



Membership Meeting of the Marin Chapter of CGJA

Approved Minutes

November 20, 2008—Civic Center

Convene Meeting: The meeting was convened @ 10:00 a.m. by President McKown, following a 15 minutes meet & greet between the attendees and the honored guests. Coffee, juice, and pastries were provided by the chapter.

Quorum Present: Vice-President Robinson confirmed we had a quorum present to conduct the business portion of the meeting, which reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Speakers: Discussion with Superior Court Presiding Judge Verna A. Adams and Court Administrator Kim Turner:

Presiding Judge Adams thanked current and past Grand Jury members for their service. She commented on the importance of the Grand Jury system using terms such as: “democracy-in-action” “bedrock” “grass-roots.”

Ms. Turner noted that the court web-site (**HYPERLINK** "http://www.marincourt.org" www.marincourt.org) has a page regarding the Civil Grand Jury. In turn, it links viewers to demographic information regarding the current jury and to the County’s Grand Jury web pages. Both asked members of the MCGJA to work w/ the courts on recruitment of a diverse Grand Jury.

Both complimented the Association for its pre-screening efforts and information provided to the courts during last year’s selection process.

They also mentioned that we should watch for recruiting efforts to their new initiative called “Community Advisory Committee”. Members would give input to the Court in developing community outreach activities and improving the Court's services. The Court's goals for this Committee are to promote public understanding of and confidence in the administration of justice in Marin County. The establishment of this Committee is one of several long-term program strategies designed to strengthen the Marin community's connection to the Court and improve the effectiveness of the Court's outreach to the community. The term of service for members on the

Community Advisory Committee is two years. The current Community Advisory Committee members' terms will end in June 2009. The Committee meets quarterly, and those meetings are professionally staffed and facilitated. Fifteen community members and six alternate members were randomly drawn from applications submitted to the Court in the Spring of 2007.

Several issues were brought up by the membership. Those that seemed to generate the most questions regarded jury recruitment efforts, jury demographics, jury compensation and the responsibilities of the courts versus the county government for Grand Jury support, direction, and oversight. The Presiding Judge left her phone number and encouraged additional dialog on topics. Ms. Turner said she will work on a briefing document that will clarify the respective roles of the courts versus county's responsibilities as it concerns the Grand Jury.

Announcements:

Compliments from the floor for President Catherine McKown and her leadership of the chapter... *huzzah!*

Appeal from Carolyn Burwell on organizations to present on recruiting efforts. More follows in committee reports.

Grand Jury Report:

Jury Foreperson Jeff Skov provided a brief comment on the current jury's efforts. Noted the unique way their first report, on Measure B -- establishing a Director of Finance for Marin County, was investigated and written in record time. He was enthusiastic regarding their efforts and hoped we would watch for them to cover several important issues.

Requested our qualitative input regarding the responses received to past Grand Jury reports and whether there was any actions they should consider. (ACTION: Continuity Committee). Jeff concluded by complimenting the association on its efforts to assist the sitting Grand Jury and mentioned several new initiatives such as individual technical assistance.

President's Remarks:

Catherine expressed appreciation to Lowell Smith for arranging for today's speakers and to Mary Arthur for making lunch arrangements. She noted that everyone is invited to our lunches, and bills are settled based upon what you ordered and not split so light eaters do not subsidize those with heartier appetites. Recapped briefly the Buck Institute tour and State convention

events. Most notably Betty Mattea receiving the prestigious Angelo Rolando Award for outstanding service to the California Grand Jurors Association. She encouraged everyone to check out our new and improved NewsPage and our website at: www.mgja.org with kudos to Sterling Harwell for his efforts. She noted that the next State conference would be held in Sacramento in late October 2009.

Board Member's Remarks and Reports:

Orientation dates for 2009-2010 Grand Jury have been set for July 2009.
From Treasurer: Association currently has a balance of \$4900.

Work Plan / Committees

Public Outreach

Distributed new recruiting brochures

Noted that on January 13th they will hold training for anyone interested in public speaking So far they have about 20 members interested in assisting with recruiting

They have a list of 233 ...*and growing*... organization that could be approached for outreach efforts.

They are developing a power-point presentation for those speakers who are comfortable using the technology.

They will investigate purchasing a table at next Fall's Senior Fair.

They are reaching out to former GJ foreperson to identify exception candidates.

Social

Reviewed all upcoming dates and events. Note: new information is posted on the Association's NewsPage, and all information can be found on the "Social Calendar" page.

Patrick Layne asked if the e-vite to the Holiday Reception was working. A few members were having problems accessing.

Orientation

Will meet in January

Manual Rewrite subcommittee: Meeting planned for next Tuesday (25th) to kick-off efforts. Goal is to have new manual by next summer.

Public Issues

Met last week at Rick White's and are working on their plan to present topics of interest to the incoming Grand Jury. Selected topics would specify: The issue, criteria, sources of information, potential

interviewees. Goal is to augment what information may have been left from the previous Grand Jury and jump start the Jury's efforts at identifying topics for potential investigation.

Continuity & Excellence in Reporting

Plan to review past ten years of Grand Jury final reports and responses.

Identify topics that seem to still be open for referring to current (and future) juries.

Develop criteria for selecting outstanding reports. Select best report in each of the past ten years and outstanding report of the past ten years. Reports selected could be acknowledged at the 10th Anniversary celebration and used to publicize Grand Jury accomplishments.

Election

Timetable under review by the Board

Need members for nominating subcommittee

Nomination for Board members needed by May Election

New Business:

Vice-President Robinson noted that previous Grand Jury efforts resulted in Sam Anselmo reconstituting their Disaster Preparedness Committee. Both she and Ted Freeman are on the committee.

Miscellaneous and Good of the Order:

December Meeting: December 14th ... No Members' Meeting, but Sterling and Gail Harwell have graciously offered their home for an all association members' **Holiday Reception on Sunday December 14th from 4-6 pm.** Everyone is welcome, including significant others.

January 15th ... Members Meeting to be held tentatively at McInnis Park. Optional lunch to follow. Speaker to be announced.

Adjournment @ 12:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Layne, Board Member