



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 16, 2026
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:14 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: Executive Director Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, April 10, 2026, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Amber Atteberry, Cristina Cortes, Eric Gebhardt, Jeff Orth, Joley Rosales, Jonathan Bohnenberger, Kelli Jones, Larry Imas, Mike Patel.

Absent: Brent Bonino, Mattie Scariot, Mark Jacobsen, Terrence Fugazzi, Trevor Van Laar.

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

March 2026 Google Analytics Report and March Marketing Activities – ED Frank Johnson: Website traffic is up 120%, with organic traffic up 50%, continuing our strong record of organic web traffic. We are buying a Spot in the Fresno market and supplying the Fresno KMPH 26 radio station with 5 Gilroy Gardens tickets to promote in the local Fresno market. In addition, Gilroy events will be added to their online community calendar. Social Media follower growth has slowed, with significant spikes when we promote specific events.

Consent Calendar

Motion to approve Board Meeting Minutes from March 19, 2026:

First: BM Jeff Orth, with amendment

Second: BM Kelli Jones

Motion passed, with amendment to Board Member Report: BM Jeff Orth – "...hosting a CMAP open house [this Saturday]".

Motion to approve Financial Reports for March 2026:

First: BM Amber Atteberry

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously

Old Business

April Video Shoot and Influencer Visit – Our current video spot is performing wonderfully, and we now have fresh content to showcase more angles of Gilroy; Hiking, Fruit Stands, and Wineries with events and

younger demographic. Building a story for the fruit stands between Casa de Fruta and Gilroy. Influencer with 200K followers to make a reel on hiking, winery, and downtown Gilroy.

Small Market Meeting Spaces Update – Identifying small meeting spaces in Gilroy, and the range of variety available, including wineries and Gilroy Gardens. Creating a PDF guide with all Gilroy spaces, delineating different types of spaces and amenities with the goal of making it easy and clear for people to find and book spaces in Gilroy for meetings and events. Gilroy will be included on CaliforniaMeetings.com, run by Visit California.

New Business

Visit California Podcast – Gilroy is under consideration for the “California Now” podcast, hosted by Josh Meyers, an amazing opportunity earned by making connections at trade shows. Visit California is also doing 2-minute video segments of the California Welcome Centers; Frank Johnson and Susan Childers participated in an initial zoom conversation presenting the Gilroy California Welcome Center and key Gilroy assets.

New Credit Card Company and \$7,500 limit – Difficulties with the current company.

Motion to raise Credit Card limit to \$7,500, and the option to look for a new credit card company:

First: BM Eric Gebhardt

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously.

Expedia Program Update – Visit Gilroy has an active promotion of \$14,200 on Expedia.com resulting in \$146,400 in gross bookings in the area. Our Gilroy mini site has a CTR .05%, above the standard rate of .08% for a DMO of our size. Heavier digital spend over print spend right now.

Kulture City – Sensory Processing Impaired – New initiative with Visit California, our California Welcome Center is now stocked with a small number of bags that contain various items to support guests with sensory processing impairments. Our bag inventory will be shared with the satellite welcome center in Gilroy Gardens to support park guests. All employees have been Sensory Inclusive® certified through the program and trained in check-out procedures. Backpacks can be checked out for the day, and contain items including noise cancelling headphones, communication card, VIP lanyard, darkening glasses, fidgets, and more. All California Welcome Centers are participating, with signage posted at each site.

Go West Update – Profound and sincere interest for Gilroy in thirty-five two-minute meetings. Destination strengths and growth-points identified in conversations,

Ag Tourism Update – The County is having a referral meeting today at 10 AM. Item 6 on the agenda will address zoning challenges. ED Johnson is part of the Santa Clara County Ag Partners group that meets once a month to discuss how to promote our wineries, farmstands, stables, u-picks, etc. A Zoom link to attend today’s meeting was sent to Board Members to bring awareness to the need of support for local Ag businesses affected.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director's March 2026 Report – Frank Johnson: VisitGilroy.com now equipped with an accessibility tool for ADA compliance; we should not be exposed to litigation. This plugin is \$60 per month. Community member, Lisa Faria, has helped Visit Gilroy with projects like building up our outdoor and hiking information, and volunteered her vehicle for use in our latest video shoot! I will be giving a presentation to the City Council this Monday, April 20th; the meeting begins at 6 PM.

CWC Gilroy Manager's March 2026 Report – Susan Childers: After slower winter traffic, we're seeing an increase of walk-ins with 919 for March 2026, with spring breakers and college tours bringing people in. Top visiting countries were Mexico, Taiwan, and Brazil. Several new stores coming to the Gilroy Premium Outlets: Wetzel's Pretzels, Pandora, and Karl Lagerfeld. Old Navy and Victoria's Secret are scheduled to open in the Summer. No merch sales in the downtown Cannery Marketplace or online though Shopify for March. We expanded our logo ballcap colors. Preparing the store for Summer.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator March 2026 Report – Mary Gurries Bejarano: Had a very active March this year, starting with a Wedding Fair in San Jose, and going to the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara; 3,338 pieces of marketing collateral was dispersed to our regional audience. Small-market meetings workshop was held, followed by toolkit development. Freshly styled and updated Gilroy Visitors Maps are in normal circulation again. 300 Visit Gilroy tote bags and tourism collateral were donated to the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival to welcome filmmakers and industry professionals.

Board Member Reports

BM Kelli Jones – Looking forward to the annual food-centric event by Performance Foods at MOHI Ranch is scheduled for May 20th; The biggest event of the year!

BM Eric Gebhardt – March and April look steady; small bookings still trending. Sports travel and blue-collar work are sustaining bookings. Regarding the World Cup, we aren't seeing any movement or planning for these sporting events.

BM Joely Rosales – Resident Day and Opening Day had beautiful weather. Welcomed Chick-fi-A with a permanent spot inside Gilroy Gardens. On April 19, national garlic day, Gilroy residents receive \$12 admission & \$12 parking. Partnering with Christopher Ranch on the Garlic Festival Queen Pageant, and Gilroy Garlic Festival Association to hand out garlic bread and garlic goodies. Two additions to the Gilroy Gardens team for Event Production and Project Development Specialist, as well as a Chief Advancement Officer, strengthening the non-profit development and community connection.

BM Larry Imas – *Cork's Kegs*, and *'Que* is happening May 30, 2026. All member wineries are closely dialed into things happening with the County. May 16th is the first *Wine and Stargazing* event at L&M Vineyard! Positioning this event as "get an uber, stay the night in Gilroy" Music starts at 5:30, a food truck will be available for dinner, and Lick Observatory volunteers with telescopes and expertise.

BM Jonathan Bohnenberger – It's been great to recently partner with Gilroy Gardens. The Blue Wave carwash will be opening soon, hopefully bringing in more traffic. A neighboring lot (last lot in the plaza) sold to IOTA EV Charging.

BM Amber Atteberry – GDBA is having the annual *Heart of Gilroy Wine & Art Stroll* event this weekend, on April 18th. Goal this year to collaborate with more partners. *Downtown Movie Nights* have been moved from Thursdays to Fridays; over 50 people attended after the switch – 3 more movie nights – Finding Nemo is next on the list. Planning to pick up *Downtown Movie Nights* again in the Fall. *Downtown Live Summer Concert Series* begins June 18th, running through August. A farmers market is starting up Sunday May 3rd in the 7th St. Parking lot. The GDBA will be doing “Sidewalk Sunday’s” in collaboration with the farmers' market.

BM Mike Patel – Spring break and construction work make up most bookings. A lack of World Cup Bookings could be a mix of the chosen team matches scheduled, and fewer international travelers as a whole. Best Western Forest Park Inn has made some recent social media posts to promote Gilroy.

BM Cristina Cortes – Friday, May 15th is the Blue Wave Car wash ribbon cutting at 1 PM. May 2nd is the Nola Street Kitchen ribbon cutting at 12 PM, followed by the annual *POP a Cork* event at Rebekah Children's Services. Next week is our annual 72nd Spice of Life Gala 5-8 PM at Elk's Lodge. Save the date - the 26th Annual Garlic City Car Show and Harvest Festival will be at the Hecker Pass Event Center at Gilroy Gardens.

BM Jeff Orth – We’re very glad to get this new attempt at a Farmers Market in downtown. We need to promote and show up; successful markets don’t happen overnight. We had a successful cleanup day with the help of dedicated volunteer The City left us a blank slate with gourmet Alley – now we get to develop the Alley into a beautiful space – looking at Ashfords to 5th St. We got task approval from property owners, need their help with electricity (no public access to power in the alley) each block can have it’s own artistic personality.

Adjourned: 9:48 AM