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CONTINUITY REPORT FOR THE 2015-16 YOLO COUNTY GRAND JURY

- “The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department: Personnel Practices”
- “Wild Wing Service Area: Management and Service Concerns”
- “Yolo County Sheriff’s Office Detention Facility Review”
- “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never-Ending Story”

The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department

2015-2016 Investigation Synopsis

The report describes the Grand Jury’s investigation of employee complaints concerning the personnel practices of the Yolo County Health and Human Services Department (YCHHSD), particularly the Emergency and Intensive Services managers and supervisors, pertaining to hiring, promotion, employee transfers, civility, favoritism, retaliation, grievance procedures, and allegations of the misuse of county funds for persons receiving aid. The Grand Jury determined that the July 2015 reorganization of the YCHHSD failed to address these complaints and that there were substantial internal personnel and management problems within the Department as documented by the number of similar complaints.

The YCGJ listed four Findings and two Recommendations. The Findings addressed management practices that did not foster a culture of open communication in addressing personnel complaints as well as non-adherence to established County personnel practices dealing with awarding permanent employment status to probationary employees, conducting timely performance evaluations, and hiring procedures for hiring internal applicants versus external applicants. The Recommendations including requiring additional training for supervisors and managers to promote open communication and resolution of personnel issues as well as conducting all employee evaluations in a timely manner.

Recommendation Implementation

Yolo County and the YCHHSD commented on the two Grand Jury Recommendations. Grand Jury Recommendation R1 proposed that Health and Human Services Agency supervisory and management staff be provided with additional training to promote open communication and resolution of personnel issues. The respondents stated that R1 had been implemented prior to the YCHHSD’s knowledge of the Grand Jury investigation and that a manager received management development training through UC Davis and that a supervisor received effective supervisory practices training through the International City/County Management Association. Additionally, agency managers, supervisors and staff receive ongoing training that is offered countywide. R2 proposed a timeline for bringing all probationary and permanent employee evaluations up to date. The respondents agreed to implement R2 within the timeline suggested by the Grand Jury.

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Wild Wings County Service Area

2015-16 Investigation Synopsis

The report describes the Grand Jury's investigation of citizens' complaints concerning the Wild Wings County Service Area (CSA). The complaints included allegations of financial mismanagement, lack of transparency with regard to public documents, lack of responsiveness on the part of Wild Wings CSA management, concerns about Wild Wings Golf Course operations, and water quality. The Grand Jury identified several policies and procedures that should be improved to provide greater transparency, increased access to public documents, improved communication, increased financial oversight, and development and funding of a long-term capital improvement plan.

The YCGJ identified eight Findings and seven Recommendations based on those Findings. The Findings focused on the lack of transparency and accessibility of information regarding the Wild Wings CSA including KemperSports, the golf course management company's failure to post monthly updates on the Wild Wings Golf Club web page. The YCGJ discussed the failure of the CSA to fully fund reserve accounts for three years and its borrowing from capital improvement, sewer, and water reserve accounts to cover general expenses. The YCGJ Findings also noted that the CSA's public meetings were set at inconvenient times for working families, that the meeting agendas and minutes were not posted online in a timely manner, and that the CSA management was frequently unresponsive or gave incomplete responses to requests for information. Finally, the YCGJ found that the Yolo County website is not user-friendly, is difficult to navigate, and information is not updated on a regular basis. The Recommendations addressed improving public accessibility to CSA meetings such as setting a regular date and time for meetings, specific timelines for posting meeting agendas and minutes, timely acknowledgement of and response to citizen complaints and concerns, and improved fiscal accountability regarding water and sewer rates. The YCGJ also recommended that Yolo County improve its maintenance of the Wild Wings CSA's website and that KemperSports' monthly updates be posted not later than the end of the month to the Yolo County Wild Wings Golf Club web page.

Recommendation Implementation

Responses to the seven Recommendations in this report were provided by the Office of the County Administrator. There was agreement with R1, R2 and R7 asking that minutes of the Wild Wings CSA meetings be posted online within 10 working days of the meeting, that CSA meetings be scheduled and held on a consistent basis, and that timely responses be made to complaints and concerns. These Recommendations will be implemented. R3 proposed that the CSA meeting start time be no earlier than 7:00 p.m. to allow for greater resident participation. The respondent stated that implementation of this recommendation will require further analysis. R4 asked that by September 1, 2016, KemperSports' monthly updates be posted within 30 days of the end of the month to the Yolo County Wild Wings Golf Club web page. The respondent agreed to this recommendation; however, the implementation date was extended to November 1, 2016, with the

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caveat that the updates will not be posted on the golf club web page as this is a marketing tool, but instead will be posted on the Wild Wings CSA residents' web page. R5 proposed that Yolo County maintain a regularly updated and easy-to-navigate website for Wild Wings CSA. The respondent agreed to implement the Recommendation within the timeline suggested by the Grand Jury. R6 proposed that water and sewer rates be adjusted on a yearly basis to fund reserve accounts. The respondent stated that this Recommendation will not be implemented because it requires further analysis to determine whether it is warranted.

Yolo County Sheriff's Office Detention Facility Review

2015-2016 Investigation Synopsis

Inspecting County detention facilities is an annual statutory requirement of the Grand Jury, though not all facilities need to be inspected each year. Penal Code section 919(b) states that "the Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county." The Grand Jury chose to visit the Monroe Detention and Leinberger Memorial Centers to fulfill the statutory obligation. Areas of concern included \$36 million facilities renovation grant expenditures, confidentiality of medical information, sanitary conditions, inmate grievance procedures, and maintenance of "Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus units" (SCBA).

YCGJ identified six Findings and seven Recommendations based on those Findings. The Grand Jury found unlabeled chemical containers in and poor housekeeping of dental/medical equipment and exam rooms as well as improper maintenance of SCBA units. Hazards were identified regarding emergency egress practices. Findings also noted that there is no onsite person charged with overseeing the health and safety of the Detention Facility, and that discrepancies in the Inmate Grievance procedure demonstrated a lack of serious attention to resolving inmate grievances on the part of the Detention staff. The Recommendations set timelines for instructing Detention staff that emergency exits must be free from impediments at all times, for properly securing all medical records, for removing or replacing defective or inoperable SCBA units, for cleaning and sanitizing medical equipment and offices to industry standards, and for securing and properly labeling all chemicals along with maintaining proper Safety Data Sheets. Further Recommendations included establishing policies, updating the inmate handbook, and staff training to ensure that proper attention is given to inmate grievances. The Grand Jury also recommended that the Sheriff's Office employ a qualified health and safety officer/industrial hygienist to ensure a comprehensive health and safety program.

Recommendation Implementation

Yolo County and the Sheriff's Office committed to implementing three of the Grand Jury detention facility Recommendations, designated "R1," R2," and "R5." R1 recommended that all emergency exits must be free from impediments at all times, and Yolo County and the Sheriff's Office agreed to place signage at each emergency exit stating that the door shall not be blocked. R2 made recommendations concerning the SCBA units. Yolo County and the Sheriff's Office will continue to inspect the SCBAs on a regular basis and will remove inoperable units. The Sheriff's

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Office will continue to educate and train staff on the proper use and inspection of SCBAs. The Sheriff's Office noted that one SCBA unit is designated "for training use only." This unit will be clearly marked as such. R5 recommended the hiring or designation of a qualified health and safety officer/industrial hygienist to be responsible for the operation, equipment, and training of personnel, to ensure a comprehensive health and safety program. The Sheriff's Office stated that Yolo County, Probation, and the Sheriff's Office were in contract negotiations with the California Forensic Medical Group to provide medical/mental health services. A component of this contract is to hire a qualified health and safety officer.

Yolo County and the Sheriff's Office implemented R4 which asked for proper chemical storage, labeling and Safety Data Sheets and agreed with R7 which asked for medical records to be properly secured in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The County contracts with California Forensic Medical Group to provide medical/mental healthcare to inmates and will see that the contractor is held to strict HIPAA compliance.

Yolo County and the Sheriff's Office disagreed with two Recommendations, R3 and R6, stating that the Yolo County Detention's dental facilities are routinely inspected and found to be in compliance with industry standards and that a June 24, 2016, Board of State and Community Corrections inspection found the Inmate Grievance policy and procedure to be in compliance. The respondents stated that these Recommendations are not warranted.

Yolo Habitat Conservancy

2015-2016 Synopsis

This report described the Grand Jury's inspection of the Yolo Habitat Conservancy's (YHC) 25-year-long effort to create a Habitat Conservancy Plan and the Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP or *the plan*). *The plan* is meant to accommodate continuing development within Yolo County while protecting the habitats of designated species. The YHC is an outgrowth of the Yolo Natural Heritage Program and, as of 2002, is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) consisting of voting members from the County of Yolo and the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland. The University of California Davis occupies a non-voting YHC board position. Estimated expenditures incurred toward development of a conservation plan are in the millions of dollars; however, to date, several draft plans have been prepared, but no plan has been finalized or adopted. During its investigation, the Grand Jury identified operational and fiscal inconsistencies negatively affecting the YHC.

As a result of the investigation, the Grand Jury identified three Findings and two Recommendations. The Findings addressed the lack of an approved HCP/NCCP plan and that the YHC performance over the past 25 years does not justify the time and money spent. The Recommendations set timelines for submitting the HCP/NCCP plan for approval and asked for annual performance audits of the YHC to measure progress.

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Recommendation Implementation

Yolo County, the YHC, and four of the five voting JPA members responded to the two Grand Jury Recommendations, designated “R1” and “R2.” Grand Jury Recommendation R1 asked the YHC to submit the HCP/NCCP plan for approval by April 30, 2017. R2 asked the YHC to institute a program of annual performance audits by September 1, 2016. The YHC Board of Directors and Executive Director agreed to implement R1, but stated that R2 will not be implemented. Yolo County, speaking for The Board of Supervisors, agreed with R1 and stated that R2 will not be implemented. The City of Davis agreed, with reservations, to R1 and stated that R2 was not warranted. West Sacramento agreed with R1 and stated that R2 needed further analysis. The City of Winters did not respond to the Grand Jury’s Recommendations. The City of Woodland agreed with R1 and stated that R2 needed further analysis.

CONCLUSION

In response to the Findings and Recommendations published in the 2015-2016 Grand Jury Final Report, this summary of responses documents the comments received and the measures taken by the investigated parties and governing bodies. Agency and individual comments were timely and thorough in observance of statutory requirements and were in the spirit of cooperation with the Grand Jury. Of the 18 Recommendations contained within the 2015-2016 Report, 11 will be implemented, two were already implemented, two will not be implemented, two were deemed not to be warranted, and one required further analysis. The negative responses stated the underlying reason(s) for the agency’s or individual’s non-implementation of the Recommendation.

The potential benefit of the implemented recommendations demonstrates that the Yolo County Grand Jury continues to serve as a useful agent for positive change.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2015-2016 Yolo County Grand Jury Final Report, June 30, 2015:

<http://www.yolocounty.org/business/community/grand-jury/yolo-county-grand-jury-reports>

Responses to 2015-2016 Yolo County Grand Jury Reports (also posted on the web page above)

- Yolo County Response to “The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department: Personnel Practices”
- Yolo County Response to “Wild Wings County Service Area: Management and Service Concerns”
- Yolo County Response to “Yolo County Sheriff’s Office Detention Facility Review”

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- Office of the Yolo County Sheriff Response to “Yolo County Sheriff’s Office Detention Facility Review”
- Yolo County Response to “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never-Ending Story”
- Yolo Habitat Conservancy Response to “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never- Ending Story”
- City of Davis Response to “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never-Ending Story”
- City of West Sacramento Response to “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never-Ending Story”
- City of Woodland Response to “Yolo Habitat Conservancy: A Never-Ending Story”

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