

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting

February 28, 2017

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

The roll was taken, and the meeting began at 7:02 PM.

Present: Directors Andi Winters (president), Lloyd Bell, Medsie Bolin, Larry Herbst, Karen Jahr, Rich Knowles, Jerry Kunkle, Joann Landi, Lou Panetta, Jim Ragan, Barbara Sommer; Kathy Wylie

Absent: None

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: Winters

The Board unanimously approved the agenda.

B-2 CGJA Member Comments

None

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 01/24/16: Ragan

C-2 Acknowledge Committee Minutes and other documents in 02/28/17 meeting packet: Winters/Ragan

The Board unanimously approved the consent items. Ragan stated that the agenda doesn't make it clear that only one motion, second, and vote is necessary to approve the consent items. He will make the changes to start with the agenda for the March meeting.

D. Officer and Committee Chair Reports

D-1 President's Report (Winters)

Winters said that we are working on the agenda for the board retreat on April 1. She said that Lanny Larson, the new editor of the Journal, and Marsha Caranci, who has been working on revisions to our bylaws and policy manual, will attend along with board members.

D-2 Officer Reports

Vice President Bell – no report.

Treasurer Bolin – no report. She said she would answer questions about the financial information presented in the meeting packet. There were none.

Secretary Ragan – no report.

D-3 Legal and Legislative Resources Committee (LLRC)

Vice Chair Jahr referred board members to the committee minutes of December 21 and February 21.

D-4 Public Relations Committee (PRC)

Chair Ragan said that he would be speaking later during the action agenda.

D-5 Membership Relations Committee (MRC)

Chair Knowles said that he would be speaking later during the action agenda.

D-6 Training Committee (TC)

Vice Chair Bolin referred board members to the committee minutes of February 22.

D-7 Finance Committee (FC)

Chair Bell said that our financials are in good shape. There will be an action item later in the agenda.

D-8 Nominations-Elections Committee (NEC)

Chair Kunkle said that the 2017 NEC has begun working. The second meeting will be in March.

D-9 Awards Committee (AC)

Chair Landi referred board members to the committee minutes of February 14.

D-10 Annual Conference Committee (ACC)

Chair Bell said that the ACC has met twice since the last board meeting and is making progress. There is an action item this evening with respect to the budget and approval of the contract with the hotel. Once these items are approved, the ACC will reach out to the Monterey chapter to see where it might be able to help. He added that the manager of the hotel is working with us closely.

D-11 Ad Hoc Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)

Chair Jahr said that the committee is significantly updating the CGJA Bylaws and the Policy Manual. The H-3 items as part of the board meeting packet include the proposed amended bylaws: a summary of the changes, a track-changes edition to specifically see the proposed changes, and a clean copy. She invited comments. An action item on the March 28 meeting will be to approve the proposed amendments.

She said that the committee will then turn to the Policy Manual, following the same process used for the bylaws. An important task is to make the two documents consistent. The reviews are considering logical flow, internal consistency, clarity, policies not being followed, and practices that might be inconsistent with policies. One recommendation will probably be to make the BPRC and the Finance Review Committee standing rather than ad hoc committees, since they have year-to-year duties.

Winters thanked committee members for all their work. Jahr also thanked the committee members.

D-12 Ad Hoc Education Committee (EC)

Chair Wylie said that she has had telephone conversation with Winters, Jahr, and Caranci to talk about the scope of the committee. They agreed that the focus should be education for the public. The committee will probably propose to the board that a better committee name would be the Public Education Committee. She said that she knows of six or seven people who are interested in developing curriculum. She hopes to hold the first committee meeting in March.

E. Action Agenda

E-1 Approve the Alameda County Civil Grand Jury Association (ACCGJA) as a CGJA Chapter. [Motion submitted by Knowles]

Knowles said that former grand jurors in Alameda County have submitted all the paperwork to form a chapter, which are included in the board meeting packet. Within the past 3¹/₂ months, 11 former jurors have become CGJA members. Winters said that Knowles will go to Alameda County on March 7 to present the official papers re their association with CGJA. Jahr asked about the impetus for this action, since CGJA does not train grand jurors in Alameda County. Knowles responded that a few former jurors expressed interest, and a deputy county counsel had planned to attend our legal advisors training seminar last July when a conflict intervened. He expressed interest in learning about CGJA's training program, and the former grand jurors expressed interest in helping with juror recruitment. Bell thanked Knowles for his effort.

The motion passed unanimously, 12-0-0, by voice vote.

E-2 Approve the conduct of a mail survey of grand juries. [Motion submitted by Ragan]

At the January 24, 2017, board meeting, President Winters announced her creation of the Grand Jury Survey Work Group to conduct and create a survey of grand juries. The responses will help CGJA maintain and improve its support to grand juries through training, our website, the Journal, and other means. At this January 24 board meeting, Lewi discussed the survey and said that the work group would seek board approval of the survey and its budget at the February 28 meeting. He thanked board members for making suggestions. Ragan said that the committee decided on a mail survey because we don't have the email addresses of all grand juries. He thanked Herbst for updating all the mail addresses.

The draft survey cover letter and the draft survey were included in the February 28 board meeting packet.

Herbst congratulated the committee for making the survey as brief as possible, asking questions in a clear way – allowing the forepersons to quickly check yes or no on the majority, but then allowing them to expand on others.

The motion passed unanimously, 12-0-0, by voice vote.

E-3 Approve negotiating with Elevation Web and signing a contract at a cost of \$8,800 to redevelop the CGJA website with contemporary graphics, integrated store operation, and improved navigation. [Motion submitted by Ragan]

Ragan asked Herbst, as chair of the subcommittee, to describe the action. Herbst said that the February 28 board meeting packet included a PDF file of the work progress of the subcommittee (including the pros and cons of the two contractor finalists) and the proposal of the recommended contractor. The two finalists are our current provider, Precision Intermedia (PI), and Elevation Web. He said that these two finalists were very close in their capabilities. The subcommittee does not think that there is a bad choice. He then summarized the PDF file. The subcommittee and the Public Relations Committee unanimously recommend Elevation Web for its slightly superior graphic design and layout capability, its nonprofit-organization focus, its price-fixed costing structure based on features, and its broad nationwide professional experience and perspective.

Subcommittee members Panetta and Sommers – and Knowles – expressed their support.

Jahr asked whether prototypes might be available at the board retreat on April 1. Herbst responded: probably not. Subcommittee member Sommer has developed some graphic concepts and will continue working with Elevation Web and him to develop graphic proposals. There will be back-and-forth before we get to the real concepts. He said that, given the estimated 13 to 14 weeks of development, he wouldn't expect to see the concepts until about half way through.

Sommer said that, since this is a content-heavy website, the real challenge is how to present it graphically. The content will be relatively easy.

Jahr asked whether we would have the capability on the website to password-protect documents that could only be accessed by certain users. Herbst responded that this capability exists, but not on website launch.

Ragan added that we are very sensitive to how and when we launch our revitalized website with respect to our training mission, since we now have so much information on the site that supports grand juries. Herbst added that he is coordinating with Caranci on this issue. The launch will not occur prior to the printing of 2017 training materials that starts in March. It could occur in June, but that would probably not help training. So, it might be that the launch will occur shortly after the July-August training.

The motion passed unanimously, 12-0-0, by voice vote.

Herbst then recommended that the Finance Committee should take the lead in contract negotiations with Elevation Web. FC Chair Bell said that he was willing to do that, but he needed more information. The main financial issue, Herbst said, is negotiating the payment schedule. Herbst will discuss contract conditions with Elevation Web. Bell agreed to coordinate on this issue. Herbst said that he will contact Elevation Web to get agreement on the issues. Bell said that Bolin, as treasurer, is our point of contact. Panetta said that payment is a planning issue: can we make the payments when they are due? Jahr asked whether the schedule of payments is the

only item to be negotiated. Herbst responded yes. He wants the FC to tell him whether the payment schedule works for CGJA. He said that CGJA should sign the contract as soon as possible – so that we can get started.

Bolin said, we have the money to write the check. Cash flow is not an issue. The payment schedule is not an issue. Bell said that FC would immediately respond to Herbst on this issue so that he could conclude negotiations with Elevation Media on the contract.

Ragan asked: when do we notify Precision Intermedia that they lost? Herbst responded that he, Jerry Lewi (the current webmaster), and Ragan should decide.

- E-4 **Ratify the president’s appointment of Dianne Hoffman to the position of assistant treasurer, whose term shall be consistent with the term of Treasurer Medsie Bolin.** [Motion submitted by Bell]

On November 24, 2015, the board of directors ratified the establishment of a temporary position of assistant treasurer and the appointment of Dianne Hoffman to fill that position “up to one year, through November 24, 2015, whichever is sooner.” It should have been for one year through November 24, 2016. This scribing error resulted in an appointment that ended on the day it was ratified, which was not the intent of the original appointment. The Finance Committee still feels the need for an assistant treasurer, and Dianne Hoffman has agreed to continue in that position.

The motion passed unanimously, 12-0-0, by voice vote.

- E-5 **Approve the budget for the 2017 Annual Conference and approve the hotel contract with Embassy Suites for this event.** [Motion submitted by Bell]

Bell said that the board has approved the date and the venue for the 2017 Annual Conference. The ACC is now working on the program. It now presents for board approval the proposed conference budget and the proposed contract with Embassy Suites. He said that board members have asked some questions: why a two-day conference? Why are we committing to a number of hotel rooms? He said that this seems to be what our members want (from surveys of past conference attendees). The 2016 conference was one day; most attendees expressed a desire for a two-day affair. The ACC is aware of economic losses in previous years (very small in 2016, but thousands of dollars in the two years before that). Current planning calls for spreading our fixed costs over 45 attendees. In the past, we have over-estimated our attendance so that our registration fee didn’t cover our fixed costs. We have committed to 15 rooms on the night of our board retreat and 40 rooms on the night of the first day of the conference. Rooms booked a few days before or after the conference will count in the room guarantee. Members expressed interest in a social event. In negotiating with the hotel, we were able to reduce the cost of the dinner and of the conference registration fee to lower than those of the 2015 conference. In addition, the hotel – Embassy Suites – provides a free breakfast and a free cocktail hour.

Landi said that, if we have a loss again this year, we should consider for the future holding the conference biannually. Bell and Bolin agreed. This should be discussed at the board retreat held in conjunction with the conference.

Ragan expressed concern about the low number of attendees and that only attendees were asked about the conference. Bell responded that last year the ACC electronically surveyed all CGJA members about the conference. There were no responses.

Herbst asked about the room rate that may seem too high to some people. Bell responded that we always have this concern. We must put the conference where people want to be in a facility that makes people feel good and deliver a program that will inform, enlighten, and inspire them. Bolin added that one of the reasons for choosing the Embassy Suites was the extras (breakfast, cocktail hour) that are included in the room rate. This justifies the room rate compared to other hotels. Sommer asked whether there are cheaper places nearby. Bell said that there may be, but he doesn't know if any are within walking distance. Sommer said that we might want to offer that alternative.

Annual Conference Committee (ACC) has reviewed attendee feedback from the 2016 one-day annual conference and determined that a more expansive event should occur for 2017. The committee reviewed input from various sources and has determined that the Embassy Suites, Monterey Bay, provides the most attractive facility for our 2017 event, has explored cost implications involved in utilizing this facility, and finds it to be highly competitive and attractively priced. Jahr said that we must be careful here because of our room guarantee.

Jahr then asked about fundraising events that we have held in the past to help offset costs (e.g., a silent auction). Bell said that the ACC hasn't yet addressed this issue.

Ragan asked whether the Monterey chapter might help. Bell said that the ACC intends to ask the chapter to form a committee that might be helpful in a variety of ways. Panetta said that, because that chapter president had to resign because of medical problems, chapter leadership is currently thin at the top.

The motion passed unanimously, 12-0-0, by voice vote.

The approved budget is attached.

F. Director Comments

Kunkle asked about recent email exchanges about responding to an inquiry about the Nevada County Grand Jury and California grand juries. Winters said that the consensus was to ignore the inquiry.

G. Adjournment (8:37 PM).

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Ragan, Secretary

CGJA Annual Conference & Membership Meeting
29-30 Oct 2017

Budget -- Target 45 attendees

	Income	Expense
Income:		
Registration:	\$ 6,660	
Donations:		
Fixed Expenses:		
Daily Mtg Rm Rental (2x\$500) ++*		\$ 1,330
AV: (podium & Q&A mic)+(drop screen)		\$ 612
Printing		\$ 450
CC Processing		\$ 40
Wine on table (2 ea on 5 tables)		\$ 400
Coffee ++* (afternoon Oct 30)		\$ 260
Total Fixed Expenses		\$ 3,092
Variable Expenses		
Food Spend **		\$ 2,610
Dinner Room Rental \$500 (comp w/\$1750++)		
Total Variable Expenses		\$ 2,610
Totals	\$ 6,660	\$ 5,702
Difference	\$ 958	

Historical (multi-day event)

Year	Registration	Dinner	Room	Total
2015	\$ 120	\$ 55	\$ 129	\$ 304
2017	\$ 90	\$ 58	\$ 140	\$ 288

(\$30 ea++ x 10)

Coffee = \$65++/gal for reg, decaf & tea

(\$2328 min req = 40 dinners @ \$58 ea)

Fixed costs per person (45)
\$ 68.71 equals
\$ 3,092
\$ 6,660

Registration: 45 @ \$148 (includes dinner)

Footnotes:

*++ = plus svc @ 22% plus sales tax @ 8.882% plus CA tourism tax @ 0.195% (rounded to 33%)

**Dinner options to be determined @ \$55 ea (++ included)

Watch outs:

Room guarantee: 15 - Oct 28; 40 - Oct 29. Deficit pricing @ \$140 ea (no ++)