

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Consolidation of Dispatch Services

Report Date: May 28, 2013

Authorized Responder and Agency Mayor Debbie Peterson on behalf of the
Grover Beach City Council

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: _____
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3, F5 and F6
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed;
include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented,
but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)

- Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.

(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study,
and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or
director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including
the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall
not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)

- Recommendations numbered R1 and R2 will not be implemented
because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

(Attach an explanation.)

Date: July 19, 2013 **Signed:** 

Number of pages attached Three (3)



City of Grover Beach

Mayor Debbie Peterson Mayor Pro Tem Karen Bright
Council Member Jeff Lee, Council Member Glenn Marshall, Council Member Bill Nicolls

Robert Perrault
City Manager

July 19, 2013

The Honorable Judge Barry T. LaBarbera
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
1035 Palm Street, Room 355
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT ENTITLED:
 "CONSOLIDATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH SYSTEMS"**

Dear Judge LaBarbera:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury Report entitled "Consolidation of Public Safety Dispatch Systems". The report and our response were thoroughly reviewed during the Council meeting held on Monday, July 15, 2013. In developing this response, the Council asked me to convey to you the Council's concern that, while the report focused on the possibility of combining dispatch centers for the City of Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande, the report did not include the City of Pismo Beach in the discussion.

The concept of consolidation of dispatch services is not new to the City of Grover Beach or for that matter the South County area. As early as 2003, and in response to an invitation from the City of Grover Beach, the Cities of Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and Pismo Beach met to consider the consolidation of police services, including dispatch. At the conclusion of that discussion, the Cities determined that consolidation of police services was not feasible, but agreed to continue a focus on communications. The Cities continued to review the prospect until 2006 when the City of Pismo Beach decided to discontinue participation.

In 2009, the Cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach took the lead in retaining a consultant to review possible dispatch opportunities throughout the County. While the consultant determined that a consolidation of dispatch services was fiscally possible in the South County, service issues were not addressed and consolidation did not move forward. With the advent of the Five Cities Fire Authority and the recognized need to consolidate fire dispatch within the Fire Authority area, efforts were again undertaken in 2010 and 2012.

In order for the consolidation of safety dispatch to succeed, a balance must be struck between the desire to save funds and the ability to deliver quality and necessary services. History indicates that it is difficult to strike this balance when consolidating dispatch services for just Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande. Based on this background, I offer the following required responses to the report:

154 South Eighth Street ♦ Grover Beach, California 93433 ♦ FAX (805) 489-9657 ♦ www.grover.org

Administrative Services/Water (805) 473-4550 ♦ City Council/City Manager (805) 473-4567 ♦ City Clerk (805) 473-4568
Community Development - Building, Planning & Economic Development (805) 473-4520 ♦ Human Resources (805) 473-4564
Parks & Recreation (805) 473-4580 ♦ Police/Non-Emergency (805) 473-4511 ♦ Public Works (805) 473-4520

Findings:

F1 There is duplication of police and fire dispatch services in Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach.

Response: Agree in part and disagree in part. The basic services provided for police and fire dispatch services in Arroyo Grande are very similar, but there are also differences in services offered based on the size and makeup of the respective communities. A basic difference in the services provided by the two jurisdictions is the fact that Grover Beach is providing fire dispatch services to the Community of Oceano under a separate agreement with the Oceano Community Service District.

F 2 Service levels to the citizens of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach are at risk regarding fire protection because of computer incompatibility.

Response: Disagree. The City is unaware of any computer incompatibility in either the Arroyo Grande or Grover Beach dispatch centers that would impact service levels to its citizens.

F3 There are potentially significant future cost savings to the cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach in joining dispatch services after the first year of combining equipment expenditures.

Response: Disagree. All of the reviews completed thus far indicate there would be a limited amount of savings resulting from the consolidation of Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande dispatch centers. The actual amount of savings would vary, depending on which agency hosted the consolidation. Studies completed thus far do not indicate a significant future cost savings to either agency.

F 5 The County Sheriff's Office is prepared to handle both police and fire dispatches for the cities of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach.

Response: Agree in part and disagree in part. The San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office could provide police and fire dispatch services for the City of Grover Beach and the City of Arroyo Grande under a contract for services. Currently the Grover Beach Dispatch Center provides a 24/7 contact point for all citizens seeking city services during those periods when City Hall offices are closed. The City would need to seriously consider potential ramifications to these services with a contract for services with the Sheriff's Office.

F6 The reluctance to consolidate dispatch by Five Cities Fire Authority and Cal FIRE has brought action to a stalemate in finding answers to dispatch issue.

Response: Disagree. The City is not aware of any discussions or interactions that could have taken place between the Five Cities Fire Authority and Cal FIRE that would have created a stalemate between the parties with reference to the consolidation of dispatch.

Recommendations:

- R1 The City Councils of Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach should consider consolidating the public safety dispatch systems of their respective cities.**

Response: Disagree. The City of Grover Beach has participated in a number of efforts that has led to City Council consideration of dispatch consolidation and the results have always led to the same conclusions. The City of Grover Beach would support a broader review and discussion that would consider the consolidation of dispatch services in the South County that would also include the Five Cities Fire Authority and the City of Pismo Beach.

- R2 All city law enforcement, city managers, Sheriff, Five Cities Fire Authority and CAL FIRE should join in meeting with an independent facilitator to finalize consolidations of dispatch by contracting dispatch services to the Sheriff's Office.**

Response: Disagree. The City is not averse to meeting with all the parties noted in the recommendation, but does not believe a facilitator or the cost of a facilitator is necessary. Additionally, the recommendation notes one alternative - contracting services with the Sheriff's Department. This was the only alternative cited. As has been already mentioned, an alternative that should be considered would be a review of consolidating communication services for all South County agencies, including Pismo Beach and the Five Cities Fire Authority.

In conclusion, the Council requested that I convey to the Grand Jury that the City remains open to considering options for the consolidation of dispatch services that are practical and make sense. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury Report.

Sincerely,



DEBBIE PETERSON
Mayor

c: SLO County Grand Jury, PO Box 4910, SLO, CA 93403 (w/ electronic copy to: grandjury@co.slo.ca.us)
City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Police Chief