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COMMENTS REGARDING RESPONSES TO THE 2011-2012 GRAND JURY REPORT

BACKGROUND

State law requires that local government agencies respond in writing to grand jury reports. The governing board for an agency that is the subject of a report has 90 days to submit a response, while elected officials and department heads are allowed 60 days to respond. Responding agencies must state whether they agree or disagree with grand jury findings and whether recommendations will be implemented or not or require further analysis. With both findings and recommendations, agencies are required to explain disagreements.

DISCUSSION

The final 2011-12 Butte County Grand Jury report contains a total of 88 recommendations for 11 local government entities, of which 56 (64%) have been or will be implemented, according to the responding agencies. The 2012-13 Grand Jury believes that the four Butte County government agencies, the City of Gridley and the Feather River Recreation and Park District provided exemplary responses to the 2011-12 report. Agency responses to the 2011-12 report are available at www.buttecounty.net. Following are details on how local government agencies responded to the report:

Butte County Agencies

All Butte County government entities responding to 2011-12 reports did so on time and in accordance with state law. Those responding included the Board of Supervisors, Sheriff's Office, Probation Department and Department of Behavioral Health. Considered together, the four entities agreed with 18 of the reports' 42 findings (43%), while implementing or agreeing to implement 27 of the jury's 44 recommendations (61%).

Recap by County of Butte Agency						
	Findings		Recommendations			
	Agree	Disagree	Has been done	Will be done	Will not be done	Requires analysis
Butte County Supervisors	37%	63%	36%	19%	36%	9%
Dept. of Behavioral Health	33%	67%	29%	38%	25%	8%
Sheriff	50%	50%	27%	20%	27%	26%
Probation Officer	33%	67%	67%	0%	33%	0%

Cities

The Gridley City Council, as well as the city's administrator, responded to the 2011-12 report on time and in accordance with state law. The city put considerable effort into providing a detailed response. Of the report's 27 findings, the city agreed with 20 (74%), while implementing or agreeing to implement 20 of 28 Grand Jury recommendations (71%).

The City of Oroville responded to the 2011-12 report on time and in accordance with state law. The City Council and city administrator agreed with five of the Grand Jury's seven findings (71%), while implementing all four recommendations (100%).

Special Districts

The Durham Recreation and Park District responded to the 2011-12 report within the required response deadline. However, the district was informed by the 2012-13 Grand Jury that its initial response was not in accordance with state law in addressing the report's findings and recommendations. In a follow-up response, the district manager wrote that three of the Grand Jury's four recommendations (75%) will be implemented, but still no response was given to the report's 10 findings.

The Feather River Recreation and Park District responded to the 2011-12 report on time and in accordance with state law, providing by far the most comprehensive response of the four recreation and park districts. The district

agreed with seven of the Grand Jury's nine findings (78%) and plan to implement four of the seven recommendations (57%).

The Paradise Recreation and Park District responded to the 2011-12 report within the required response deadline. However, the district was informed by the 2012-13 Grand Jury that its initial response was not in accordance with state law in addressing the report's findings and recommendation. A follow-up response from the Paradise board president agreed to implement the jury's single recommendation but still did not address any of the nine findings.

The Richvale Recreation and Park District failed to respond to the 2011-12 report until contacted by the 2012-13 Grand Jury several weeks after the response deadline. The district's subsequent response did not address any of the nine findings and just three of the six recommendations, agreeing with one recommendation (17%).

The Gridley Business Improvement District responded to the 2011-12 report on time and in accordance with state law, concurring with the report's single finding and agreeing to implement all three recommendations (100%).

FINDINGS

- F1 Butte County government showed support for the grand jury system with its on-time and on-point responses, even as county officials disagreed as often as not with the findings and recommendations of the 2011-12 report.
- F2 The Feather River Recreation and Park District explained all of its positions in considerable detail and in conformance with state law. In contrast, three recreation and park districts - Durham, Paradise and Richvale - failed to meet their legal requirements even after a reminder letter from the 2012 - 13 Grand Jury.
- F3 The two cities that were the subjects of reports, Gridley and Oroville, both agreed overwhelmingly with the 2011-12 Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.
- F4 Larger local government agencies, which commonly have more personnel and more experience dealing with grand jury reports, generally did better than smaller agencies in providing legally adequate responses to reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

None.

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