

California Grand Jurors' Association Board of Directors Meeting
May 25, 2021
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, Bernadette Cheyne, Janet Clark, Bob Finlayson, Tim Hafner, Larry Herbst, Joann Landi, Kathy Mastako, Lou Panetta, Barbara Sommer.

Absent: Travis Gibbons.

Quorum is present.

Others present: Committee Chairs: Karen Jahr, BPRC and LLRC; Lloyd Bell, ACC and FC; Jerry Lewi, PRC; Diane Lloyd, MCRC.

B. Agenda and Comments

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

B-2 CGJA Member Comments - none

C. Consent Items

C-1 Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 04/27/21: Panetta

C-2 Acknowledge Committee Minutes and other documents in 05/25/21 meeting packet: Panetta Minutes were amended to correct item E3 (changed second from Caranci to Clark). Board unanimously approved the consent items and the corrected minutes.

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

D-1 **President's Report** – Panetta will be out of country from May 26 to June 16. Herbst will fill in except for the period from May 28 to June 6 during which time Caranci will cover the president's responsibilities.

Panetta said that he was very impressed with the level of work being done by the committees and is grateful for that effort.

D-2 **Officer Reports**

Vice President (Herbst) – no report.

Treasurer (Gibbons) – no report.

Secretary (Sommer) – no report.

D-7 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Bell stated that we continue to put away a little money each month. The committee has drafted a memorial fund policy which is being reviewed by BPRC.

D-10 **Annual Conference Committee (ACC)** – Bell said the committee continues to seek topics for the membership meeting's program speaker (CEO Neil McCormick, California Special Districts Association). Please send him suggestions.

Panetta said there might be some value in sending the query to chapter presidents. That effort could be coordinated with MCRC.

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

D-4 **Public Relations Committee (PRC)** – Lewi said that the committee is focusing on increasing grand jury awareness. There are a number of tasks: promote the system book when it is completed in the fall, continue tracking results of continuity reports, push chapters to publish favorable reports, promote that concept through training, and reinforce the sitting jury's doing a self-critique of the previous report in order to improve its own. Another suggestion is to combine accounts of the success of previous grand juries with recruiting materials posted by the courts in order to emphasize what grand juries do.

The PRC has started a list of media contacts throughout the state. Writers will be contacted to cover the grand jury, for example, Dan Walters of CalMatters. We will promote the use of social media to publicize reports. Two counties already do it. The aim is to involve chapters as much as possible.

The committee is addressing current problems connecting news blog posts with Facebook. Statistics show a weekly rate of 30-40 hits on the news blog.

Herbst asked about coordination between the PRC and MCRC which had been discussed at the last meeting. Lewi responded that at present he and Diane Lloyd will serve as liaison team.

D-5 **Membership Relations Committee (MCRC)** – Lloyd indicated that an eBlast was sent yesterday to lapsed members. They have already received four renewals. They sent 261 invitations to renew and only nine bounced. The open rate was 46% and click rate was 12%. There were a couple of nonsubscribers.

The previous eBlast to Introductory Members (IMs) gained new members. The committee had set a goal of 300 early in the year. That goal has been exceeded.

There were many items on their agenda and ideas are bubbling. Lloyd is working with Lewi to learn more about Constant Contact. She learned that the chair of MCRC can appoint the database manager. Mastako will assume that role and Lloyd will learn about so that she can provide backup and support.

Herbst commented on how positive it was to hear that a goal of 300 members was considered low and congratulated the MCRC on its success. He also brought up the problem he had in the past with emails going into his spam box. He wondered if there were preventive steps we should take. Lewi said he had not heard of any further problems, but that Constant Contact has excellent tech support and that he would follow up with them.

Panetta underscored the need for an accurate database to be in place before the election. Lloyd said the MCRC and NEC have coordinated their efforts in that regard.

D-6 **Training Committee (TC)** – Caranci said things change daily. A week following the two final report writing workshops of this season marks the start of the 2021-22 regular training season. The calendar is filling in for training in July.

The training subcommittee reviewed applications for new trainers and have selected nine individuals (including Mastako). There still is a shortage of attorneys. They added one to the

training team but need two or three more. Let her know if you have any suggestions. Lloyd asked whether the attorney's area of expertise mattered. Caranci said no.

There are 15 active trainers plus the additional nine. There will be a Train-the-Trainer workshop on Friday on Zoom and a second session in June, along with team meetings. The curriculum subcommittee is wrapping up its work and the legal workshop program is finished.

Herbst noted the pattern of January impanelment and wondered if that was a general trend. Caranci said it might be. Several courts still need to decide on a 12- versus 18-month schedule.

- D-8 **Nominations-Elections Committee (NEC)** – Boracci said the committee is on track for the elections. The Tellers Committee has been set up. The NEC is developing a Tellers Instruction document which will be brought to the board at the next meeting. There will be election articles in the June and August Journals. The NEC will send out email announcements and vote reminders to members.

There have been no additional nominations for the board positions. Lloyd pointed out that it is helpful to have Boracci (as chair of the NEC) on the MCRC.

- D-9 **Awards Committee (AC)** – In response to last meeting's action item, Landi reported removal of the Local Achievement Award information from the website and an updated Certificate of Special Recognition description. The specifics of the change have been sent to the BPRC for review.

- D-11 **Bylaws & Policy Review Committee (BPRC)** – Jahr said the committee will meet in June to consider six by-laws amendment items:

Clarifying who can receive a Certificate of Special Recognition.

Change "chapter dissolution" to "revocation of chapter charter."

Procedure for voting for officers.

Memorial fund policy.

Who should appoint the members of the Finance Committee?

Procedure for filling a vacancy in the office of the president.

- D-13 **Technology Committee (Tech)** – Herbst reported that Bob Morse from Humboldt County has joined the committee. His key skill pertains to the website, with exact role to be determined. The committee is assuming responsibility for the technical management of the news blog and social media. The content for both remains the responsibility of the PRC.

The committee will be working on how to conduct the electronic election. They have decided to maintain the website as the election vehicle. There was a problem in the past of multiple votes. The committee is investigating methods to prevent duplicate voting. They are coordinating their efforts with the MCRC and NEC.

Regarding website statistics, March and April are almost identical. Overall, there is no clear pattern of use. Mastako noted that the top downloads were for chapter formation and wondered if it was possible to find out who made the downloads. Herbst said individuals could not be traced, but that county could be determined. He will look into it.

E. Action Agenda

- E-1 **Ratify the appointment of Diane Lloyd as Chair of the Membership and Chapter Relations Committee**

[Motion made by Panetta, seconded by Herbst]
The motion passed, 11-0-0, by hand vote.

F. Director Comments

Finlayson said that questions about the president’s online meeting with chapter presidents came up at his local chapter meeting – if an effort had been made to contact the nonparticipating chapters, are there were plans for a future meeting, and what Panetta thought about the meeting.

Panetta said he found it to be a positive, energetic meeting with good participation. He has not contacted chapter presidents that did not attend and will leave that to MCRC. As to ongoing meetings, he is happy to do as much as the chapters want and looks to the MCRC to assess the pulse of chapter interest. We are working hard to get more chapters and the MCRC is working on strategies. Social media, i.e., Facebook and Twitter, is very important. Finlayson said that if there are future meetings, it would be good to have the directors all be present.

Caranci said that the Plumas Chapter wanted to know more about training. This is of interest to many chapters and would be a good topic for a meeting. Perhaps she and Lloyd (MCRC) can reach out to chapters. Chapter involvement in the training events was common practice in the past with on-site training. However, using Zoom led to a restriction in the number of attendees.

Saying that the president of her chapter (SLO) was very pleased with the meeting, Mastako suggested having similar meetings, perhaps on a quarterly basis, if there were topics of interest. She has been reflecting on what we do for members and felt that more frequent virtual meetings might be desirable. Panetta suggested a Webinar format where there is a topic and attendance is voluntary, depending on one’s interest. Herbst suggested going forward with both in-person and online events.

There was a discussion about the imminent deadline for director nominations (May 31). The MCRC will send out a quick reminder to chapters.

G. Adjournment (4:07 PM)

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Sommer, Secretary