



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 18, 2026
Hampton Inn & Suites

Call to order: 8:10 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: Executive Director Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, June 12, 2026, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Cristina Cortes, Eric Gebhardt, Jeff Orth, Joley Rosales, Jonathan Bohnenberger, Larry Imas, Mattie Scariot, Terrence Fugazzi.

Eric Gebhardt stepping in as chair for Trevor Van Laar

Absent: Amber Atteberry, Brent Bonino, Kelli Jones, Mark Jacobsen, Mike Patel, Trevor Van Laar.

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

May 2026 Google Analytics Report and May Marketing Activities – ED Frank Johnson: A snapshot on web analytics included in the packet for review. Web traffic is down almost 20%, but time spent per page is impressive per industry standards. AI search overview presents short answers without users needing to click into websites; monitoring the content users are valuing with rich analytics can help assess ongoing content strategy. Hotels and Accommodations page is in the top 10. Instagram views +18%, Facebook engagement +39%, and follower growth +136%; annual events drive traffic and engagement. E-newsletter open rates are still down; we are looking to assess and reconfigure.

Consent Calendar

Motion to approve Board Meeting Minutes from May 21, 2026:

First: BM Terrence Fugazzi

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve May Financial Reports:

First: BM Terrence Fugazzi

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Pinterest, New Writers, AI – Meeting planners use Pinterest as an information resource; the account has been refreshed with updated assets. We have a writer working on new projects for meeting spaces, and more written content is on the horizon.

Visit California Podcast Visit California Calendar – Visuals included in the board packet. In the context of the Bay Area, Gilroy is featured very nicely on the CA Now Podcast. Submitted the *Gilroy Garlic Festival* to their calendar, generating more exposure.

TOT and TBID update – We passed our 3rd City Council hurdle, and appreciative of all the support.

Expedia Campaign – Campaign visuals included in the board packet resulting in 1700 room night books; 61.8% of bookings are made withing a 6-day window, following the “last-minute market” trend. Our .08% click through rate is well above the standard for these campaigns. Return on Ad spend (ROAS) was 11.7, with over 1.2M impressions, and 755 conversions. The co-op campaign was \$55K, of which Visit Gilroy contributed \$20K.

Fifa and World Cup – We’ve promoted our Sports Fan Map and put up decorations in the California Welcome Center; several walk-in's specifically for the World Cup, but as expected, not many.

New Business

Improved Hiking section – Page has been updated with more in-depth hiking content.

Johnathan Bohnenberger has been nominated for the Executive Board. Vote to approve –

Motion postponed until next meeting; specific executive position needs to be filled at the same time.

New RFP for Marketing Company – Looking for a new marketing company. Currently, Verdin contract ending June 30th, will be on the books as month-to-month starting July 1st. We currently have healthy Branding and Marketing strategy.

Vote to approve selection committee and allow them to choose Visit Gilroy’s new Marketing Company – A committee has been identified with several board members, advisors, and staff: Raissa de la Rosa, Cristina Cortes, Mattie Scariot, Jane Howard, Eric Gebhardt, Mary Gurries Bejarano, Frank Johnson.

Motion to approve:

First: BM Jeff Orth

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director’s May 2026 Report – Frank Johnson: Thank you to our community partners that make Gilroy stand out; Gilroy Gardens, Downtown, and Wineries. Our accountant will be supporting us remotely due to personal injury; financial reports may not be ready in time for next month’s board packet, but important information will be included. The board discussed remote-friendly accounting processes and procedures.

CWC Gilroy Manager’s May 2026 Report – Susan Childers: CWC May walk-in’s: 691, retail sales: \$4447,10. Walkins were down compared to previous year, but comparative sales were up. Top visiting countries:

Germany, India, and Japan. Vendors call the welcome center to be involved in Gilroy annual events, and farmers market, and we post event flyers to help promote to visitors and locals alike. We decorated for *The World Cup* and the 4th of July.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator May 2026 Report – The Meetings & Events Toolkit has been published on the website, providing valuable new content to help market Gilroy's diverse meeting and event venues. The other major project was expanding and updating the website's hiking and biking content. Regular meetings with community partners and communication with Verdin to coordinate month-to-month marketing efforts. Routine website maintenance, responded to visitor and partner inquiries, and Extranet onboarding to help partners manage their own listings and event submissions on VisitGilroy.com.

Board Member Reports

BM Mattie Scariot – *Poppy Jasper International Film Festival* submissions open in July. Planning a late summer “wrap party” and “what’s coming next” event, to get more volunteers too. Moved out of CMAP building; looking for a new building. Met with GUSD rep, Sonia. Still working to create a film commission for our region in partnership with neighboring Film Festivals.

BM Jeff Orth – May 30th we had a barrel painting day with local artists, and in the process of converting our planters to succulents. The first Downtown Live Concert is happening tonight! *Gilroy Garlic Bootcamp* is on June 27th.

BM Terrence Fugazzi – Open positions for City Staff have been filled, such as Economic Development Director and Police Chief. We’ve made much progress with cleaning up certain parts of Gilroy. The Public Safety measure will not be on the November ballot. Smoke shops and tobacco shops – we had the ability to enforce city codes against illegal shops. Sharks update – the ad hoc committee has been actively meeting.

BM Joely Rosales – *Voyage to the Islands* has wrapped at Gilroy Gardens, earning amazing feedback and comments. *Cherry Jubilee* is back for it’s second year, bigger and better. Great web analytics, and at the highest point this year so far. Instagram almost at 100K followers; hoping to keep our spot as the most-followed theme park in Nor Cal.

BM Larry Imas – Signage for the WSCV Wine Trail is progressing slowly, but forward. *Corks, Kegs, and ‘Que* went well, but true to recent trends, tickets were bought last min. *Vine to Wine* is Sep 19 in Santana Row.

BM Jonathan Bohnenberger – Mobile food facility is fully permitted in SCC and SBC and will be participating in the *Morgan Hill Freedom Fest*. The Gilroy Gardens partnership is going great; had the opportunity to use their newly renovated board room as a meeting space for traveling team members. *Summer Wednesday movie nights* started last night, with families driving from as far as Castroville. We are noticing an increase in unhoused people in our plaza.

Jane Howard – Gilroy Gardens has a new Chief Advancement Officer, June; working on acquiring grants, I am assisting through the process. Great things happening in the Green Barn with new opportunities for education, with Angela as the new community engagement coordinator.

Raissa de la Rosa – TBID renewal is still open for 26 days, and will transition into the new assessment period beginning January 1, 2028. An updated California Welcome Center operating agreement will be presented in the coming weeks. Further updates included the Chamber of Commerce contract, Mobile Vending Ordinance, improving destination optimization in business park sector, and economic development website.

BM Cristina Cortes – Excited to continue the Chamber of Commerce partnership with the city. September 19th is the *Garlic City Car Show and Harvest Festival*. Sandy Lei is back serving on our board of directors. Part-time events coordinator position is open.

BM Eric Gebhardt – Hotels are still trending in the right direction; the past several months have been good. *The World Cup* has slightly inflated rates, but not bookings. *Hollister Bike Rally* will bring many bikers through the area.

STR Report: Gilroy, Monterey & Salinas were flat. Gilroy +17% per room, Morgan Hill +9%, although Morgan Hill had higher occupancy.

Adjourned: 10:08 AM