



August 25, 2019

Michael Jurkovich
Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury
Madera County Superior Court
200 S. G Street
Madera, CA 93637

Subject: Response to the 2018-19 Grand Jury Report entitled "Rolling Hills Water"

Honorable Judge Jurkovich:

In accordance with California Penal Code § 933.5(a) and (b), this letter addresses all Findings and Recommendations contained in the above-referenced Grand Jury report.

The following are the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations, followed by the responses of Brett Frazier, Madera County Supervisor – District 1.

Finding 1:

The Madera County Grand Jury's examination of the County accounts and reports failed to disclose any malfeasance or negligence by the County of Madera.

Response

Respondent agrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (1).

Finding 2:

The Madera County Grand Jury found a lack of good communication between County of Madera and the residents of Rolling Hills, which resulted in misunderstanding and frustration on both sides.

Response

Respondent partially disagrees with the finding per California Penal Code 933.05 (a) (2). As noted in the Grand Jury's report, at least some residents interviewed complained that communications with the County were insufficient and unsatisfactory. Presumably, the complaints of these residents are limited to the several meetings referenced in the report which are described as "contentious and hostile" and date back to 2008. While there is no disputing that a lack of good communication can lead to misunderstanding and frustration for all parties involved, it should be noted that the County, and in particular the District 1 Supervisor, have made a concerted effort to improve communication between the County and the residents of





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CSA 19. In an effort to foster good communication between the County and the residents of Rolling Hills, the County took measures to ensure that all residents had an opportunity to engage with the County particularly with respect to the privatization of the water system provider. The County increased efforts to provide notice of community meetings via mailed notifications to residents as well as changing the venue of these meetings to Children's Hospital in order to accommodate all interested residents. Most notably, the District 1 Supervisor, as well as his staff, went door-to-door handing out flyers, engaging with residents and encouraging all to attend the scheduled community meetings so that all residents would have an opportunity to have their voices heard. While it is true that both the County and the residents of Rolling Hills have at times experienced frustration which can certainly be attributed, at least in part, to ineffective communication, it is equally true that both sides have worked hard to overcome these challenges for the mutual benefit of both the County and the Residents of CSA 19.

Recommendation 1:

The Madera County Grand Jury recommends that the County of Madera continue to use appropriate accounting practices and policies consistent with national accounting standards for all County Service areas managed by the County.

Response

The recommendation has been implemented. California counties must follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) as prescribed by the State Controller's office pursuant to California Government Code section 30200. The County of Madera intends to continue to fully comply with these standards.

Recommendation 2:

The Madera County Grand Jury recommends the County of Madera communicate in writing or meeting in person with County Service areas and Special Districts to provide the financial health of those entities to them on an annual basis.

Response

The recommendation requires further analysis. As noted in the Grand Jury report, substantial information is maintained within the Public Works Department related to certified audits, financial records which detail purchases and vendor expenses as well as maintenance expenses and other issues. Staff is available to meet with the public to discuss these and other issues. The feasibility of communicating in writing or meeting in person with each of the County's Service Areas and Special Districts annually will need to be evaluated by Public Works staff





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during the current fiscal year to ensure that adequate funding and staffing is available to implement the recommendation.

I wish to acknowledge the Grand Jury's review and time involved in this matter, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Brett Frazier
Madera County Supervisor – District 1

BF/md

