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PLUMAS COUNTY FACILITIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Function

The Facilities Services Department (FSD) is charged with providing and maintaining acceptable environments in which all county employees are able to comfortably carry out their individual duties. The FSD maintains over thirty (30) facilities and real properties owned and/or operated by the county.

Background

The prior year's Grand Jury performed a fundamental investigation of the FSD and recommended that this year's Grand Jury follow up with a more thorough investigation. During this review, we interviewed the County Administrative Officer (CAO), the Facilities Department head, the County Auditor/Controller, and many other employees who deal and interact with the FSD.

Findings

1. The FSD has done a commendable job in view of its lack of sufficient support both in personnel and in funding required to perform its functions.
2. There seemed to be inadequate coordination and communication between the FSD the Auditor/Controller, the Sheriff's Office, the Jail Commander, and the Board of Supervisors (BOS).
3. Over the past two years, the FSD has been inordinately impacted by budget reductions. This is primarily due to the fact that, unlike other County departments, the utilities and other fixed costs relating to all county facilities are part of this department's budget. Thus, when departments are subjected to an across-the-board budget cut, the FSD must cut its only variable costs: personnel and supplies.
4. The number of facilities that have not been brought up to standards necessary to meet the needs of the disabled public is absolutely appalling and definitely does not meet the legal requirements under existing applicable laws. This law has been in effect for many years and the county is not now and has not been in compliance. Just because the county under its current insurance arrangement has only limited liability, it is in no way excusable to avoid this responsibility.
5. There appears to be no system to evaluate the many physical facilities the county owns as to the feasibility of maintaining or replacing individual structures or complexes.

Recommendations

The Grand Jury recommends: