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## **FARMERSVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUES**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The 2015-2016 Tulare County Grand Jury (TCGJ) issued a report titled, “Farmersville School Issues” relative to a complaint that was received from a citizen alleging excessive and/or improper spending on the part of the Farmersville Unified School District Board, as well as illegal hiring and inappropriate conduct during board meetings. The complaint further alleged that the Bond Oversight Committee had not been conducting meetings. This report is a public document and can be reviewed on the TCGJ website ([grnd\\_jury@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:grnd_jury@co.tulare.ca.us)).

The report consists of the facts and findings during the investigative process as well as the grand jury’s recommendations and required responses submitted to the Farmerville Unified School District (FUSD) and the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE). Governing bodies and elected officials of investigated entities are required by California Penal Code Sections 933(c) and 933.05 to respond to the findings and recommendations. It also specifies a time frame and prescribes the format for the responses. A response to the grand jury report was received on July 18, 2016, from FUSD; however, the response did not address any of the recommendations within the grand jury’s report.

### **REASON FOR INVESTIGATION:**

The 2016-2017 TCGJ initiated an investigation to conduct a follow-up report regarding the ongoing issues at FUSD.

### **METHOD OF INVESTIGATION:**

- Interviewed witnesses
- Reviewed documents
- Visited FUSD facilities
- Attended school board meetings

### **FACTS:**

1. California Penal Code Section 933 (c) and 933.05 requires government agencies to respond to the findings and recommendations of grand jury reports.
2. During the time period of July 15, 2014 through June 17, 2016, FUSD had three different Superintendents and one Interim Superintendent.
3. Farmersville voters approved a \$4.8 million bond measure for school improvements.
4. \$3.1 million of the bond money was used to build a new vocational education building.

5. FUSD has approximately \$1.7 million of bond funds remaining to be sold.
6. FUSD has purchasing policies and procedures in place.
7. FUSD has job descriptions on file for administrative staff.
8. FUSD uses Personnel Action Forms to initiate the hiring process.

**FINDINGS:**

- F1. FUSD did not respond to the TCGJ's recommendations when submitting its response to the 2015-2016 final report.
- F2. The Interim Superintendent was permanently hired as the new Superintendent for FUSD in 2016.
- F3. The new vocational education building cost \$3.6 million to build, of which \$3.1 million was bond funds and approximately \$500,000 from the general fund.
- F4. Policies and procedures regarding the expenditure approval process are not being followed.
- F5. Job descriptions for administrative staff are outdated.
- F6. Personnel Action Forms are not being used as policy requires.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- R1. FUSD follow their established purchasing policies and procedures.
- R2. Update job descriptions to accurately reflect duties.
- R3. Train staff on the use of Personnel Action Forms and ensure policy is followed.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Farmersville Unified School District (Recommendations 1-3)

**Disclaimer**

Grand Jury reports are based on documentary evidence and the testimony of sworn or admonished witnesses, not on conjecture or opinion. However, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing such evidence except upon specific approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, or another judge appointed by the Presiding Judge (Penal Code Section 911, 924.1 (a) and 929). Similarly, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing the identity of witnesses except upon an order of the court for narrowly defined purposes (Penal Code Section 924.2 and 929).

## **FUTURE NEEDS FOR KAWEAH DELTA HEALTH CARE DISTRICT**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Kaweah Delta Health Care District (KDHCD), the largest of the three hospitals in Tulare County, is a non-profit district hospital. It was formed on March 28, 1961, by a vote of the community. The Tulare County Board of Supervisors appointed the first governing board. After the establishment of the District's physical boundaries, operation of KDHCD commenced July 1, 1963, when the Board of Directors leased the former Visalia Municipal Hospital. On December 14, 1965, a bond was passed and a new hospital was rebuilt in 1969, known as the Mineral King West Wing.

Triggered by the 1971 San Fernando Valley earthquake, which destroyed a number of hospitals, the California Legislature passed the original Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Facilities Seismic Safety Act (AEAHFSSA) in 1973, requiring all new construction to meet stringent seismic requirements. Following the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, which resulted in \$3 billion damage to hospitals, the AEAHFSSA was amended under SB 1953. The seismic mandate established five structural and five non-structural classification upgrades.

The Mineral King West Wing of the hospital does not meet the mandated seismic safety level requirements. The Board of Directors on January 25, 2016, passed a resolution asking the voters within the district to approve a general obligation bond in the amount of \$327 million. This bond was to help fund the expansion, improvement, acquisition, construction and/or renovation of health care facilities in the District. The \$327 million Measure H, General Obligation Bond failed to get the required votes.

### **REASON FOR INVESTIGATION:**

The Tulare County Grand Jury (TCGJ) received several complaints concerning issues surrounding the authority, legality and methods used by KDHCD. The core issues of the complaints related to administrative transparency and accountability.

### **METHOD OF INVESTIGATION:**

- Attended board meetings
- Conducted interviews
- Reviewed documents

### **FACTS:**

1. Resolution 1888, dated January 25, 2016, stated the proposed tax rate for the bond measure would be \$9.92 per month per \$100,000 of assessed property value in fiscal year 2016/2017.