

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting

May 23, 2017

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

The roll was taken, and the meeting began at 7:00 PM.

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

Absent: Barbara Sommer (excused)

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: Winters

Board members unanimously approved the agenda.

B-2 CGJA Member Comments

None

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 04/25/17: Ragan

C-2 Acknowledge Committee Minutes and other documents in 05/24/17 meeting packet: Winters/Ragan

The Board unanimously approved the consent items.

D. Officer and Committee Chair Reports

D-1 **President's Report (Winters)**

Winters announced that Larry Johnson is stepping down as chair and as a member of LLRC. She also congratulated LLRC on updating its committee procedures.

D-2 **Officer Reports**

Vice President Bell – no report.

Secretary Ragan called attention to the updated committee roster that was included in the board meeting packet.

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

D-3 **Legal and Legislative Resources Committee (LLRC)**

LLRC Vice Chair Jahr said that LLRC has drafted its procedures and forwarded them to BPRC for compliance review, as required by the CGJA Bylaws. When the review is completed, the procedures will be forwarded to the board. One of the procedures deals with handling requests for involvement in appellate cases, which occurred this month. An attorney asked that CGJA write a letter to the court of appeal supporting publication of the court's decision

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allowing a taxpayer suit against a government consultant for conflict of interest. LLRC declined because the case is not directly related to the grand jury system.

Jahr expressed her deep thanks to LLRC Chair Larry Johnson (not present) for his great service.

D-4 Public Relations Committee (PRC)

Chair Ragan said that PRC didn't meet in May because several members couldn't attend. With respect to the April board action referring to PRC the motion to replace the logo, he said that PRC has not yet discussed it. He did, however, ask MRC and TC for comments. He added that, because of the motion and its rationale, we have already made two changes to the current logo. First, Jerry Lewi found another version that places the service mark outside the state boundary (which we are now using). Second, we are now using the logo without a border (transparent background), where appropriate.

Ragan then asked Herbst to provide an update on website revitalization.

Herbst said that he and Sommer had received the first iteration of the home page from Elevation and provided their comments. Elevation has just submitted the second iteration. He and Barbara will discuss it with Elevation by phone tomorrow (May 24), providing them with tweaks. He expects to be able to share the home page preview with the board at our June meeting. The next steps are to go to the other pages (migrating the home page design) and to the store (where Dianne Hoffman will be involved).

He said that Jerry Lewi and he have been deleting items on the current website that are no longer in use in order to make the data migration easier. He expects the new website launch to be in late summer or early fall so as not to conflict with CGJA's 2017 grand juror training.

As for the current website, the main effort has been to get all the training data in place and up-to-date.

D-5 Membership Relations Committee (MRC)

Chair Knowles talked about the membership renewal process backing up the statistics provided. In early May, MRC sends an email to every member whose membership expires in May or June. It also sends postal letters to those whose membership expired in April.

Bolin asked how many Introductory Members (IMs) we currently have. Knowles responded: 476.

Winters asked about the Sutter County chapter that has members who have never served on a grand jury. Knowles responded that he asked Beckie Jennings, chapter president, about that. She said that, for outreach, the chapter wanted to engage people with special skills in such areas as market research, teaching, and education. In addition, a few members have been county administrators who can talk about how county government actually works.

Winters also asked about the chapter survey: would it be sent to the board for comment? Knowles said he thought that MRC did that, but he would check to make sure. Jahr asked Knowles to describe the survey. He said that, directed to chapter presidents, it consists of a number of yes/no questions and other questions about membership. There is some information sharing, Knowles added, since chapter presidents may not know who in their county (regardless of chapter membership) are CGJA members.

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D-6 Training Committee (TC)

Vice Chair Bolin said TC is gearing up and ready to go for the upcoming training season. She highlighted a couple of items in the TC meeting minutes.

First, she said that Jahr and TC Chair Marsha Caranci developed an eBlast that went out to IMs on the importance of exit interviews to verify findings as part of the grand jury report-writing process. We have a report that 55% of the IMs opened this eBlast. TC will periodically contact IMs during their year on such issues, reinforcing the training they received. Knowles said that the 55%-open rate of the eBlast is high, indicating that it is timely and of interest.

Second, she said that TC addressed the question of the logo, which Ragan addressed earlier, and will provide comments to PRC.

Herbst asked about the \$500 scholarship extended to Sierra County. He asked for more information. Bolin replied that we have given Sierra a break on the tuition – a scholarship – by reducing the fees. Jahr added that we have been providing these scholarships to three small counties that otherwise could not afford the training for about five years. This year, it is just Sierra County. Bell said that this is a budgeted item.

D-7 Finance Committee (FC)

Chair Bell highlighted two items in the FC meeting minutes.

First, he said that at the end of the term of the current CGJA liability insurance policy, the new policy will not include any chapters. The board had previously discussed this item.

Second, he said that the monthly budget vs. actual financial statement now includes a new column (#5): the previous month's expenditures. This is an addition. He asks committee chairs to tell him whether this is useful.

Herbst asked about the process of dealing with adjustments to the budget over the course of the year. Bell responded that this situation doesn't happen that often. A few years ago, TC asked for a budget increase to fund an additional trainer retreat, which the board approved. The FC will discuss how to deal with such issues in the future. Bolin said that, as treasurer, she doesn't agree with adjusting the budget over the course of the year. FC has emphasized submitting a balanced budget each year. Approval of a new extraordinary expenditure, such as website revitalization this year, creates a problem for us with respect to balancing the budget. The important thing is where we are at the end of the year.

D-8 Nominations-Elections Committee (NEC)

Chair Kunkle referred board members to action item E-1. He talked about options for the president's appointment of tellers to count the election ballots to ensure that each teller could go to and return from the "counting" site in one day.

D-9 Awards Committee (AC) – No report.

D-10 Annual Conference Committee (ACC)

Chair Bell said he has again visited the 2017 conference facility in Monterey. It looks good. We will get slightly larger areas for some events. There are no optional eating facilities in the immediate area. The linkages for conference and hotel registration will soon be posted on our website and will appear in the June edition of the Journal.

D-11 Ad Hoc Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC) – No report.

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D-12 **Finance Review Committee (FRC)** – No report.

D-13 **Public Education Committee (PEC)** – Chair Wylie reported that several people have expressed interest in joining the committee. Action will accelerate once Wylie ends her current service as grand jury foreperson in Mendocino County.

E. Action Agenda

E-1 **Authorize the Tellers Committee appointed by the president to count and verify the ballots of the 2017 membership election of CGJA board members.** [Motion submitted by Kunkle, seconded by Jahr]

After due deliberation, the Nominations-Elections Committee recommends that the ballots for the 2017 election of the Board of Directors should be counted and validated by the Tellers' Committee appointed by the CGJA President (without use of an independent counter). There was no discussion.

The motion passed unanimously, 11-0-0, by voice vote.

F. Director Comments:

Winters said that Beckie Jennings, president of the Sutter County chapter, has initiated efforts in the state legislature declaration of Grand Jury Month an annual event.

Winters then introduced a communication she had received about the possibility of using the firm Flipcard on the internet to do fundraising (Winters had earlier sent the communication to board members). Many comments followed, pro and con, which the secretary has decided not to record in these meeting minutes. Suggestions were made as to forming an ad hoc committee to look at it and/or making it a board retreat topic. Panetta agreed to do basic research on Flipcard, which board members accepted.

Panetta then discussed how the Monterey chapter has been having problems since its president, Mac Small, had to resign due to health reasons.

G. Adjournment (8:23 PM).

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Ragan, Secretary