



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 17, 2024
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:05 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: Executive Director Johnson announced the agenda was posted on October 10th, 2024, at 5 PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020

Roll Call: Brent Bonino, Chantelle Mace, Danny Mitchell, Don Delorenzo, Eric Gebhardt, Mark Jacobson, Kurt Michielssen, Michele Campbell, Sarah Lira, Tom Cline, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Cameron Childers, Dave Peoples, Mattie Scariot, Mike Patel.

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

Board Advisors and Guests: Jane Howard- Gilroy Chamber of Commerce.

September 2024 Google Analytics Report and September Marketing Activities – ED Johnson: Web Traffic was up by 10% over the previous year. The Tamale Festival and Renaissance Faire Ads were the biggest draws for web traffic. Top traffic sources were Google/Organic, Facebook/Ads, and Direct. Top pages: Tamale Fest & Renaissance Faire. To note, in past years, the Renaissance Faire has reached 60k in attendance, and we are waiting for the 2024 attendance numbers.

Consent Calendar

Approval of September 19, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve: Don Delorenzo, Second: Mark Jacobson. Approval of September 2024 Financial Reports – Motion to approve: Kurt Michielssen, Second: Tom Cline. September 2024 Minutes and Financials approved unanimously.

Old Business

Website, CRM, and Branding update – lots of training is part of the process to learn the software and keep it clean while entering the important data to help our businesses appear in searches. Coming up, the website map presentation is an important meeting to go over the future of the website. Refining the data, photos, and so forth will take time and attention.

Ale Trail – The first draft to review, and a modified version will be available soon. We are working with Seeker on a mobile version of the Trail, and a way for all of the Trails to be seen on one platform; Wine, Taco, Beer, and Art. If board members have any suggestions or thoughts, please reach out.

Moviemaker Magazine – The Poppy Jasper International Film Festival is recognized and one of the "Top 25 coolest Film Festivals in the World!". This film festival certainly brings people to town and is growing.

Branding Package – Included in the Board Packet is a document from Simpleview with a Color Palette, Branding Guide, Logo, and more – an action item to officially vote on this Branding Package will be on the November Meeting Agenda.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director September 2024 Report – Frank Johnson: There will be no December Board Meeting, so please plan to attend in November.

CWC Gilroy Manager’s September 2024 Report – Susan Childers: September Walk-in Numbers were down 30%, but gross sales were only down by 13% compared to prior month. We currently are at 113% of the Monthly Budget and 114.6% of the Annual Budget. California residents make up 64% of September retail sales. We’re noticing a rise in local residents coming to the welcome center for merchandise gifts and travel information. We had 193 International guests in September, representing 29 Countries. Top visiting countries were Germany, Mexico, and Brazil. In September 919 pieces of collateral were dispersed fulfilling leads through Yosemite Journal Magazine, requests by phone call, and Mary’s Hotel and RV distribution. For Quarter 3, the California Welcome Center tracked 3,699 visitors, down 28% in foot traffic compared to this quarter last year, but quarterly retail sales are only down 1% equaling \$12,082.21. The top retailers in the Welcome Center are Gilroy Logo items, California Welcome Center items, and Casa de Fruta. Saturdays and Mondays have shown to be the busiest days. We are preparing inventory for holiday shopping, and the store is decorated for Fall with beautiful pumpkins from LJB.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator September 2024 report – Mary Gurries Bejarano: Last month's collateral distribution is detailed in my report included in the Board Packet, and I’m looking forward to more engagement from the hotels with the Extranet feature of the new website to come. I attended and took photos at the Tamale Festival, LJB Pumpkin Boo-tique, and the Renaissance Faire for promotion next year. Blog statistics- Blog users were up 12% over the prior month. Top Blogs: “Fall 2024 festivals in Gilroy”, “Rodeo Spotlight”. “Gilroy Fruit Stands”, and “Moya Art Gallery in Gilroy”. I’d like to have an information-rich blog post for the Renaissance Faire that ties the event to Gilroy even more, as something to plan ahead for.

Board Member Reports

BM Campbell: The Beer Crawl is soon, on October 26th in Downtown, and the Holiday Festival and Parade will be on December 7th.

BM Lira: The Outlets are busy preparing for Black Friday. There won’t be a trick-or-treat event this year. The Gap store is moving to building C, and many more stores are set to open next year.

BM Bonino: We’re at the end of harvest season, and there are pumpkins in the patch! The heat waves kept attendance very low, but recent weekends have been doing well. The Trick-or-Treat events sold out and did very well.

BM Mace: It's harvest time, the wineries are all very busy, although attendance is down.

BM Cline: Election season is upon us with the Mayor and three Council seats up for re-election, and the important Sales Tax Measure. November 8th is the Ribbon Cutting Event for Gourmet Alley. All parking lots are open for use, with further beautification, light poles, and infrastructure for dumpsters to be complete very soon.

BM Delorenzo: Fall maintenance at the golf courses. The First Tee program is going very well, several events took place at the Gilroy Golf course, and the Gavilan Golf Course is up 32% compared to last quarter.

BM Van Laar: The Gilroy Garlic Festival Association Grant Awards Ceremony is tonight, 6PM at the Gilroy Presbyterian Church where the Association will award \$50,000 to 29 community organizations.

BM Jacobson: The Gilroy Garlic Festival Association will be at the Food Truck Fly In event at the San Martin Airport on October 26th serving drinks in the Beer and Wine Garden. For restaurants, things have been relatively slow.

Jane Howard: The weekend attendance at Gilroy Gardens is doing well with the Halloween event. For Economic Development, the Chamber of Commerce is working with the City of Gilroy and Visit Gilroy on a full-page Co-Op Ad for the Sharks Yearbook this year, with about 500,000 to be distributed. We are also working on marketing plans to promote business shopping in Gilroy.

BM Mitchell: Blond Me Hair Studio is having their Ribbon Cutting tomorrow night. The monthly Chamber Breakfast is next Wednesday, 7 AM, at Old City Hall. The Shop Local Business Expo will be next month, November 14th at Gilroy Gardens, and the Spice of Life Awards is planned for next Spring and November 12th is the last day to submit nominations.

BM Michielssen: The EDC is doing very well, we are having a lot of support with the Rotary presentation, and the reinvestment and interest in the EDC. Thank you to Jane and Danny for their help and support.

Chair Gebhardt: Weekends are still doing well with the Renaissance Faire, some bookings from Cal Fire, and occasional corporate travel and family weekend trips. Large-scale construction in Salinas planned next year may help bookings in Gilroy.

Verdin Marketing: Members from Verdin Marketing facilitated a workshop with our Board Members to assist in the refreshing of the Visit Gilroy Strategic Plan and Marketing Strategy. The feedback and guidance from Board Members that represent different business markets is valued when assessing Gilroy Tourism as a whole.

Adjourned: 9:38 AM