

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting

August 27, 2024

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

The roll was taken, and the meeting began at 3:00 p.m.

Directors present: Shirley Boracci, Marsha Caranci, Gary Cooper, Karen Deeming, Bob Finlayson, Travis Gibbons, Jim Glover, Larry Herbst, Karen Jahr, Juliana Olinka Jones, Diane Lloyd, Barbara Sommer.

Absent: Lou Panetta (excused), Richard Rogers (excused).

Quorum is present.

Others present: Committee Chairs: Lloyd Bell (ACC) Mike Hofman (PRC); Asst. Treasurer: Loydyne Lane.

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: By acclamation with amendment to action item E-1 changing "El Dorado" to "Nevada".

B-2 CGJA Member Comments – none.

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approved Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 06-25-23: Cooper.

C-2 Acknowledged Committee Minutes and other documents in 08-27-24 meeting packet: Cooper.

D. Officer and Committee Chair Reports – see committee minutes in packet for details on current activities.

D-1 **President's Report** (Cooper) – recognized and thanked those in attendance for their input and work.

D-2 Officer Reports

Vice President (Herbst) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – The Treasury Bond account has been established and we are ready to begin purchases. Nine checks for \$22,000 have been received from counties for training. The CD that matured this month went into the savings account and will be used to purchase the Treasury bonds for 25K. Trainer reimbursement checks have been mailed with only two or three remaining. Cooper asked about T bond interest. Gibbons said that it is announced two or three days after purchase. This week it was about 5.25%. It will go down in September. Caranci thanked Gibbons for setting up the treasury bond purchase and reported four orders of \$20K each will be placed tomorrow.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

D-14 **Grand Jury Effectiveness Workgroup (GJE)** – Finlayson said the group met in July and August and have conceptualized eight possible reports. They are still working on metrics and monitoring a committee developed at a regional meeting which is addressing the topic.

D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell announced that Leon Panetta will be the keynote speaker and that because of Panetta's schedule, the conference will resume on Monday at **8:30**

a.m. (instead of the usual 9 a.m. time). So far, 33 people have signed up for the conference, an on-track figure. The last day to get the hotel conference rate is **Sept. 27**. Gibbons asked about a pre-deposit. Bell said he was figuring it out. Caranci asked whether the schedule has been finalized. She was concerned about the breakout sessions not having something for members who did not belong to a chapter. Bell said that the topics were selected based on attendance and interest expressed last year, along with the conference evaluations.

Herbst asked about promoting attendance. Hofman described a series of three Eblasts, one of which has already been sent (8/22), the second scheduled for 9/15, and a third one around the beginning of October. Glover asked about communication with chapter members who were not CGJA members. Hofman said he had email addresses and could send Eblasts to them. Boracci reminded Bell to add new chapter recognition to the conference schedule. Next year's conference will be in San Luis Obispo.

D-3 **Legal and Legislative Resources Committee (LLRC)** – no report.

D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – Hofman reported that the current blog summaries of grand jury media coverage would be moved to Facebook with the entire articles being posted on our website. That process will be finalized in September. The PRC would like to publish an article in the Journal on “Why I volunteer” and asked if anyone knew of individuals with an interesting perspective, to let him know. He brought up the concept of having a CGJA Spokesperson, a contact point person. Herbst questioned the efficacy of a single spokesperson, pointing out the multiple outlets that are communicating in one form or another and referred to the communication matrix in the policy manual. Hofman responded that the spokesperson would be dealing only with media inquiries.

Regarding the logo style guide, Hofman pointed out that there is still funding should further changes be needed. He will hold a Constant Contact meeting, probably on Oct. 8, reviewing best practices for those who use it or are interested in it. Jerry Lewi is interested in updating the CGJA history document and may be contacting individuals about that. Finlayson pointed out the importance of the covid epidemic in affecting our operation.

D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** – Caranci said the committee has twelve members. The committee reached out to strong chapters, Contra Costa, Monterey, Marin and Los Angeles, and was successful in recruiting volunteers. The committee is reaching out to inactive chapters, for example, Fresno. Current membership is 317 active paid members, a record high for a long time.

D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Caranci said the summer season is finished, and the committee is moving on to planning curricula and assignments for report writing season. They have been very successful in recruiting trainers. The nine second-year ones are good. The new trainers did well, despite some health and family issues. Overall, we have a strong training staff.

D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Caranci explained the basis for the red notation on the financial reports. They are the result of ongoing changes in income and expenses., primarily trainer reimbursements, after 31 July during the reconciliation period. Gibbons said at present we have \$37,000 in checking and \$89,000 in savings. The accounts are linked so that if checking is depleted, savings will cover. He monitors the situation weekly and tracks outstanding payments.

D-9 **Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)** – Deeming said voting was going along as it should. So far, 104 ballots have been returned; nine were mailed and one has returned. The

Tellers Committee is in place. She raised the issue of shortening the deadline, noting that with online voting, perhaps not as much time is needed. Next year's committee will consider the matter. Herbst added that the return rate is usually around 35%, with most coming in soon after initially sending or after a reminder.

- D-10 **Awards Committee (AC)** – Sommer reported that there were five nominations for best grand jury report and one nomination for best media coverage. She mentioned that Caranci had suggested dropping the media award. The Awards Committee will consider that suggestion.
- D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – Jahr said she would get to the pending PRC Procedures revision soon.
- D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – Herbst reviewed the history of efforts to facilitate communication between the treasurer and assistant treasurer. The situation has finally been resolved. For the website, total visits tend to range from 1100 to 1400 per month. In July, the total was 1700, most likely due to training efforts and requirements.

E. Action Agenda

E-1 Approve up to \$600 in expenses for David Hammer to travel to the County Counsel Association Annual Conference in Santa Barbara.

Caranci provided the rationale. His talk is titled "Representing the Civil Grand Jury." He is an attorney and a former county counsel and has considerable experience with the civil grand jury. Caranci and Jahr are working with him on his PowerPoint presentation which will incorporate our logo. They will also review his notes.

[Motion made by Caranci, seconded by Jahr.]

Jahr elaborated on how his presentation would be helpful in educating county counsels about our training role for grand juries.

The motion passed, 10-0-1, by hand vote.

E-2 Approve the formation of the Solano Chapter.

All the required paperwork has been submitted.

[Motion made by Boracci, seconded by Glover.]

The motion passed, 11-0-0, by hand vote.

E-3 Provide approval to Nevada County Chapter to use CGJA logo in its materials.

Hofman amended the motion to read "Provide approval to Nevada County Chapter to use the CGJA logo along with the chapter name in its materials, *specifically in their website or in outreach or recruiting materials only.*"

[Motion made by Hofman, seconded by Caranci.]

Jones objected to the board's having to deal with each chapter's logo use, arguing that PRC guidance and the style guide would be sufficient. Herbst expressed concern about the specific use in this case. He added that it would be necessary to amend the policy and procedures manual to give the PRC the necessary authorization using defined guidelines. He will prepare those. Lane showed a flyer as an example of what Nevada County has in mind. Caranci explained her concern, not about the appearance of the logo itself, but rather, the documents on which the logo might

appear, for example inappropriate political positions, or statements that might be in variance with court procedure.

The motion passed, 11-0-0, by hand vote.

- F. **Director Comments** – Caranci pointed out that the October board meeting is scheduled a day after the conference. Cooper said we would take that issue up at our September meeting.
- G. **Adjournment (4:52 p.m.)**

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary