

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting

March 25, 2025

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

Directors present: Marsha Caranci, Gary Cooper, Karen Deeming, Robert Finlayson, Dan Freeman, Travis Gibbons, Karen Jahr, Lou Panetta, Richard Rogers, Barbara Sommer.

Absent: Shirley Boracci (excused), Jim Glover, Larry Herbst (excused), Juliana Olinka Jones (excused).

Quorum is present.

Others present: Committee Chairs: Lloyd Bell (ACC), John Bradley (PRC), Mike Hofman (MCRC)

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: By acclamation.

B-2 CGJA Member Comments – none.

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approved Regular Board Meeting Minutes by acclamation, 02-25-25: Cooper.

C-2 Acknowledged Committee Minutes and other documents in 03-25-25 meeting packet: Cooper.

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

D-1 **President's Report** (Cooper) – said there have been a lot of changes and there are more to come. We need to manage through them and think creatively, Artificial Intelligence (AI) being an example of a change that can't be avoided.

D-2 **Officer Reports**

Vice President (Herbst) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – Paid yearly fee for QuickBooks and insurance, which increased by ten percent.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

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

D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – no report.

D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** – Hofman said the subcommittees are getting up to speed, working on initiatives. Membership is slow, so far. We have 292 members. He presented the following information from the database: 78% of our members and 51 of 75 volunteers come from counties with chapters. Finlayson asked how many chapter members are not CGJA members? Hofman said we lack information

on chapter membership regarding CGJA status. The committee will be following up on the possibility of dual membership (Bradley is leading on that initiative). Caranci pointed out that chapters are supposed to report yearly on the number of CGJA members.

With respect to improving chapter relations, Hofman said the next chapter presidents' meeting is scheduled for June 19. There are three a year: February, June and November. Panetta said we need to offer chapter members an incentive to join CGJA. What can we do for them? Hofman said dual membership is in that direction. We also should focus on counties without chapters.

- D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Caranci said this year's training curriculum is at the printer. The committee is gearing up for training the trainers. She added that Los Angeles County has a new jury administration. Chapter members will be meeting with her and will suggest the county's using our training program.

- D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Freeman described how the yearly financials for publication in the April Journal to our membership have been simplified for a cleaner presentation. The income statement no longer compares to our budget. Instead, it simply presents our current year's actual results.

Adoption of the QuickBooks Enterprise system in place of QuickBooks Online will allow us to produce financial statements directly from QuickBooks. No manual intervention needed. Our necessary computer is housed at "CloudWalks." They have good backup and security. We will move to accrual accounting. We are investing in treasury bonds.

Each committee will receive a detailed financial statement. After the end of the month, Gibbons and Lane will reconcile the QuickBooks Online statements. Then they will transfer the data to QuickBooks Enterprise. This is a low-risk conversion. The change is greatly facilitated by the fact that the software is essentially the same. They are now working on a new "chart of accounts" where we put charges and organize data following standard nonprofit protocols.

He gave examples of the detail that will be available to committees. Overall, there are three levels of information: Most detailed at the individual committee level, next for the Financial Committee, and most broadly, for the BOD. He added that Hofman is working on the interface with credit cards and training expenses.

- D-8 **Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)** – Panetta said they sent an eBlast and follow up with a final open rate of 84%. However, no nominations were received. The committee will move ahead about ten days after the announcement goes out in the *Journal*.

- D-9 **Awards Committee (AC)** – no report

- D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell reported that the committee is in the early stages of program development. They are looking for an AI speaker. They have some new breakout session topics and will bring back previous well-attended ones.

They are considering CGJA lapel pins to give to conference attendees. Such pins could also be sent to chapters for their CGJA members. He suggested that the MCRC, PRC and TC might want to give some thought to it.

- D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – no report.

D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – no report.

D-14 **Grand Jury Effectiveness Workgroup (GJE)** – Finlayson said the committee will be following up with the State Archivist in setting up digital copies of grand jury reports. He said that Prof. Franco completed the collection of fire reports requested by Congressman Schiff. Those data collected for a 10-year period took about a week to compile. He suggested that the procedure they developed might be used to accumulate a list of reports on specific topics which could then be made available to sitting civil grand juries. The committee plans to release a production report giving the number of reports by county, by year, with the number of respondents. This could be done as an annual report.

D-15 **Finance Process Workgroup** – reported in D-7 above.

E. **Action Agenda** – no action items.

F. **Director Comments** – none

G. **Adjournment** (3:38 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary