

CGJA Chapter Officers' Meeting

November 19, 2025

MINUTES

30 attendees representing 17 Chapters

Welcome remarks

Introduction of Chapter Relations Subcommittee (CRS) members by Sharon DeBenedetti, CRS co-chair (Sonoma County): Dar Swenson, CRS co-chair (Fresno County), Marsha Caranci (Shasta County), Martha Saldana-Wolf (Solano County), and Laura Griffin (Contra Costa County). Following a brief presentation on the role of CRS within CGJA by Dar Swenson, Denise Snider (San Joaquin County) volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Annual Conference in San Luis Obispo

CRS members thanked the Chapters for their response to the "Challenges and Triumphs" survey. Eighty-five percent of the Chapters responded. Additional comments regarding the conference:

- The San Luis Obispo County Chapter was acknowledged for hosting the conference.
- A Shasta County Chapter representative gave a presentation on writing an effective press release and op ed for civil grand jury reports.
- The Fresno County Chapter members' take away was an outline of how to make a presentation about the civil grand jury.
- The Los Angeles County Chapter was impressed by the presentation by the keynote speaker on AI.
- The Alameda County Chapter commented on the need for a statewide database containing all past and future civil grand jury reports to provide counties with insight into the responses to reports other county civil grand juries had produced. The state archivist presented to CGJA's Legal and Legislative Resource Committee, a proposed language change to penal code section 933 that would require all counties to send a digital copy of their reports and responses to the state archives. It was noted that several years of civil grand jury reports are posted on each County's Court website.
- A new law requiring CGJ reports to be ADA accessible will take effect in March 2026 for most counties, thus new reports posted on a government website thereafter must meet ADA compliance. The training teams have taken these requirements into account and the Report Writing Workshop includes reference to this new requirement.
- The Annual Conference Committee will begin considering topics for the 2026 conference.

CGJA Website

Marsha Caranci presented updates to the Chapter section of the CGJA website made by members of CRS.

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- Attendees were reminded to check the "Civil Grand Jury News" section for the latest information. Chapters wishing to share news about their activities should send the information to CRS along with any photos.
- The Chapter section of the website contains a list of all Chapters and their president and access to the Chapter's website, if one is available.
- A new map of California identifies the location of the 23 current Chapters within the state.
- The "Chapter Resource Documents" provides Chapters with a location to share their documents and practices. Chapters should submit documents for posting on the website by sending them to membership@CGJA.org.
- Chapters were encouraged to share information regarding local orientations, outreach activities, contractual agreements, or those interested in obtaining liability insurance etc.
- It is important that everyone use the term "Civil Grand Jurors Association." Chapters using the term "Jury" should correct the title.

Combined Membership Program

Mike Hofman stated that CGJA was attempting to improve and recognize the value Chapter plays in CGJA by updating the website and implementing the combined membership program. The goal is to increase Chapter membership. The program is not restricted to those Chapters that charge membership dues. When a person signs up for combined membership, the Chapter is notified that there is an individual interested in joining their group.

When individuals renew their membership on the CGJA website, they will be asked if they wish to join a Chapter. If there is a participating Chapter in their county and the individual clicks on both CGJA and Chapter membership, they will pay for both fees (assuming the chapter charges dues). The CGJA treasurer will send payments to the Chapter on a regular basis (likely within a month). On the day of the transaction, a notice is sent to the Chapter of the person's interest in joining the Chapter.

For those Chapters interested in participating in the combined membership program, send Mike Hofman an email stating:

- the amount of the Chapter dues,
- who to notify at the Chapter of the person's interest in joining
- who should receive the payment for the Chapter dues from CGJA
- confirm the Chapter's fiscal year.

Chapters who wish to obtain a list of current CGJA members within their county should contact Mike Hofman, who will provide them with a list.

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CGJA Journal

Participants were reminded of the CGJA Journal which is published and sent out to members six times per year. The journal contains information about the Civil Grand Jurors' Associations with a section titled "Chapter Connections." The goal is to highlight the accomplishments and successes of a Chapter in each edition. This is an opportunity to recognize the work of a Chapter. Each Chapter that is highlighted is asked to write an article about their activities and accomplishments and include pictures if available. The information should be sent to Membership@cgja.org .

Open Discussion

There was no further discussion.

Next Chapter Officers' Meeting

February 11, 2026 - 3 PM to 5 PM Via ZOOM