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Plumas County Civil Grand Jury

What is it? What does it do?

The Plumas County Civil Grand Jury is an independent body empowered by law to investigate all aspects of county government under its “watchdog” function. It is a body made up of volunteers and selected members from a jury duty pool who serve for a period of one year from July 1 through June 30. It is independent of county administrators and politicians. All jurors are sworn to secrecy to protect the confidentiality of complainants and interviewees.

Grand Juries have existed in California since the original constitution of 1849-50. The codification of Grand Jury Law came about in 1872 with the adoption of the Penal Code where most Grand Jury Law resides. This code includes inquiring into local prisons, auditing of county books, and examining matters of community interest. In 1880, the Grand Jury was expanded to investigate local governments. Grand Jury Law is embedded in the Penal Code, in a section identified as Part 2, Title IV beginning with section 888 which states: A Grand Jury is a body of persons of the county sworn to inquire of public offenses committed or triable within the county. One Grand Jury in each county shall be charged and sworn to investigate or inquire into county matters of civil concern.

Plumas County grand jurors are agents of change. They are civic-minded individuals who have chosen to give back to their community by striving to suggest improvements in the way local government entities conduct their business. Drawing from their life experiences, the Grand Jury’s mission is to help our local government be more responsive and efficient. The Jury accomplishes this by examining and monitoring the performance of the county government, special districts, and cities within the county by conducting research, interviewing public officials, experts, and the citizenry, as well as visiting public facilities. The Grand Jury reviews and evaluates procedures, methods, and systems utilized by county government, and functions lawfully as one body. No individual of the Grand Jury acts alone or has any power or authority. Meetings of the Grand Jury are not open to the public. The law requires all matters discussed and votes taken before the Grand Jury are to be kept private and confidential. Reports are developed, resulting in recommendations that have the potential of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of government services. The goal is to facilitate positive change in Plumas County.

The Civil Grand Jury as an independent body has the ethical and moral responsibility to use its resources wisely and conduct meaningful investigations, yielding reports that will make a positive difference in local government.

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."
(Edmund Burke) 1729–1797

2011 / 2012 Plumas County Grand Jury Final Report

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LOOKING BACK WITH PRIDE

PLUMAS COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY ROSTER 2011/2012

Participation in Grand Jury investigations and discussions is a rich and rewarding experience. It is an opportunity to get an intimate look at how government works and to make informed and valuable recommendations regarding possible improvements. It is also an opportunity to serve with fellow county residents and to discover how a body of sixteen dedicated citizens reaches consensus. This is the heart of the democratic process, and service on the Grand Jury is a valuable way to learn, to contribute and to make a difference in our community.

We the members of the 2011/2012 Civil Grand Jury are proud to have served on such a worthy assembly. We hope our work will help improve conditions here in Plumas County and we want to thank all of you for entrusting us with this very important task.

Richardson, Frank	Foreperson	Quincy, CA
Huddleston, Josh	Foreperson /pro tem	Taylorsville, CA
Nichols, Joe	Treasure & Public Safety Co-Chair	Chester, CA
Foster, Colleen	Correspondence Secretary	Quincy, CA
Hopman, Lisa	Parliamentarian	Quincy, CA
Marshall, Laverna	Recorder & Special Districts Chair	Beckwourth, CA
Doyle, Dennis	Recorder & Audit Committee Chair	Clio, CA
Garcia, Caroline	Member	Taylorsville, CA
Gruber, Larry	Member	Portola, CA
Headley, Kathryn	Editorial Committee Chair	Graeagle, CA
James, John	Member	Lake Almanor, CA
Ghidossi, Donna	Member	Portola, CA
MacArthur, Bob	Public Safety Co-Chair	Lake Almanor, CA
Smith, Robert	Member	Chester, CA
Sunderman, Lynn	Health & Social Services Chair	Quincy, CA
Szczerby, Carolyn	Member	Portola, CA

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead



PLUMAS COUNTY GRAND JURY

PO Box 784
Quincy, CA 95971

Frank Richardson

June 30, 2012

Josh Huddleston

The Honorable Janet Hilde
Presiding Judge
Plumas County Superior Court

Joe Nichols

Re: 2011-2012 Plumas County Grand Jury Final Report

Colleen Foster

Dear Judge Hilde,

Lisa Hopman

On behalf of the 2011-2012 Plumas County Grand Jury, I am pleased to present this final report to you and the citizens of Plumas County.

Laverna Marshall

Caroline Garcia

The primary function of the Grand Jury is the examination of all aspects of county government and special districts, seeing that the government agencies are being run efficiently, honestly, and fairly. We took our job seriously. The members of the Grand Jury worked tirelessly, meeting as a panel or in special committees. We toured several county facilities, including the penal institution located in Quincy. We reviewed thousands of pages of documents and met with or interviewed nearly one hundred agency and departmental representatives and employees. All together, thousands of hours were spent in the preparation of the final report.

Dennis Doyle

Larry Gruber

Kathryn Headley

Each year, the Grand Jury chooses what issues to address and where to focus its resources to best serve the public. We selected a wide range of topics. Our goal was to seek issues which were important to the community and where we thought the Grand Jury could best contribute. Those members who had potential conflicts of interest recused themselves in all cases.

John James

Donna Ghidossi

Bob MacArthur

Although it is sometimes the role of the Grand Jury to criticize, we want to acknowledge all of the hardworking government employees in Plumas County. When we do criticize, we do so not to point out any human imperfection, but to draw attention to systems that could be improved and to recommend ways to improve them. It has been a privilege to have had such a close view of the intricacies and complexities of our local government.

Robert Smith

Lynn Sunderman

Carolyn Szczerby

I am very proud and fortunate to have served as Foreperson of the 2011-2012 Plumas County Grand Jury. Every member of the Grand Jury has been dedicated, dauntless, and honorable. It has been a pleasure and honor to have served with them.

Sincerely,

Frank Richardson
Foreperson 2011-2012 Plumas County Civil Grand Jury

