



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 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 August 8th, 2024, at 5 PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Cameron Childers, Chantelle Mace, Danny Mitchell, Dave Peoples, Eric Gebhardt, Mark Jacobson, Jane Howard, Kurt Michielssen, Mike Patel, Tom Cline, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Brent Bonino, Don Delorenzo, Mattie Scariot, Michele Campbell, Sarah Lira.

Staff: Executive Director Frank Johnson, CWC Manager Susan Childers.

Board Advisors and Guests: Jason Raby- Articulate Solutions, Jane Howard- Gilroy Chamber of Commerce.

July 2024 Google Analytics Report and June Marketing Activities – Jason Raby: Website Traffic- a nice 20% increase compared to prior year, mainly attributed to the Heart of Gilroy Festival Campaign. Top traffic sources for July: Google Organic, Direct, Google Ads for the Heart of Gilroy Festival. Top pages visited: Home Page, Heart of Gilroy Festival, 33 Things to Do, and the Event Calendar. The Heart of Gilroy Festival Ad Campaign Recap shows a total of 445,913 Impressions, 7,501 Clicks, and 544 Conversions to the GDBA Ticket Sales Page.

Consent Calendar

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

Old Business

Website and Branding Update: The “backend” database is currently being transferred and updated. We will have the ability to communicate with our partners and local businesses within the website platform, and they will have control to build their own listings, which will be very helpful and valuable to our community partners. We will allot some funding for various tasks and data entry to be done. The Branding and Visual Identity Presentation will be on August 21st, Board members are invited and encouraged to participate.

Downtown Uber Program: From when the program launched in May, voucher-claims have a significant increase every month, a total of just over \$1,100 has been spent on discount rides to downtown Gilroy, helping to alleviate parking concerns.

Kiosk Update: A beautiful 6-foot-tall Kiosk is now in the Welcome Center thanks to Visit California. We're working through some data configuration to sort everything accordingly, and Jason from Articulate Solutions sent data so that Gilroy Events can be viewed as well. This device is another tool guests can use to explore, discover, and customize their visit to Gilroy. Other notable perks include a virtual Guest Book, Photo Booth, and an Itinerary Builder with a link sent right to your email.

Video Production Update: We got a quote from Articulate Solutions this week, and we are ready to move forward. This new video footage will have a long shelf-life, and we are very happy with the production quality that we've seen from Articulate Solutions.

Staff orientation of Downtown: Frank Johnson gave a tour for the part-time Welcome Center Staff team of Downtown Gilroy during one of the Downtown Live events on Thursday nights. The first-hand experience and introductions will help them give genuine and personal recommendations to visitors who come into the Welcome Center.

New Business

Hire Verdin Marketing for Strategic Marketing Plan*: This company has done work for many comparable DMO's, and this would be a good resource for us in our next step of Strategic Marketing. Quarterly reporting is included in this contract. *Motion to hire Verdin Marketing for Strategic Marketing Plan for a ten-month contract period – First: Dave Peoples, Second: Trevor Van Laar. Motion passes with one opposition from Board Member Mark Jacobson.

Wine, Ale, Taco, and Art Trails: We're looking for a platform to gamify the trails we have and elevate them. A "prize" incentive is standard when it comes to successful trails in destinations, and suggestions are welcome. Sponsorship conversations have been started with the San Jose Sharks. The final platform hasn't been selected yet.

Farm to Table Field Trip: September 12 is an opportunity for us to visit Terra Amico Farms in San Martin. This is a wonderful educational experience about Farm-to-Table offerings that Gilroy, also incredibly rich in Agricultural history, can learn from.

Book Direct \$4000-\$3000 a year with \$1000 set up*: This add-on booking engine will live on our Visitgilroy.com site and give guests the chance to book a hotel in Gilroy without leaving our site interface. Also, we can give cleaner conversion statistics to our hotel partners. Motion to approve Book Direct for a total of \$4000, a breakdown of \$3000 a year and a one-time \$1000 set-up: First: Danny Mitchell, Second: Dave Peoples. Motion passed unanimously.

Yosemite Journal Placement: The current installment advertises Gilroy as a whole, including its proximity to Pinnacles National Park promoting "Stay in Gilroy" for nearby outdoor adventures. Our magazine article about Gilroy California and Pinnacles National Park AD was found spontaneously in an airplane seat by the owner of Old City Hall Restaurant while she was traveling. This goes to show that print media still makes an impact with an audience we can't always measure but helps to

associate Gilroy with other travel-worthy places like the Pinnacles, as well as engendering good faith with our local partners. The Yosemite Journal prints 100,000 magazines- 20,000 are sold, while 80,000 are given to strategic partners for distribution.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director July 2024 Report - Frank Johnson: We're developing a good connection with the new Chick-fil-A coming to Gilroy, Susan and her staff have put together welcome bags for their training team, and Frank provided contact with Gilroy Gardens for marketing opportunities. Lastly, our Visit Gilroy Visual Identity Presentation from Simpleview will be August 21st at 10AM.

CWC Gilroy Manager's July 2024 Report - Susan Childers: July Walk-in Numbers were down almost 26%, but retail sales were down only 5% compared to prior month. Both the Monthly and Annual budgets are just under 110% for the new fiscal year. California residents make up 64% of July retail sales. We're noticing a rise in local residents coming to the welcome center for merchandise gifts and travel information. We had 159 International guests in July, representing 23 Countries, visiting in 14 different groups. Top visiting countries were Mexico, Germany, and China. There is an influx of visitors interested in farming. We have a new employee at the Welcome Center who was a long-time Gilroy resident and is great at customer engagement, particularly with Gilroy residents. The Gilroy themed/logo items are appreciated as celebrating Gilroy, people say items like these are hard to find. In July 1,255 pieces of collateral were dispersed fulfilling leads through Yosemite Journal, visitor bags for Chick-Fil-A Training team, Hotel and RV distribution and other community outreach. Lastly, we are losing a team member that is chasing her career, but we already have a new team member to fill the loss.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator July 2024 report – Mary is out sick; Executive Director Johnson summarizes the July Report: Discussed the collateral distribution at the hotels and the importance of maintaining the relationship of feedback and suggestions with the hotel partners. Mentioned the various meetings within the community that Mary attends and reports on. The top blog in July was “Gilroy Fruit Stands”, showing the seasonal shift in what people search for.

BM Michielsse: The Economic Development Board met last night, and we're very happy to have Jane Howard refocused fully on the EDC. There is revitalization in the EDC lately, and it's exciting to see activity.

Danny Mitchell: It's exciting to be involved as the new CEO of the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce, after being a board member for 6 years. The Chamber is also experiencing new energy and activity. The Spice of Life Event is coming back this year. The Chamber will soon be ready to make their recommendations for endorsement of City Council Candidates, and Mayor Candidates.

Jane Howard – Recently appointed the Economic Development Manager under the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce. The EDC is at a pivotal point in the determination of its future, possibly operating at its full capacity and power as it once did.

BM Cline: Gourmet Alley is coming along in construction, hopefully completing by October. City staff are nearly ready to come to council with their recommendations on Special Events Permits, as well as the Food Truck Permit topic that has been in discussion already.

BM Jacobson: The last Downtown Live is today, so come out and support the GDBA in it's 10th show. Chick-Fil-A is now open, still busy from opening. Louie's Lasagna will also be opening soon, in the Nob Hill parking lot.

BM Van Laar: The Gilroy Garlic Festival Association was just at the Gilroy Rodeo, which was a lot of fun. The last event of the season is the Nashville Songwriters Concert at Clos la Chance Winery. The Cherry Orchard Dinner won't be happening in September.

BM Childers: The Summer Season has ended, and the Park is now only open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays now. The Carnival Nights have just started, kicking off the holiday lineup of events, and 2025 Memberships sales are live with a touching Ad campaign to go along with it from Articulate Solutions.

BM Peoples: No update.

Mike Patel: The Concours d'Elegance is this week in Monterey, but booking numbers remain low. We did see a pickup in our Gilroy location, because the rate is better than the Monterey location. A member of our staff has done a good job at making social media posts for engagement.

BM Mace: The Wineries are doing alright; everyone is ready for cooler weather. This year's Vine to Wine is in a new venue in downtown San Jose and we're looking forward to this new set-up.

Chair Gebhardt: August and September are expected to show a decline, and numbers are remaining low. The Renaissance Faire is coming, so that will be a good help.

Adjourned: 9:32 AM