



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 19, 2026
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:06 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: Executive Director Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, February 13, 2026, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Amber Atteberry, Brent Bonino, Cameron Childers, Eric Gebhardt, Jeff Orth, Jonathan Bohnenberger, Kelli Jones, Larry Imas, Mark Jacobsen, Mattie Scariot, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Cristina Cortes, Mike Patel, Terrence Fugazzi.

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

Public Guests and Advisors: Jane Howard, Raissa de la Rosa

January 2026 Google Analytics Report and January Marketing Activities – ED Frank Johnson: January social media performed very well, several new things in Gilroy have been gaining traction on our website such as, NOLA Street Kitchen, and Café Dolce Vita, along with several events like the Gilroy Garlic Festival, San Juan Bautista Rib Cookoff and the Northern California Renaissance Faire. Verdin Marketing presented a 2025 overview and 2026 game plan, with a review of multiple redesigned and updated print media assets and reporting Paid Media earning over 4.6 M impressions for FY2025, Social Media was up 221.6% YOY, and Website Stats were up 55% YOY.

Consent Calendar

Motion to approve Financial Reports for January 2026:

First: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Second: BM Brent Bonino

Motion passed unanimously

Motion to approve Board Meeting Minutes from January 15, 2026:

First: BM Jeff Orth

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously

Old Business

TOT update – Our Board decided not to take a position last month. City Council has directed staff to develop ballot measure language of the TOT increase to not exceed the threshold of 13%. Currently, we are at 9%. Visit Gilroy has no action items at this time.

Board Binders – Distributed in today's meeting, these binders contain the Visit Gilroy marketing plan, by-laws, roll sheet, Brown Act, and other necessary documents.

New Business

Kelli Jones was added as an authorized check signer and Dave Peoples removed

Motion to approve BM Kelli Jones as an authorized check signer:

First: BM Mark Jacobsen

Second: BM Eric Gebhart

Motion passed unanimously

Rack Card bifold success – Our newly designed and branded bifold pickup rate has increased by 30% in our distribution locations. With our upcoming photoshoot, we may opt to update with new imagery.

Vote on new Board Member Joley Rosales from Gilroy Gardens

Motion to approve Joley Rosales as a Visit Gilroy Board Member representing Gilroy Gardens:

First: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Second: BM Mark Jacobsen

Motion passed unanimously

Expedia Campaign and Co-op – On Expedia, Visit Gilroy has an Ad banner that shows up next to Visit California, leading to a page with our leading tourism pillars as people plan trips on their website.

FIVE Tradeshows in March – The Bay Area Wedding Fair in San Jose, Bay Area Travel & Adventure Show in Santa Clara, Central Coast Tourism Council in Paso Robles, GO West Conference in Las Vegas, CA Outlook Forum in San Diego.

Small Market Meeting Spaces Workshop – To be held at the Neon Exchange on March 6, 2026.

2026 TBID Budget Approval

Motion to approve the 2026 TBID Budget:

First: BM Jeff Orth

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously

Approve revised P&L's for TBID

Motion to approve the revised TBID P&L's, amending an accounting error:

First: BM Amber Atteberry

Second: BM Eric Gebhardt

Motion passed unanimously

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director's January 2026 Report – Frank Johnson: Nothing further to report.

CWC Gilroy Manager's January 2026 Report – Susan Childers: Walk-in traffic and sales at the Welcome Center have slowed this post-holiday season; 657 walk-in's in January, with top visiting countries being China, Mexico and Canada. As of now, no new retail sales at Cannery marketplace in downtown or on Shopify to report. Several RV groups reach out for large amounts of visitor literature ahead of their visit.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator January 2026 Report – Mary Gurries Bejarano: Continued coordination with Verdin Marketing on monthly content action plans for social media, e-newsletters, and upcoming projects. Website support regarding customer inquiries, event calendar assistance, granting Extranet access to partners, account/listing management, and web page edits.

Board Member Reports

BM Eric Gebhardt – Superbowl did not have a large impact on Gilroy hotel bookings. Rainy weather can impact weekday bookings for construction workers. Congratulations to Performance Foods, awarded the Spice of Life Large Business of the Year.

BM Kelli Jones – The past few weekends have been great for the food industry, with an uptick specifically around the Superbowl and Valentine's Day.

BM Jeff Orth – Downtown cleanup days will take place ahead of downtown events; 5 new planters painted by local artists, and a new bench will be created and installed.

Jane Howard – Proud to share that Gilroy Gardens was awarded the IAPPA Bronze Ring Award for the Best New Food & Beverage Event in the World after their *Cherry Jubilee* event last year, which will return June 3-25, 2026.

BM Cameron Childers – This year's IAPPA recognition is great for for Gilroy Gardens, the last was for the Lumination event about a decade ago. New events, *Voyage to the Islands*, will begin in May followed by *Cherry Jubilee* and our other popular events. March 21 will be Premium Members Days, and March 22 will be Residents Day, then Public Opening Day is the following weekend. This will be my last meeting attended as a Visit Gilroy Board Member, as my role at Gilroy Gardens will be shifting.

BM Larry Imas – Valentines and Superbowl were not good attendance days. Thank you to Visit Gilroy for helping promote *Barrel & Bites*, looking to see how this event plays out. *Corks Kegs and 'Que* in in May.

BM Mark Jacobsen – The *Gilroy Garlic Festival* will be returning July 24-26, 2026 at the "Outdoor Events Center". New partnership with Christopher Ranch to bring back the Garlic Queen Pageant with a \$5000 scholarship. Hoping to increase festival attendance this year.

BM Johnathan Bohnenberger – The first *Daddy & Daughter Date Night* was great success at Chick-fil-A, seeing 40 tables filled. Altering restaurant operating hours, staying open longer from 6:30AM-11PM.

BM Brent Bonino – LJB Farm's is doing well with firewood sales and a new partnership with locally made sourdough, hosted Valentines Day pop-up with coffee and pastries. Filling these winter months with local partnerships; Look forward to our Mother's Day event.

BM Amber Atteberry – *Downtown Movie Nights* kicked off in Don. Prieto Park every other Thursday night, partnering with Savvy's Downtown Sweets for popcorn concessions and with the Poppy Jasper International Film Festival to show 15 minute short films before the feature movie. Sponsorships on-screen

are available! The upcoming Heart of Gilroy Wine and Art Stroll will be an immersive and interactive experience.

BM Mattie Scariot – Started as the Interim Executive Director at CMAP, working on an open house event. Businesses are welcome to come and create a 2-min video to promote their business. Working on PJIFF scavenger hunt and continuing the partnership at the Pruneyard with “My Life as a Robot” playing March 24. Hundreds of filmmakers are planning to visit during the festival.

BM Trevor Van Laar – No report

Verdin Marketing Presentation – Allie Rolfs, Account Manager, and Ashlee Akers, Chief Strategy Officer.

- 2025 Overview
 - Creative review – online and physical media pieces.
 - Metrics deep dive – Website, social media, and Ad campaigns.
- 2026 Game Plan – Gilroy makes it simple to experience more of California for less.
 - Objectives with corresponding insights, strategies, and tactics.
 - Overnight stays, Gilroy as high-value base form exploring CA.
 - Increase meeting and corporate group inquiries.
 - Increase wedding inquires and venue referrals.

Board discussion followed, regarding visitor experience, recent local trends, and regional identity, with members noting Gilroy's welcoming character, agricultural appeal, and potential as a destination hub. Survey questions will be distributed to the Board for further input.

Adjourned: 10:00 AM