



Call to order: 8:05 AM

Report on posting of the agenda: Executive Director Johnson announced the agenda was posted on Friday, November 7, 2025, at 5PM at the California Welcome Center, 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Gilroy, CA 95020.

Roll Call: Cameron Childers, Cristina Cortes, Dave Peoples, Kelli Jones, Larry Imas, Eric Gebhardt, Jeff Orth, Jonathan Bohnenberger, Mark Jacobsen, Michelle Carlen, Mike Patel, Trevor Van Laar.

Absent: Brent Bonino, Mattie Scariot, Terence Fugazzi

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

Public Guests and Advisors: Jane Howard

October 2025 Google Analytics Report and October Marketing Activities – ED Frank Johnson: We had a high-traffic month last month, so a dip right now is expected. Leveraged our media assets, our new video spots are on YouTube. Identifying different audiences, Road Trippers outperforms the other audience groups. Verdin Marketing will be attending our February Board Meeting and giving a recap presentation. No December e-newsletter, saving dollars. Our open rate for the newsletter is strong, and we continue getting signups every month. The La Ofrenda Festival and the Renaissance Faire pages performed very well, still gaining traction. Website health – all “broken links” on our website have been corrected or removed, maintaining SEO. The announcement banner on our homepage currently promotes the Downtown Holiday Festival & Parade and will be updated accordingly for current major events.

Consent Calendar

Motion to approve Board Meeting Minutes from October 16, 2025:

First: BM Dave Peoples

Second: BM Jonathan Bohnenberger

Motion passed unanimously

October 2025 Financial Reports will be prepared and sent next week to be voted on in January.

Old Business

Plan for FIFA and Sports Tourism - In preparation for big sporting events next year, we’re going to repurpose and build on our existing Ale Trail. On our website there will be a page for FIFA World Cup as well as a page with our teams like the Sharks, Golden States Warriors, Earthquakes, and Valkyries. The

San Jose Sharks have granted permission to use their logo, and we've reached out to several more teams for permission to promote and use their logos. BM Gebhard notes the STR Report provided detailed insights for bookings on specific dates around sporting events, and hotel occupancy in a radius area.

New Business

Taxes for 2025 submitted – Visit Gilroy is in compliance, and our taxes have been submitted.

Sunset Magazine & Edible Silicon Valley – We're mentioned next to many other quality central coast destinations. Edible has a healthy readership base, and our Ad will be in print before the Superbowl.

Collateral Review – With our new branding, we have refreshed many collateral refreshes: Restaurant Guide, Ale Trail, Taco Trail, Road to Garlic, Wineries in Gilroy, One-Sheet Flyer in English and Spanish, Visit Gilroy Rack Card, and Visitors Guide Booklet. These pieces have been updated and bolstered with new tourism assets in Gilroy, updated photography, branding, and tourism messaging.

Gilroy Arts Scene – Art is a distinguishing element of Gilroy. We recently highlighted the Gilroy Mural Trail in a social media video and just posted a new Gilroy Art Blog that compiles many different facets of our arts community and offerings.

Meeting with County Supervisor Arenas's team – Frank met several times and participated in a tour of Gilroy Gardens with Trevor and the Supervisors team, discussed Gilroy Gardens as an event and meeting space for large groups with economic development and agritourism in mind. Regarding the proposed zoning changes, the office of Sylvia Arenas will be asking the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to table the proposed rezoning for now. Every board in Gilroy should have a prepared letter in support of our wineries, farms, and affected businesses. ED Johnson also met with Gilbert from Robert Rivas's office to discuss these proposed rezoning concerns.

STR Report Update – The price of this report has increased, but the insights and data provided can prove valuable for our tourism purposes. August 2025 compared to previous year – Gilroy at 72% occupancy was up 3%. Morgan Hill down 2%, Salinas down 1%, Monterey up 1%. September 2025 compared to previous year – Gilroy was up 2%, Morgan Hill up 2%, Salinas down 2%, Monterey up 1%. This data helps track what drives hospitality bookings based on many playing factors in real time.

Marketing 2025 recap – Along with the new collateral materials, and the biggest success in building our video and video assets, more than 10K images are in our data-base that we've shared with our partners. In February our marketing company, Verdin, will be making a presentation to our board.

Holiday Party update – December 9th, 6-8 PM. Board members, please let us know if you can make it. Visit Gilroy does not budget for party expenses, so we're asking for a contribution per person to make this possible.

Staff Reports

Visit Gilroy Executive Director's October 2025 Report – Frank Johnson: The YMCA is doing a toy drive, and any donations can be brought to the welcome center, or the the Neon Exchange. ED Johnson proposes that all excess funds from our Visit Gilroy Holiday Party can be donated to the YMCA toy drive.

CWC Gilroy Manager's October 2025 Report – Susan Childers: October numbers – 905 walk-ins, up 25% compared to last year. Retail Sales: \$3,999.12. Sales were up compared to last year. 166 transactions, International: 11.7% of walk-ins. Top visiting county: Japan (thanks to BM Dave Peoples and his group of foreign exchange students). Preparing the welcome center for the holidays with decorations and Black Friday opening at 6AM. Some of our hats are still at the Cannery Marketplace. Attended the Oceanside CWC Managers meeting- Visit CA has partnered with Kulture City, helping those with invisible disabilities, and we will be listed on our website with an inclusive location- we can check-out backpacks with supportive items for those individuals – our supply stock may be shared with the satellite welcome center inside Gilroy Gardens. The backpacks have items like noise cancelling headphones, weighted blankets, and other items. Focusing on e-commerce options, Shopify will be our online storefront to offer our logo hats, shirts, and garlic socks. We have our 2025 holiday shopping guide for the California Welcome Center to help engage our visitors with a helpful list.

Tourism & Community Engagement Coordinator October 2025 Report – Mary Gurries Bejarano: Supporting marketing efforts with updating all collateral pieces shared today. Website support updating pages; every signature annual event has its own landing page that summarizes and promotes all year long, giving tourists ideas and something to plan for. Fixed all “broken links” that hurt our SEO. Consistent messaging to partners and Gilroy businesses to submit their events to our online calendar using the “submit and event” form on our website.

Board Member Reports

BM Jeff Orth – Holiday Fest and Parade coming up December 6, 2025. Over the last few years, we've tracked over 14,000 attendees. Santas Village, Grinchville, Trail of Treats, vendors, and more for this event. Sponsors are still needed. The partnerships we have with the City of Gilroy, the Chamber of Commerce, and Visit Gilroy are so critical for the success of these events that accelerate Gilroy to a tipping point.

Jane Howard – As a board member for Gilroy Gardens, Jane is co-leading a Gilroy Gardens assessment with another board member, park general manager, and an outside consultant identifying individuals with perceptions and ideas – will have a final assessment report as part of our strategic planning process for next year. Sustainability is key, along with bringing revenue in and getting the word out. Gilroy Gardens approved a new board member – former HR director at Cordevalle.

BM Kelli Jones – No report.

BM Michelle Carlen – Last day at the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce is tomorrow, thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this board. Passing things over to Cristina Cortes as the new CEO of the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce.

BM Cristina Cortes – Being a part of the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce over 2 years in every aspect of what the Chamber does; strengthening partnerships with members, meeting many members in the city. The Chamber has 1 staff member currently, now looking for a membership specialist. Next week is the Networking at Noon luncheon at Old City Hall with YMCA sponsoring – accepting donations of toys, books, or jackets.

BM Cameron Childers – Another strong season of Great Big BOO! Rolling into Nov, we have a food drive donation – We had over 400 guests last weekend and Veterans Day participated – 2 more weeks of this program. Another donate-and-save program to follow, more like a toy drive.

BM Jonathan Bohnenberger – Christmas lights will be going up soon at Chick-fil-A, very visible. Will be in the Christmas Parade again, partnering with Rebekah Children's Services to give out food. Jonathan thanks LJB Farms for their generous donation of pumpkins and haybales for the Fall Festival at Chick-fil-A.

BM Dave Peoples – After 30+ years serving on this board, this will be my last meeting, and I will be leaving the first of the year. The board will need a new Board Secretary.

BM Mark Jacobsen – Recently held the first Gilroy Garlic Festival Association meeting for the upcoming year; conversations with Gilroy Gardens to come.

BM Mike Patel – Hotel bookings for weddings and sporting events keep weekends looking good. Overall Gilroy stays steady or slightly up. We prepare different packets of info for our guests and groups, depending on interests.

BM Larry Imas – The Wineries of the Santa Clara Valley recently had some officer elections for our board for the upcoming year. Regarding zoning, there are still many questions, and attending the public meetings is important for any relevant and impacted business; they can be informational. We are interested in learning how to host “watch parties” at our winery within legal compliance.

BM Eric Gebhardt – Several past months have been good for wedding and sporting bookings, supporting the weekends; recent rain heavily impacts the weekday construction bookings.

Adjourned: 9:30 AM