

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting February 22, 2022

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

The roll was taken, and the meeting began at 3:01 PM.

Directors present: Shirley Boracci, Marsha Caranci, Bob Finlayson, Travis Gibbons, Larry Herbst, Diane Lloyd, Lou Panetta, Barbara Sommer.

Absent: Janet Clark, Henry Rible.

Quorum is present.

Others present: Committee Chairs: Lloyd Bell, ACC and FC; Karen Jahr, LLRC and BPRC; and Joann Landi, AC; Richard Rogers, FC Member.

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: Board members unanimously approved the agenda.

B-2 CGJA Member Comments - none

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approved Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 01/25/22: Panetta

C-2 Acknowledged Committee Minutes and other documents in 02/22/22 meeting packet: Panetta. Board unanimously approved the consent items and the minutes.

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

D-1 **President's Report** – Panetta announced the resignations of Directors Hafner and Cheyne, both for medical reasons.

The new Nominations & Elections committee has been appointed.

South Region: Director (Chair) Lou Panetta, Member Maria Garcia

North Region: Director Marsha Caranci, Member, Ray Frisbie

Central Region: Director Barbara Sommer, Member Gary Cooper

D-2 **Officer Reports**

Vice President (Herbst) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – no report.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Bell said that the committee has been reviewing insurance documents. He introduced Richard Rogers who will be the new chair.

D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell said that plans are in good shape with speakers and programming. The committee is preparing an article for the *April Journal*. The conference will be held in San Rafael on Oct. 23-24. Herbst asked whether the agenda has been finalized. Bell said it was in process. Finlayson asked about speakers. Bell said the keynote address would be given by Ethan Rarick, CEO of the Little Hoover Commission. The other speaker is Wendy

Brickman who will describe CGJA initiatives for increasing grand jury awareness. Herbst asked if the committee was committed to an in-person conference. Bell said “Yes. However, we may not see a surplus this year”. Not clear what the attendance will be.

Lloyd pointed out that the MCRC has a time slot, and the committee is considering a panel of chapter presidents to discuss best practices. They are trying to design something that will be highly interactive, informative, and fun.

D-3 **Legal and Legislative Resources Committee (LLRC)** – Jahr outlined the proposed legislative bill, AB 1972, aimed at increasing the grand jury per diem to match the prevailing wage in public works. The upshot is that it could amount to \$65,000 per juror per year. That has substantial ramifications. Counties won’t like it because the state won’t pay for it. A second concern pertains to holdovers being kept for the purposes of diversity. Conceivably, if no diverse holdovers were available, no one else could serve as a holdover. The bill recently went to committee. She will keep the board apprised of its progress or fate.

D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – Herbst pointed out that the committee did not meet this month.

D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** – Lloyd reported that the committee has two new members: Henry Rible from the San Luis Obispo chapter and Jody Hansen from the Monterey chapter.

CGJA had 312 members as of January, a drop as people were not renewing. These will be the committee’s next targets. Committee members will contact them and ask why. There have been a few renewals and some new members since.

The committee still needs members. They are creating chapter information sheets as a means of consolidating chapter information such as meeting dates, tax numbers, and other data which can be of use to both the committee and to the individual chapters.

They plan for each MCRC member to attend a chapter meeting each month.

Caranci asked about the chapter formation guide revision. Panetta said that Herbst and Karin Hern were reviewing it. Herbst said he was waiting for Hern’s input. Panetta will check with her.

D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Caranci explained the absence of minutes as due to the meeting schedules for February and March.

This is a busy time of year due to background work. The January report writing workshops went well. Sierra County empaneled an 11-member grand jury, the first in three years.

The committee completed its review of its policies and procedures. They are scheduling five report writing workshops for May. Three legal advisor workshops are scheduled for the 2022-23 season. Jahr is requesting an increase of CCE credits from five to six.

Summer season is looking busy. They will train 40-45 counties over a period of eight weeks. About one quarter of those are scheduled already. Most counties are requesting in-person training.

The training subcommittee is recruiting the next class of trainers. Three have been interviewed, and one legal trainer has been accepted. New trainer orientation is in May. The public relations subcommittee is working on an eblast for new grand jurors.

Lloyd asked if the committee had a list of expectations regarding chapter support at the training venues. Carance said the support varies. She will work with the MCRC on the issue.

- D-10 **Awards Committee (AC)** – Landi said we had one request for a posthumous Certificate of Special Recognition Award from Alameda County. We will acknowledge it at the annual conference and with a note in the Journal. Panetta will work on a press release and mention it on Facebook.
- D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – Jahr hopes that committee chairs are working on needed updates. The committee ensures that the various governance documents are in sync. She would like to have any submissions within the next several weeks so the committee can deal with several at a time.
- D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – Herbst does a daily review of the “attack log.” In the last ten days there has been an inordinate number of attacks from IP addresses in Moscow.

January saw high website usage, probably due to training activity. The board page was viewed often. Panetta pointed out recently having posted a Facebook link to it. The system book has been downloaded often; oddly, the old version more than the recent one.

The committee (Herbst and Panetta) have focuses in restoring a relatively direct link between Blogspot and Facebook. Herbst described the process of discovering that Google has probably blocked exporting Blogspot.

Gibbons described getting bogus BOD emails with a phony URL. Herbst said an individual periodically downloads addresses from the website and sends them out. He has traced the individual to an IP address in a town in northern Virginia.

Rogers asked if Herbst could write a script for the third party involved in Blogspot to facilitate the export to Facebook. Herbst said we don’t have any script writers. If the Awareness Workgroup effort picks up, then it might be worth exploring. He said we could abandon Google’s Blogspot and move to our website in concert with GoDaddy and use GoDaddy’s blog tool. It would require setting up a new blog and keeping the old one as an archive. That arrangement would give us more control.

- D-14 **Grand Jury Effectiveness Workgroup** – in addition to the minutes, Finlayson said that Josh Franco has become an associate member of CGJA and is active in the workgroup. Their work on measuring impact and improvement is a work-in-progress. Herbst asked about takeaways, requesting something like an executive summary. Finlayson said he would provide that next month.
- D-15 **Diversity Study Workgroup** – Sommer referred to the second report in the packet and the first report from last month’s packet. The main point from the first report is that we hope Panetta’s workgroup on increasing grand jury awareness will incorporate the suggestions into materials for distribution to chapters and the courts.

The second report refers to the orders of the court that require the jury commissioner in each county to track grand jury demographics. We have started to collect that information and will continue to do so.

Sommer said she would like to publish an article about the workgroup in the *Journal* and will run that by the PRC as it has Journal oversight. In addition, she pointed out the legislature is

weighing in. The legislation, AB 1972, described earlier by Jahr, would amend the statutory requirements to include gender, age, race, and ethnicity during the grand jury selection process. It is good that we are on top of the issue.

Finlayson said the data from the second report were used by his chapter in their upcoming contact with the Contra Costa jury commissioner and that it would be of use to his workgroup on grand jury effectiveness. Herbst pointed out how, during his effort in assisting Sommer in collecting the data, he was surprised by the very few websites reporting demographics. He wondered “who was watching the store”?

Caranci expressed concern that the data reflect a very limited point in time. Sommer agreed and pointed out the need to continue collecting the data over time to see trends. She added that positive examples might be used to encourage a continued search for diversity (for example, the limited data showed a positive pattern for the number of Black jurors, but not so for Latinos).

- D-15 **Grand Jury Awareness Workgroup** – Panetta said their work began on February 1 with the agreement with Brickman Marketing. Panetta, working with Brickman, released the first press release today – about February as Grand Jury Month. They have posted pieces on Facebook to assess reach. There are 150 new contacts. They are building out the media contact list. The press release on the book goes out on March 1. The chapter presidents meeting with Panetta is on March 15. The committee will be creating and sending a press release template for use by the chapters. The first committee meeting is tomorrow.

E. Action Agenda

E-1 Approve Richard Rogers as Chair of the Finance Committee.

[Motion made by Panetta, seconded by Gibbons]

Panetta recognized retiring chair, Lloyd Bell, for his professional and quality work. He was “patient and a champion.” Rogers was described as energetic and brilliant and having contributed to the training team. “We welcome and thank you for taking this on.”

Rogers briefly described his background: UCSB grad, CPA at Arthur Anderson, CEO for the Golden State Warriors, and subsequent marketing and broadcasting experience.

The motion passed, 8-0-0, by hand vote.

F. Director Comments

Lloyd alerted the board to the change in the MCRC meeting date to the first Thursday of the month at 4:30 PM.

Caranci said she received a call from an individual in Alaska who is looking into corruption and is interested in the watchdog role. He was very interested in learning more about California’s grand jury system. She was pleased that she could refer him to our grand jury book.

G. Adjournment (4:17 PM)

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary