

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting

May 27, 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, Jim Glover, Larry Herbst, Karen Jahr, Juliana Olinka Jones, Richard Rogers, Barbara Sommer.

Absent (excused): Shirley Boracci, Lou Panetta.

Quorum is present.

Others present: Loydyne Lane, Asst. Treasurer. 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, 04-22-25: Cooper.

C-2 Acknowledged other documents in 05-27-25 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) – mentioned that training season was about to begin with lots of activity.

D-2 **Officer Reports**

Vice President (Herbst) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – the Zelle system is working fine.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

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

D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – Bradley asked the board about interest in exploring posting on Wikipedia, briefly outlining some options. He mentioned the pros and cons. Did the board want the PRC to pursue the possibilities? After some discussion during which concerns were noted and questions raised, the consensus was “yes.” The PRC will pursue the matter and report back to the board.

D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** – Hofman said the committee is fully staffed. Sharon Debenedetti, chair of the Chapter Relations Subcommittee, has a good crew of six, as does the Membership Subcommittee. The committee is working on

initiatives that will be brought to the board. June 11 is the next chapter officers' meeting. If you would like to attend, please notify Hofman.

Some statistics: As of the end of April we had 276 members; End of May, 297 members. Today 306 members. In April 2024 there were 71 volunteers. In April 2025 there were 75 volunteers.

Herbst asked about committee initiatives. Hofman said they are trying to reach out to chapters more directly. Another initiative involves volunteer aspects and the third addresses dual membership. Cooper pointed out the role of training in recruitment.

- D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Rogers reported that the training season is ready to go, beginning on June 11. The Train the Trainers orientation was successful. Materials are ready. He described the mentorship program run by Bob Phibbs which involves extensive preparation of trainers.

Foreperson workshop materials are at the printer. In August the Report Writing Workshop materials will be finalized. Caranci added that we have ten new trainers representing 24 counties. Team meetings have begun. Herbst asked about changes in counties being trained. Caranci said they had hoped to add Los Angeles, but it was too late. She is hopeful about next year. The door is closed for Alameda. Tehama has transferred to fiscal year and will be trained, and Siskiyou has been added. Two counties remain on an annual calendar – San Bernardino and Trinity.

- D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Freeman referred the board to the voluminous material in the packet. The committee is still working on the transfer of the January to March data from QuickBooks Online (QBO) to QuickBooks Enterprise (QBE) with help from Mike Hofman. April will be entered directly into QBE. Expenses should remain close to budget. The work will be reviewed by a consultant, with a follow-up review when complete. The QBE system automatically generates reports that will look somewhat different from the current ones. Herbst asked Gibbons whether he was still operating off of QuickBooks Online (QBO). That answer was “no.” Hofman said that the conversion included the history from QBO.

Caranci explained that the financials for April were not included in the packet because there were not yet ready. They will be in the June packet.

- D-8 **Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)** – Herbst said the deadline for board nominations is May 31. None have been received. The next phase is to receive candidate statements for publication in the August *Journal*. Ballots will be presented at the June Board meeting. Website preparation for the election is on target.

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

- D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell explained that the early-bird discount mentioned in the committee minutes is not feasible.

We have a Keynote Speaker. Nancy Welts and the Host Chapter have obtained the commitment of Dr. Foaad Khosmood, A Forbes Endowed Professor of Computer Engineering at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, to present an address about Artificial Intelligence. At Cal Poly, Dr. Khosmood usually teaches AI, Interactive Entertainment, Computational Linguistics Data Mining, and Operating Systems. Dr. Khosmood is the primary investigator for the CalMatters Digital Democracy project. We will be working

with Dr. Khosmood to tailor the address to our needs as we continue to work on conference content.

The program is almost complete. One hour of time remains to be filled. Let Bell know if you have a topic you would like included.

Herbst pointed out that registration last year was \$103 and this year is \$101, without the usual offset from the board – a notable achievement. Food costs go up every year.

- D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – Herbst reported that the committee has worked through its backlog of chapters submitted name change bylaws relating to the association’s name change. A few considerations remain for Contra Costa, Marin and SLO chapters.
- D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – Herbst briefly reviewed the highlights of the website statistics. The number of unique visits was up in April. Gibbons asked about the distinction between regular and intro members. Herbst said those data are not available as we do not require login. Hofman asked if logins (some of us login for downloads) are counted in the hits. Herbst said “yes.”
- D-14 **Grand Jury Effectiveness Workgroup (GJE)** – Finlayson said committee members met with the State Archives staff and will have a follow-up meeting on June 17. They discussed the transfer of reports from county to archives, how reports would be preserved, better access to reports (paper vs. digital, in all three instances), changing when reports and responses would be sent to simplify the workflow and possible changes to the penal code.
- D-15 **Finance Process Workgroup** – Freeman said the group was no longer operational. President Cooper disbanded it.

E. Action Agenda

- E-1 **Approve using \$4,200 in 2024 AC donations to offset fixed expenses, and approve the 2025 AC registration fee of \$101.**

Bell described the process and said that more AV capability was added. A planned 5-10% increase in food cost is included in the budget. A greater than expected increase in donations allowed for the registration fee reduction.

[Motion made by Bell, seconded by Herbst.]

The motion passed, 12-0-0, by hand vote and one email.

F. Director Comments – none

G. Adjournment (4:00 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary