples: A tour of St. Mary Cemetery will be on May 11th in conjunction with the Gilroy Historical Society.

BM Childers: The Outlook Forum gave insight and access to proprietary AI travel software, and how it pertains to travel planning, and itinerary building. Gilroy and Gilroy Gardens were not easily found when entering key words and searching for theme parks in the central coast. The “satellite Welcome Center” at the park is working on ideas to mirror the branding of the Gilroy California Welcome Center, and hopefully can have a table-top version of the same Kiosk experience as the Gilroy California Welcome Center. Gilroy Residents Day was the most successful ever, with nearly 8,300 attendees. On the Foundation side, still working on scheduling with the Empowerment Program with Meg Ryan; possibly visiting the park on the busy Memorial Day weekend, with the filming airing hopefully by the end of Summer.

BM Avelar: Occupancy for Easter and Spring Break is full. The 8 pickle ball courts are still underway. The 25th Anniversary Celebration is coming in August.

BM Scariott: CMAP has a new CEO, Mike Sanchez, and he’s doing a great job at revitalizing things. CMAP will be in charge of the camerawork for the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival events. A media group is coming in to do a podcast for the festival as well, talking about the 270 films, from 30 countries, at 18 venues, across 4 cities. Configuring the panel discussions and events of the festival in a way to promote longer stays for attendees is working! Some are extending a 1-2 day stay to 3-4 days. Having Gilroy Gardens in the outgoing letter caters to the families that are coming to town, and they will go to the theme park. Over 400 filmmakers are coming to town; thank you to our hospitable communities that make them feel welcome. Visit Morgan Hill is promoting a “See and Stay”; if you stay in a Morgan Hill hotel, you get a pass to the festival events. The idea comes from event promo in San Luis Obispo, and the results for this trial will be interesting.

BM Delorenzo: The golf courses are ready for Spring and have local high schools golfing at all 3 courses. With the First-T program at Gavilan Golf course, they’ve added another day for classes, with 3 classes on Saturdays and one on Tuesdays now. Reviving an old idea for an event tying together the golf courses and downtown Gilroy “Gilroy Sip-Athlon”: Bowling, Golf, and Cornhole. Go bowling in downtown, play golf and cornhole at the courses, then circle back to downtown for dinner and Sip-Athlon at local taprooms. Thinking of a summertime event.

BM Mace: The next big event for the wineries is the Wine Auction, at Clos LaChance on May 4th. It’s going to be “Kentucky Derby” themed, with a VIP section and special tasting. The Vine to Wine event is being planned and we’re looking for a new venue for this year, possibly in San Jose.

BM Bonino: Spring is around the corner; the winter season has lasted a long time. Strawberries kick off the fresh produce season, then cherries and apricots. Garlic ice cream continues to be interesting for some guests looking for it.

BM Howard: Things are looking great at the Chamber, new memberships coming in, the events are well attended. In promoting the Economic Development message, next week BM Howard and Victoria Valencia will attend the ICSC Conference in Monterey, for connection opportunities with shopping centers having an interest in Gilroy. The South County Business Alliance Luncheon was very inspiring, focusing on the Chamber-City relationship. The Legislative Summit is April 26th, at Old City Hall Restaurant. The Chamber has re-launched the Ambassador Program; chamber members that adopt newer members and guide through resources and connections available. The application for the Garlic City Car Show is submitted, and registration for the show is open. The Buzz has been hired to do event planning and coordination. Everyone keeps in mind there will be a major impact on the downtown area due to the Gourmet Alley construction this summer. Lastly, the search has begun for someone to fill the permanent role of Chamber of Commerce CEO.

BM Campbell: Downtown Gilroy has been very busy; Gilroy Bowl is open now, Pour Me has been busy with the nice weather lately. The Heart of Gilroy Festival is officially postponed to July 20th-21st for this year. This event will return to a Spring time-frame for 2025. The Gilroy Garlic Festival Association won't be involved as a food vendor this year. The event permit needs to be re-submitted one more time.

BM Michielssen: BM Howard covered all Economic Development topics, nothing more to add.

Adjourned: 9:41 AM