

MCCGJA Board of Directors Meeting

November 6, 2023, 1:30 pm, Civic Center Room 410B

FINAL minutes - revised 11/24/23

Attendees: President Janeko Bower, Vice President Spencer Sias, Treasurer Kevin Haggerty, Secretary Scott Smith, Rod Kerr, Larry Bauer, Deborah Haase, Bradley Wright, Dave Bonfilio, Bernie Samet, Tom Borden, Dick Gunn.

1. Meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm.
2. Introductions were made.
3. Minutes of the October 9, 2023 meeting were approved with two corrections.
4. Janeko gave a summary CGJA Conference held in October:
 - a. Janeko, Spencer and Tom attended
 - b. Opening speaker was Daniel Borenstein from East Bay Times
 - i. Shrinking local news coverage
 - ii. Importance of concise GJ reports with recommendations
 - c. Breakout sessions presented:
 - i. Building Bridges with Technology
 - ii. Recruiting jurors through PSA's with local broadcasters
 - iii. Attracting members to your association
 - d. Keynote speaker was Ethan Rarick, Executive Director of Little Hoover Commission
 - i. Similarities and differences with Grand Juries
 - e. Panel Discussion moderated by Spencer
 - f. For reference, CGJA dues are \$30, \$50 or \$500 for 1 year, 2 year or lifetime membership
5. Kevin gave the financial report:
 - a. As of October 31, bank balance \$8,467, not including some PayPal transfers incoming for membership fees and donations
 - b. After those transfers, the current balance is about \$10,000.
 - c. Donation matching challenge until December 31
 - d. Income since October 1:
 - i. Renewal of memberships \$720
 - ii. Donations \$1,120, not including matches
 - e. Dave asked how we are acknowledging donations and renewals:
 - i. Janeko sending thank you emails
 - ii. Kevin will send formal donation letters via email
 - f. Marin Community Foundation grant of \$2,000 from a Donor Advised Fund pending.

6. Bernie discussed the Social Committee's planning for an event:
 - a. Considering Marin Joe's venue, with private room, since the cost would be comparable to the community center after adding insurance, setup and food
 - b. Ballpark cost \$1,700-1,800
 - c. Roughly 40 attendees expected
 - d. Target date February 8+/-
 - e. Larry offered to check on the Bel Marin Keys community center.
 - f. Spencer moved to authorize the Social Committee to execute a February social event along the lines of the "think tank" concept, for an all-in cost not to exceed \$2,000. Janeko amended the proposal to not exceed \$1,800. **Amended motion passed.**
 - g. Committee to report back with details at or prior to the next meeting.
7. Scott reported on the Membership Committee:
 - a. Committee members from each recent term have been recruited and reached out to jurors on their terms.
 - b. Updates to membership list are being kept.
 - c. Membership renewals and donations are being received as reported in the Financial Report section.
8. Deborah gave her recommendation for Bylaws changes:
 - a. All typographical changes.
 - b. Most common change was correcting the name to "Marin Chapter, California Grand Jurors Association".
 - c. Deborah will send the updated version to the Board by email for voting at the next meeting.
 - d. Spencer noted that the CGJA is considering changing their name to "Civil Grand Jurors Association of California".
9. Tom reported on the Funding Committee:
 - a. Pat, Janeko, Kevin and Tom will meet with James Kim and Judge Chou tomorrow to discuss:
 - i. increasing the maximum annual reimbursement amount to \$10,000
 - ii. adding to the types of expenses that can be reimbursed for recruiting, selection and training
 - b. Kevin proposed adding a cost of living escalator, but the group decided this would add complexity.
 - c. Tom will report back to the Board for approval if the amendment is agreed to.
10. Rod discussed the proposal to change the Grand Jury term:
 - a. Reports issued in the Fall would better align with the County's budget process in the Spring for those recommendations requiring funding.
 - b. Support from Judge Chou, Matthew Hymel, Brian Washington, and current jurors.

- c. Suggesting a November 1 - October 31 term.
 - d. Judge and County Administrator think the change would require a vote of the Board of Supervisors.
 - e. Discussed implications on recruiting and selection.
 - f. Spencer noted that all other counties are either fiscal year or calendar year, but this wouldn't be an impediment to training.
 - g. Discussed different options for implementing:
 - i. Current jury stays on for extra 3 months
 - ii. Future jury starts on new date, with 3-4 months of no jury
 - iii. Future jury selected for a 15-16 month term prior to the transition
 - h. Deborah remarked that the GJ's statutory role is to write reports and make recommendations, not to change policy or govern. She raised a concern that the alignment with budgeting decisions borders on influencing policy.
 - i. Dick asked how much of an impediment the current calendar is. Rod gave two examples:
 - i. District Attorney report issued last May; recommendations were implemented in the County budget at a late stage
 - ii. Novato report issued last June was after budget was finalized and City didn't take action to address the recommendations
 - j. Discussed the new recruiting and selection calendar for a November start of term:
 - i. Interviews would take place in late September
 - ii. Selection would take place in October
 - iii. Chapter would need time to implement the changes, depending on the transition plan
 - k. Kevin moved that the Chapter support the concept of the proposed change for the jury term to November 1 to October 31, with details to be determined.
Motion passed.
 - l. Rod will report back on the next steps and timing after further meetings on the subject.
11. Janeko and Kevin discussed the Marin Coalition Lunch November 14 at McInnis:
- a. Attendance is encouraged to let others know what the Grand Jury does.
 - b. Janeko will bring some Grand Jury recruitment brochures to hand out.
12. Janeko thanked everyone who has renewed their membership or made a donation to the Chapter!
13. Spencer discussed potential stories for the Newsletter:
- a. Needs for volunteers - "help wanted"
 - b. Donations appeal
 - c. Social event
 - d. Membership updates

14. Meeting adjourned at 2:48 pm. Next meeting Monday, December 4, at 1:30 pm in Civic Center Room 410B.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Smith, Secretary