

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting August 25, 2020

MINUTES

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

The roll was taken, and the meeting began at 3:02 PM.

Present: Directors Lloyd Bell, Marsha Caranci, Janet Clark, Travis Gibbons, Tim Hafner, Larry Herbst, Joann Landi, Chuck MacLean, Lou Panetta, Barbara Sommer, Ron Zurek.

Absent: Jerry Kunkle.

Quorum is present.

Other present: Jim Ragan, Parliamentarian; Karen Jahr, Chair BPRC and LLRC.

B. Agenda and Comments

B-1 Agenda Approval: Herbst

The agenda was modified to move the ACC report to an earlier position. Board members unanimously approved the modified agenda.

B-2 CGJA Member Comments - none

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 06/23/20: Herbst

C-2 Acknowledge Committee Minutes and other documents in 08/25/20 meeting packet: Herbst
Board unanimously approved the consent items.

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

D-1 **President's Report** (Herbst) – commented that 2019 was an outstanding year, 2020 an unexpected one. The board and the organization have been resilient and flexible with regard to their ongoing relationship with the counties. He postponed the October board retreat and therefore has not solicited discussion topics. There will be a special board meeting in the morning on Oct. 26 (about an hour before the membership meeting) which will include newly elected directors. The agenda will include the NEC recommendations for officers. Continuing and new board members will vote to approve the nominations.

D-2 Officer Reports

Vice President (Panetta) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – Zurek reported that the financials look good.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell said that the agenda, included in the board packet, covered all requirements for the annual membership meeting. The keynote speech is not required.

He solicited questions on the timing. There was a discussion about the distribution of committee reports. Bell said these would be distributed (or linked) along with the Zoom

invitation. Herbst said he would be featuring committee activity highlights in his presidential address. Just prior to the Q&A session, committees and committee chairs will be introduced. The committee reports will be published in the October *Journal* (which will be published a few weeks before the membership meeting). Ragan outlined the annual membership meeting communication plan which includes a flyer sent via eBlast in mid-September, a letter to chapter presidents in late September, and the invitation to members with meeting agenda, Zoom link, Zoom instructions, and a link to committee reports stored on the website.

There was discussion about the mechanics of Zoom (e.g., access, chat) and handling questions. The meeting will be open to all who wish to attend. The announcement will be sent to members and to chapter/association presidents. The board decided that the swearing-in was worth including and Jahr volunteered Judge Jahr for the task. The awards presentation will include time for brief recipient comments should they so desire.

- D-3 **Legal and Legislative Resources Committee (LLRC)** – Jahr explained that the committee is meeting less frequently. This is not because they are not receiving inquiries. However, the questions often duplicate those asked earlier. As a response has already been constructed, there is no need to consult with committee members. She or Caranci send the appropriate responses to the questioners. This is the reason that we are seeing fewer formal responses.
- D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – Regan reviewed the publishing of new members names and will pursue obtaining data about long-term members so as to feature them appropriately.
- D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** –Ragan said the new members have been an asset. The committee continues to contact chapters. Herbst mention that there were two new lifetime members in July. He has sent them formal letters inviting short bios and their history in the grand jury system with an eye toward an article in the *Journal*. Ragan reported sequential generational (mother/daughter) participation on a grand jury.
- D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Caranci said they are very busy with training and are constrained by the limited number who do Zoom training. They are working on training more presenters and that is going well. San Francisco training went very well. Paid invoices are coming in from the county. Treasurer Gibbons said that income this month was \$7,682.
- Expenses are way down as trainers are not traveling. Getting the manuals (shipping) has been a problem. The first foreperson workshop will be in a couple of days. The first report writing workshop is on Sept. 30.
- Hafner asked about undecided counties (with regard to impaneling grand juries). Caranci said situation is not clear and changes rapidly, with subsequent training demands arising. It is difficult to keep track of what might be coming up.
- D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Zurek said the committee has not met, but individually reviewed finances and these are fine. We are breaking even, maybe making a profit. Herbst underscored that the pandemic has thrown off the CGJA budget.
- D-8 **Nominations-Elections Committee (NEC)** – Panetta reported 94 votes to date out of 273 eligible voters. The committee sent reminders. There were only 2 paper ballot requests. The election is on track. Final results will be available after August 31. The committee will make its formal recommendation in September. Herbst looked at past turnout and said it was in the 110-130 range. He is concerned about what happened with those who tried and failed because

of the opening glitch. There was also a beginning glitch last year. He is not convinced that electronic voting is the best way to go. Zurek commented on how easy it is to vote electronically. Panetta commented we should not completely judge electronic voting until we have a year when we encounter no early issues when voting begins.

The Tellers Committee has been appointed: Judy Lazenby, Kris Desmond and Nell Griscom.

Panetta suggested that the control numbers used for the ballots be random numbers and consist of 3-4 digits or more.

D-9 **Awards Committee (AC)** – no report. There will be awards presented at the membership meeting. Hafner thanked Landi with regard to the awards, saying that people doing good work should be recognized.

D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – Jahr said the committee was reviewing the updated president procedures and will complete that by the end of the current term. Herbst pointed out that these were minor updates.

D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – Panetta said Dropbox and Zoom procedures were going fine. On the website, attention is being given to the pandemic page. Herbst said website visits in June were higher than in May and June 2019, perhaps pandemic-related. The new document on jails was frequently downloaded. There was a drop off from June to July and hits were down from last year (in past, there was lots of training activity in July).

Panetta said there has been feedback about the report search function on the website. He pointed out that there is a problem with how counties log reports that makes it difficult to uncover them. The search results are also affected by the search argument used and Google's search algorithm and limitations. There was some discussion about the issue and how best to deal with it. There is a related disclaimer on the website.

E. **Action Agenda** – no actions

F. **Director Comments** – Clark asked for ideas about terminology regarding report follow-ups. Suggestions were implementation review, continuity, response review.

Caranci and Jahr described an accidental appearance at the morning's Zoom training session (an unanticipated consequence of pandemic-induced changes in training).

G. **Adjournment** (4:25 PM).

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary