

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

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**Office of the Sheriff**

891 Mountain Ranch Road  
San Andreas, CA 95249



**Gary Kuntz Sheriff**

209.754.6500  
gkuntz@co.calaveras.ca.us

June 5, 2012

Calaveras County

JUN 06 2012

Administrative Office

Ms. Jeanne Boyce  
County Office Administrator  
891 Mountain Ranch Rd.  
San Andreas, CA 95249

RE: Animal Services

Dear Jeanne:

I am sending this letter requesting an update for the transition of the Animal Services Office to the county, effective July 01, 2012. We are one month from the transfer date and I have several concerns. As you remember on February 14<sup>th</sup> of this year, Captain Ballard addressed the Board of Supervisors, making them and your office aware of our plan to relinquish control of the Animal Services Operation effective at the end of this fiscal year. The transition team has informed me that past meetings have been focusing on the potential transition of the shelter operations to the Calaveras Humane Society. I am concerned that the meetings are not addressing the imminent transition from the Sheriff's Office to the County on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The transition team members from my office have voiced frustration and concern that without a clear direction from your office regarding to whom this operation will be handed over, the transition team is unable to adequately plan for, and direct the proper turn over of operations. I am told the transition team has advised you of certain staffing issues that will occur in July that will have a significant impact on the daily operations of Animal Services. In addition, Sergeant Laurie Murray has informed me there are Animal Service Staff members who are hanging in the balance, not knowing what their future holds for them.

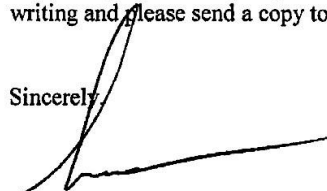
I am concerned that no solid plan has been reached at this late date. I have also been informed that there have been mixed signals regarding the perceived level of Sergeant Murray's involvement with the training of any new Animal Service management personnel after the turn over date of July 1<sup>st</sup>. The county was advised by this office years ago when the new jail project was approved, that a group consisting of sheriff employees were necessary for the complex and time consuming transition from the existing jail to the new facility. Due to financial issues, poor decisions, and recommendations from your office related to staffing, that has not occurred. Therefore, it is my intent to assign Sergeant Murray to assist Captain Ballard for the before-mentioned transition team assignment. Sergeant Murray's schedule will be busy and her availability limited.

I have three specific questions that I would appreciate your answering in writing:

1. Do you have a different transfer date other than July 1<sup>st</sup>?
2. Which county department will receive Animal Services?
3. What further involvement, if any, do you envision for Sergeant Murray after July 1<sup>st</sup>?

If there is any information that I may not have received that will address my concerns or otherwise provide a clearer picture to the progress of this situation, please inform me in writing and please send a copy to Captain Ballard and Lieutenant Huberty.

Sincerely,



Sheriff Gary Kuntz  
Calaveras County

cc: Board of Supervisors

**Office of the Sheriff**

1045 Jeff Tuttle Drive  
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**FILED**

AUG 19 2015

Clerk of the Court  
Superior Court of California  
County of Calaveras  
By *[Signature]*, Deputy

**DATE:** August, 2015  
**TO:** Honorable Grant Barrett, Presiding Superior Court Judge  
**FROM:** Gary Kuntz, Sheriff *[Signature]*  
**SUBJECT:** Response to 2014-15 Grand Jury Report on Animal Services Returning to the Sheriff's Office  
**Cc:** Board of Supervisors

The 2014-2015 Final Grand Jury Report was reviewed by The Calaveras county Sheriff's Office and staff members. The Grand Jury's investigation into Animal Services outlined several interesting findings and recommendations.

**Finding 2:**

***"Animal Services has historically operated more efficiently under the direction of the County Sheriff's Department."***

**Recommendation:**

***"Since the Sheriff's Department is the chief law enforcement agency in the county and whose responsibilities are more closely aligned with ACS, the Grand Jury recommends the Board of supervisors reposition ACS from the Environmental Management Agency to the Sheriff's Department."***

While the Sheriff's Office has respect for the Grand Jury and the Jury's findings and recommendations, The Sheriff's Office disagrees with the recommendation for important reasons;

As outlined within this 2014-2015 Grand Jury Report as well as many other Grand Jury reports, the Animal Services Department is under-budgeted and understaffed. The Sheriff's Office is also underfunded and under-staffed. In the recent past, elected members of the County Administrative Office and the Board of Supervisors had recommended and voted to decrease the budgets of both the Sheriff's Office and the Animal Services Department. The budgets were decreased to levels where services and staff were cut to such an extent where both agencies were forced to manage and only respond to crisis and emergency calls rather than being properly responsive and proactive. At times, Animal Services staff was unavailable to respond to emergency and non-emergency calls for service. These calls were pushed to Deputy Sheriffs who were working patrol and responding to crimes in progress and other emergency calls. The Patrol Division within the Sheriff's Office was also severely understaffed and was often forced to choose between responding to priority/emergency law enforcement calls for service and

priority Animal Services calls or Animal Related emergencies. This unnecessarily placed a huge burden onto the Sheriff's Office and its staff.

During past Budget Hearings and at other events, elected officials and special interest groups chose to make divisive, inaccurate and inappropriate comments regarding the workloads of both the Sheriff's Office and Animal Services. These comments only led to further frustration and confusion among the community and employees of both the Sheriff's Office and Animal Services. These comments clearly demonstrated the lack of understanding of just how low staffing levels are at the Sheriff's Office compared to workload.

Rather than continue to pass an underfunded and under-staffed department from agency to agency the Sheriff's Office would like to make the following recommendation:

**Merge or Combine Animal Services and Code Enforcement.** This has been done with success in several states including cities within California. There are several efficiencies that could be brought about by merging the two departments and cross-training staff.

1. Complaints and calls for service would come into a centralized and single point of contact instead of two separate departments answering calls.
2. If cross-trained the staff of Animal Services and Code Enforcement would nearly double in size. This would allow more coverage eliminating the days of the week or weekends whereby no employees are on duty and available for calls.
3. The fleet for both departments could increase.
4. The management and supervision could be consolidated.
5. More staff would be available during large emergency calls or long term events.

In May of 2015 Sheriff's Captain Jim Macedo called and spoke to Kerry Simpson the Neighborhood Services Manager for the city of Rancho Cordova. The city is located nearby Calaveras County in Sacramento County. Rancho Cordova has combined their Code Enforcement and Animal Services departments into a single department and has had great success. Ms. Simpson was able to outline numerous benefits to merging the two departments. She advised that she was willing to offer advice and work with anyone from Calaveras County who was interested in exploring option. I recommend this idea or option be explored and a staffing and cost analysis be completed.

**Kerry Simpson, Neighborhood Services Manager**  
(916) 851-8771, [ksimpson@cityofranchocordova.org](mailto:ksimpson@cityofranchocordova.org)

**Office of the Sheriff**

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**Gary Kuntz Sheriff**

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**FILED**

AUG 19 2015

Clerk of the Court  
Superior Court of California  
County of Calaveras  
By: *[Signature]*, Deputy

**DATE:** August 14, 2015  
**TO:** Honorable Grant Barrett, Presiding Superior Court Judge  
**FROM:** Gary Kuntz, Sheriff *[Signature]*  
**SUBJECT:** Response to the 2014-15 Grand Jury Report on the Calaveras County Jail.  
**Cc:** Board of Supervisors

The 2014-2015 Final Grand Jury Report was reviewed by the Calaveras County Sheriff's Office and staff members. The Grand Jury's investigation into the Calaveras County Jail revealed one finding and recommendation which requires a response.

**Page 16, Finding 5:**

**"Insufficient correction staff is still an issue, creating additional overtime costs."**

**Grand Jury Recommendation:**

**"This facility could be fully utilized by renting beds to neighboring counties for added income. In order to accomplish this, additional corrections officers would be needed. Further consideration would need to be made for impact on the community."**

**Sheriff Response:**

The Sheriff's Office has added a Sheriff's Lieutenant to the administrative staff of the Calaveras County Jail. This Lieutenant has been tasked with researching and implementing new income generating programs within the jail, to include the rental of bed space.

The Calaveras County Jail currently has unfilled staff positions which it is attempting to fill; this effort has been complicated by the aggressive recruitment efforts of other agencies. When bed rental contracts are developed and implemented, they will be inclusive of additional staff costs, along with workload impacts on current staff. The increase in inmate population due to rental contracts will need to occur gradually due to the lengthy process involved in funding and hiring additional correctional officers.

At this time, emphasis is being placed on creating contracts for the rental of bed space for inmates of county jails in neighboring counties. It is anticipated that these persons will return to their formal communities at the conclusion of their incarceration, with little impact onto the communities within Calaveras County.