



MINUTES - GENERAL MEETING

November 7, 2013 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM



Marin Civic Center **(Room 410-B)**

Marin Civic Center 3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903

In case the room change above is not obvious enough, please note, once again, the room change from the Board of Supervisors' Room to ROOM 410-B

1. Convene Meeting 9:00 am
 - a. Mike convened the meeting at 9:05 a.m.
2. Roll Call
 - a. Attendees: Linda Glasscock, Owen Haxton, Dennis A. Brown, M.J. Boyden, Rich Treadgold, Steve Gach, Sharon Hunter, Jim Murad, Mike Chernock, Gene Dyer, Judy Chapman, Nadine Muller
3. Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - a. The Minutes from the October meeting were approved
4. Review/Approval of 2013-2014 Budget
 - a. In the future this agenda item will read "Financial Report". The budget was approved by the membership at an earlier meeting.
 - b. Since the last meeting there was an expense of \$124.00 for the PO BOX, and a deposit of \$255.00. The checkbook balance as of October 31, 2013 is \$7,129.38.
5. Membership vote to re-order agenda between, State Conference Update, Committee Reports and Topic of the day.
 - a. The membership in attendance voted on the three topics. The result of the vote is: Conference - 5, Topic of the Day - 4, General Committee Reports - 1
6. President's Comments
 - a. Applied for Civic Center Room for 2014 but no commitment to date
 - b. A report on the IR Panel Discussion at the conference will be presented at the Regional Meeting. It won't be discussed today. Everyone is encouraged to attend the Regional Meeting on November 16, 2013 at McInnis Park
 - c. Mike reported on the CGJA Conference - Notes attached to these minutes summarize the report in detail.
7. Topic of the day: Where do we envision the chapter to be in short, medium and long term?
 - a. Rich Treadgold led the discussion. Rich suggested that the Chapter define short and long term goals and measure our progress toward achieving the goals that are set. Gene and Owen reminded us that each committee has a charter - this could be construed as a goal. Jim said that the Handbook does not have a Mission Statement. But the Chapter does "support the seated Grand Jury" with recruiting and training. It was suggested that we develop a Mission Statement and then define a mechanism for getting feedback from the seated Grand Jury. Get the feedback in person, not on paper and do so before the end of the Grand Jury term - perhaps mid-term.
 - b. The Chapter Liaison to the Court is Betty Mattea. The Chapter Liaison to County Counsel used to be Karin Hern. **The Chapter needs to appoint a new Liaison to County Counsel.**



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As Liaison to the Court, Betty (and Catherine McKown) works with the court on “orientation” of Grand Jury applicants. (Interviewing). In other counties, the Court maintains total control of the selection process. Our Chapter is a hybrid. The Chapter helps the Courts with the selection process by “interviewing” applicants and providing feedback to the Court. The Judges are solely responsible for selection of the new Grand Jury. It was suggested that we include “orientation” of applicants as a goal of the Chapter.

- c. As discussed the Chapter does support the Grand Jury with training. Judy is going to ask Catherine McKown to attend a future meeting and share evaluations from the last training.
- d. The Topic of the Day: Where do we envision the chapter to be in short, medium and long term? This discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

8. Committee Remarks/Reports

a. Communications Technology Committee

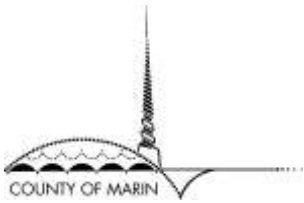
- i. The mailing list has been updated. The October Newsletter has been sent.
- ii. Dennis Brown is tentatively set up as editor. They are working on setting up his MAC to enable Dennis to use the web writing program that Sterling had been using.
- iii. The Committee met yesterday. Sterling was in attendance and is going to continue to be a member of the Communications Committee doing:
 - 1. Instructions for new Grand Jurors on use of the computer
 - 2. Maintaining and upgrading the News Archives.
 - 3. Maintaining the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures.
- iv. The News Letter Archives are almost never viewed. The Committee intends to discontinue this Archive and make more room on the site for other records. The Minutes and Special Activities Archives will be continued.

b. Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Committee – No report at this time.

c. Continuity Committee

- i. Rich reported that the IRG (Implementation Review Group) has developed a Charter. The Charter will be sent to the Chapter membership.
- ii. The group is working on the Software Saga report responses. They sent a letter to Matthew Hymel stating that some of the County responses did not meet the statute requirements. They expect a response from Hymel in the next three weeks.
- iii. If this group finds that some responses are not adequate, they can file a complaint with the current Grand Jury. The Grand Jury will continue to operate independently with their Continuity Committee.
- iv. Rich made Kim Turner aware of the IRG citizens group via email. She has not responded yet.

d. Outreach Recruiting



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- i. Judy reported on the Senior Fair. MCCGJA had a booth at the Fair.
- ii. Judy has been gathering speakers and groups to start recruitment efforts early next year. Some groups are Villa Marin, Novato Library, COM Emeritus students, Marin Library.
- e. Social Committee
 - i. The Guide Dogs for the Blind trip was a success. But they didn't get to play with the puppies.
 - ii. Send Mike additional ideas for social activities.
- f. Membership Review
 - i. The profile of the Marin Chapter-CGJA is:

1. Number of Members	78
a. Honorary Members	3
b. Life Members	14
c. Multi-Year Members	11
d. One year Members	50

9. New Business -None

10. Miscellaneous - for the Good of the Order

Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go. – Oscar Wilde

11. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Glasscock, Secretary



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NOTES from the California Grand Jurors' Association - Annual Conference

San Luis Obispo, California, October, 27-29, 2013

Respectfully Submitted: Michael Chernock, President, MCCGJA

The following **notes and ideas** were collected by Mike Chernock at the Conference:

- The Board wants to increase Public Awareness of the CGJA
 - Suggest looking at legal programs at the local Community Colleges
 - The state and others are appalled at the lack of civic training in our schools and are looking into adding "local government" courses in the schools
 - We could hold mock "Grand Jury" sessions for our High School Seniors
 - It was suggested that we send our Civil Grand Jury reports to our Legislators
 - Garnering the occasional speaker for Regionals would add to program interest as well as further advertise the presence of the chapter
- In the area of better inter-Chapter communications
 - Can we create a blog where Chapter members can ask questions and then get answers from around the state?
 - Reminder to read the FAQ section of our website and the "general chapters" section to know what other chapters are doing around the state
 - President's get a request quarterly for chapter articles and it was suggested that the President's solicit input from the membership prior to submission
- Better CGJ communications
 - the board voted to attempt to have at least one board member attend every Regional meeting and even an occasional membership meeting
 - Reminders went out to please submit a report or several for consideration for an EIR award. Among 26 possible applicants, they received 4 this year. It was suggested (happily by yet another chapter) that the procedures and practices for the IR process include EIR. If people are already reading reports, they are a natural funnel to discover reports that have made a deep impact on the community that might qualify for an EIR submission
 - Some counties provide CGJA awareness movies during the regular petit jury selection process. Others add a grand jury application to their jury summons. Still others provide grand jury interest cards to petit jurors who can fill them out and leave them with the local jury board. Some counties provide book marks for the petit jurors discussing the Civil Grand Jury and providing URL's for gathering more information.
 - One county tracks and then sends their stats to local newspapers as a report. They track such things as total hours spent, investigations started, reports completed or scrapped, complaints processed, etc.



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- Perhaps we could ask the MRC to create a platform for collecting and disseminating IR information so problems and solutions can be shared and the Chapters starting IR would not feel alone or un-supported in their efforts.
- Other program items included:
 - The IR panel discussion that will be reviewed in depth at the next Bay Area Regional. Reader's Digest version - IR appeared to be unanimously acceptable to the state membership and it garnered much enthusiasm and questions that were clearly from people who were on the verge of starting that activity within their chapter.
 - An in-depth, behind the scenes review of the CGJA process of training new jurors. It was an eye opener regarding its depth, complexity and quality. The whole team is to be strongly commended for creating and constantly updating their training. They are always looking for new trainers. Anyone interested?
 - A excellent (but sadly depressing) talk by Dan Walters, reporter for the Sacramento Bee who highlighted how things like public employee pensions, re-alignment, Property tax relief like Prop 13 etc. can cause "Unintended Consequences" when nobody in the Legislature takes the trouble to evaluate the long term effects of their bills. He also pointed out that the complexity and multiplicity of bills and propositions frequently run over each other and once again cause grave "Unintended Consequences."
 - A presentation by local law enforcement regarding the re-alignment of prisoners from state incarceration to local incarceration. The shark jaws no one saw was that when prisoners are kept for longer than a year, they require "state of the art" medical attention. That little item can be 60% of the total cost of incarceration. Can you afford dental implants? Prisoners are guaranteed that service. Note that when these facilities were jails, no such accommodations or rehab programs were required and therefore didn't even exist - the staff is not trained or equipped - and even the buildings are not designed for long term inmates! They do use Restorative Techniques in San Luis Obispo, but all such programs are run by a local activist Nun.
- A poorly attended discussion was held regarding Chapter income tax reporting and charitable trust registration obligations, liability risks and insurance coverage issues. Many people chose to get a jump on their way home and left before the final presentation. That was unfortunate because the presenters Bill Trautman, John Monaco and Karin Hern put in a lot of research and not only garnered a great deal of valuable information, but they also wrote and published a reference book for use by Chapter members.
 - Apparently some chapters who applied as Chapters of the CGJA under the corporate identity number were NOT exempted from paying taxes nor considered a tax-deductible entity. No one seems to know why but the CGJA is working to correct that error
 - All chapters must file state and federal tax returns annually as well as a filing with the state Attorney General stating that they are still a valid entity. Failure to do so will cause the state to drop the chapter as an affiliated entity and it takes much machination to get reinstated.
 - Chapters may file a form UA-100 form with the Secretary of State but it is not mandatory and no one is apparently able to determine why anyone would do so??
 - Legally, Chapters are NOT regulated, controlled or owned by the CGJA



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- As a 501C3 tax exempt organization may choose to seek liability or other insurances. If your insurance premium would be greater than 5% of your assets, you are not required to have liability insurance - but - you do have to apply each year and be officially denied!
- When someone queried the panel regarding IR liability, the general consensus was that if IR members conduct themselves "as if they were still on the jury - reasonably, moderately and factually, they should be relatively RISK FREE." Of course liability issues in a litigious society are ever present, the panel wanted to make the point that we should NOT be afraid to conduct IR business as long as we do so as reasonably and respectfully.

Interesting asides:

It is always interesting to hear the occasional factoid about other chapters and the CGJA that we either had wrong in our understanding or drops jaws because it is so different from us:

- Apparently there is no such legal entity as a Civil Grand Jury. We are simply the "Grand Jury" which differentiates itself from the other entity, "the Criminal Grand Jury." Interesting to me that this nomenclature denotes that we were the main Jury entity and the petit jury system was spun off as well as the Criminal Grand Jury. At this point in our history, the other two are well known and we are the ones who have to explain our existence. By the way, the CGJA had 341 members at the time of the conference and Marin holds honors for the most CGJA members among our Chapter. We can thank Owen Haxton for that little stat!
- Some counties such as Kern County and Orange County are designated as both Criminal and Civil Grand juries and in Orange County, they might hear over 100 Criminal indictment arguments a year. They also meet every day for 6 hours, five days a week. Some chapters, especially with dual juries, make up to \$80 per diem.
- Counties such as Kern garner about 150 candidates from which to choose their new seated Grand Jury. Others said they can expect up to 400 candidates a year. This is in sharp contrast with Los Angeles County which frequently has around 9 candidates.
- The training group of the CGJA trains over 100 new jurors in all but 3 Chapters. While some of the training takes place in central locations for multiple chapters, most of the training is on-site
- A topic near and dear to the 2 juries on which I served is: Do reports have to have recommendations? The consensus at the Conference was an emphatic "NO." Many chapters reported that when an investigation was closed due to contrary evidence, they frequently wrote and published a report of commendation about the investigated group stating that they found competency in their activities and action.
- Some sheriff offices offer "trip cars" to Civil Grand Jurors to make local trips and to make on-site visits. Kern's Sheriff offered them cars to come to the conference. One person pointed out that perhaps the Grand Jury paid less, but the bottom line to the taxpayers was the same.