

MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: David Boesch, Placer County Executive Officer
By: Bekki Riggan, Principal Management Analyst

DATE: September 25, 2012

SUBJECT: 2011-12 Placer County Grand Jury Final Report – Board of Supervisors' Responses

Action Requested

Authorize the Chair to sign three (3) letters in response to the Placer County Grand Jury's 2011-2012 Final Report.

Background

On June 26, 2012, the Placer County Grand Jury issued its 2011-2012 Final Report. The report included findings and recommendations based on the Grand Jury's investigations, as required by law. Included in the Final Report are three individual reports titled: *Annual Inspection of the Holding Facilities in Placer County; Taking Care of Placer County Veterans Today and Tomorrow; and Placer County Family and Children's Services.*

The Placer County Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Health and Human Services Department and the Facility Services Department were asked to provide responses to the Grand Jury reports. In collaboration with County departments, County Executive Office staff prepared responses on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, which are subject to your approval today. This memo provides a brief summary of the three Grand Jury reports and corresponding Board of Supervisors' responses. Details of the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations are included within the attached response letters. Upon approval by your Board, the responses will be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Placer County Superior Court and to the Placer County Grand Jury.

Annual Inspection of the Holding Facilities in Placer County

The 2011-12 Placer County Grand Jury inspected all holding facilities within Placer County. The Grand Jury concluded that the overall operations of the holding facilities are conducted in accordance with California law and the policies and procedures of the agencies which operate them. In addition, the Grand Jury reported that the inspected facilities are clean, organized and as well-maintained as fiscal constraints allow. However, the Grand Jury did express specific concerns about the Sheriff's Office Burton Creek Substation.

In its inspection of the Auburn Historic Courthouse Holding Facility the Grand Jury found the Facility to be clean and generally well maintained. It was noted there was a "blind spot" preventing control room personnel from observing inmates in the hallway outside the holding cell, causing a safety issue for both corrections personnel and inmates. The Grand Jury recommended the Placer County Sheriff coordinate with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) on installation of a convex mirror in the hallway.

The Sheriff's Office has reported to the Grand Jury that the installation of a convex mirror in the hallway at the Auburn Historical Courthouse was completed on July 9, 2012.

In its inspection of the Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation at Burton Creek the Grand Jury found the facility to be as clean as its age and design permits. The Grand Jury recommended the Board of Supervisors replace the Sheriff's Substation at Burton Creek; either by actively seeking a written agreement with the AOC on the co-location of services, or to develop and execute a unilateral plan of action for the replacement of the current facility with a stand-alone Sheriff's Office substation facility.

The Board of Supervisors' response acknowledges the need to replace the Burton Creek facility and references the project's inclusion on the County's Capital Improvement Projects list. However, as stated in the Board's response to previous Grand Juries, the replacement of the Burton Creek facility is contingent upon several factors including available funding, development of a suitable building site and completion of the required environmental review. The County continues to explore options with the Superior Courts and the AOC for replacing the facility and the Board remains committed to doing so in a fiscally responsible manner given the impacts of the economic recession.

In its review of the Placer County Jail in Auburn the Grand Jury found the Jail to be clean and well maintained. The Grand Jury identified potential cost savings through volume purchasing if sufficient storage space existed for non-perishable foods bought in bulk.

The Board of Supervisors' response advises the Grand Jury that studying additional correctional storage space needs was completed several years ago as part of the planning and design of the South Placer Adult Correctional Facility (SPACF). The SPACF kitchen, managed by the Probation Department, was designed with storage space that allow for the purchase of large quantities of food items, thus eliminating the need for adding storage space at the Auburn kitchen. The Auburn kitchen will be reconfigured as a "re-heating" facility in the near future with the opening of the SPACF kitchen in October 2012.

Taking Care of Placer County Veterans Today and Tomorrow

The Grand Jury reviewed the Veterans Service Office (VSO) and concluded that the veterans of Placer County, the County, and the taxpayers are well-served by this office. Due to the increasing number of veterans seeking services, the Grand Jury recommended the Board of Supervisors increase both staffing and funding for the VSO.

The Board's response advises the Grand Jury that the County Executive Office will work with the new Veterans Services Officer, once hired, to review administrative support and other needs within the office to ensure that the highly productive and timely services for Placer's Veterans are maintained. As the State transitions to its new performance based funding methodologies, it is anticipated that Placer County will receive increased levels of State funding.

Placer County Family and Children's Services

In 2011-12 the Grand Jury assessed Family and Children's Services (Children's Welfare Services) in the Children's System of Care (CSOC) division of the Placer County Health and Human Services Department (HHS). The Grand Jury found that CSOC is doing an extraordinarily good job in very difficult times, but expressed some concerns regarding the impact of budget cuts on workload, caseloads and response statistics. They also expressed concerns as to whether the approach to program supervision makes it difficult for caseworkers to receive adequate support and whether there are adequate in-county foster care facilities.

The Board response agrees that the State has failed to adequately fund Child Welfare Services (CWS), but advises the Grand Jury that the Board has also maintained or increased County General Fund support for these services every year since 2006. In addition, in FY 2012-13 the State is beginning to gradually restore funding cuts implemented in previous years. The response also cites HHS performance measures demonstrating that CWS meets or exceeds State requirements for investigation timeliness and supervisory training levels.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with these responses to the Grand Jury.

Attachments:

Board of Supervisors 2011-12 Grand Jury Response Letters:
Annual Inspection of the Holding Facilities in Placer County
Taking Care of Placer County Veterans Today and Tomorrow
Placer County Family and Children's Services

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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JENNIFER MONTGOMERY
District 5



September 25, 2012

John Wilhelm, Foreperson
Placer County Grand Jury
11490 C Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: 2011-12 Grand Jury Final Report – *Annual Inspections of the Holding Facilities in Placer County*

Dear Mr. Wilhelm,

This letter is in response to the 2011-2012 Grand Jury's Findings & Recommendations from the report titled *Annual Inspections of the Holding Facilities in Placer County*. The Placer County Board of Supervisors would like to thank the members of the 2011-12 Grand Jury for their efforts in their annual inspection of the Placer County holding facilities and for providing their findings for our response.

Findings of the Grand Jury

3. Auburn Historic Courthouse Holding Facility - The "blind spot" in the hallway between the control room and the holding cell prevents corrections personnel from observing inmates and represents a safety issue for both corrections personnel and inmates.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding. However, the State of California Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), rather than Placer County, is responsible for initiating maintenance and repair of Court facilities.

4. Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation at Burton Creek, Tahoe City – Based on a 17-year history of inactions and a clear and well documented lack of progress, there seems to be a lack of motivation on the part of Placer County officials, at all levels, to replace this facility.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors disagrees with this finding. The Board recognizes the need to replace the Burton Creek facility. The Grand Jury citing a "lack of motivation" on the part of Placer County officials as the main delay in replacing the facility is inaccurate. The County Executive Office, Facilities Services and Placer Superior Court officials continue to pursue development opportunities for a new Tahoe facility.

5. There is a potential cost savings at the Auburn jail if sufficient storage could be arranged to allow for volume purchasing.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding. Volume purchasing cost savings opportunities were designed into the new kitchen at the South Placer Adult Correctional Facility (SPACF). Accordingly, the Board of Supervisors authorized Correctional Food Services to transition to SPACF, which is anticipated to occur in October 2012.

Recommendations of the Grand Jury

3. The Placer County Sheriff coordinates with the Administrative Office of the Courts to install a convex mirror in the holding facility at the end of the hallway between the control room and the holding cells at the Auburn Historical Courthouse Court Holding Facility.

Board of Supervisors Response:

On August 20, 2012, the Placer County Sheriff's Office reported to the Grand Jury that on July 9, 2012, the recommended installation of a convex mirror in the hallway at the Auburn Historical Courthouse was completed.

4. The Placer County Board of Supervisors should replace the Sheriff's Substation at Burton Creek. After seventeen (17) years of inaction on the part of the Board of Supervisors, it is time for the Board of Supervisors to act.

Board of Supervisors Response: The need for replacing the Burton Creek facility is recognized by the Board of Supervisors as evidenced by this project's inclusion in the County's Capital Improvement Projects list. As stated in the Board's response to similar recommendations by previous Grand Juries, replacement of the Burton Creek facility is contingent upon many factors including securing available funding, identification and development of a suitable building site, and completing CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review.

The current Burton Creek facility is a comprehensive justice center including a Sheriff's sub-station, jail, district attorney office space and a courtroom. This co-location of law enforcement and judicial services is operationally similar to the justice campus design of the Santucci Justice Center. Co-location of these services is optimal for constituents and also allows for operational efficiencies between the Courts and the Sheriff's Office. The Board, in its previous response to the Grand Jury on August 24, 2010 reported that the AOC notified the County that a feasibility study for a new Tahoe Courthouse was approved by the State Public Works Board, the State Department of Finance and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. The AOC anticipated that this study would identify a new site for the courts.

On October 15, 2010 the AOC notified the County they were given approval to proceed with site acquisition and preliminary planning to construct a new courthouse in the Tahoe area to be funded by the AOC. However, the County was recently notified by the Courts that the \$26 million project is being reviewed by the Judicial Council of California and may be removed from the approved funding list due to lack of funding for their statewide courthouse construction program. The County and the Courts will reconvene to explore other options and funding strategies if the courthouse project is removed from the approved funding list.

The Board of Supervisors remains committed to replacing the Burton Creek facility and to doing so in a responsible manner given the impact of the economic recession on the limited resources available to the County.

5. The Sheriff should study the possibility of savings which could be realized by additional storage space for non-perishable foods bought in bulk.

Board of Supervisors Response: The recommendation for a study into possible savings that could be realized for Correctional Food Services through volume purchasing occurred several years ago as part of the planning and design of SPACF. The new kitchen was designed and built with larger storage areas for dry, refrigerated and frozen food stores to facilitate bulk purchases, thus eliminating the need for expanding storage at the Auburn facility. The Auburn kitchen will be reconfigured as a "re-heating" facility in the near future. The Correctional Food Service operation is anticipated to transition to SPACF in October 2012.

The Board would like to thank the 2011-12 Grand Jury for their report, and appreciates their work on the annual inspection of the County's holding facilities.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER

Jennifer Montgomery, Chairwoman
Supervisor District 5
Placer County Board of Supervisors

cc: Alan V. Pineschi, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
David Boesch, County Executive Officer, County of Placer
Edward N. Bonner, Sheriff
Jim Durfee, Director, Department of Facilities
Roseville City Council
Rocklin City Council
John Ruffcorn, Chief of Police
Auburn City Council
Paul Shelgren, Chief of Police
Lincoln City Council

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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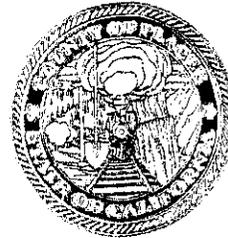
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September 25, 2012

John Wilhelm, Foreperson
Placer County Grand Jury
11490 C Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: 2011-12 Grand Jury Final Report – *Taking Care of Placer County Veterans Today and Tomorrow*

Dear Mr. Wilhelm,

This letter is in response to the 2011-2012 Grand Jury's Findings & Recommendations from the report titled *Taking Care of Placer County Veterans Today and Tomorrow*. The Placer County Board of Supervisors would like to thank the members of the 2011-12 Grand Jury for their efforts in investigating the operations of the Veterans Service Office (VSO) and for providing your findings for our response.

Findings of the Grand Jury

1. The Placer County VSO is a highly productive yet modestly funded and staffed office. If "bang for the buck" is the measure of success for public agencies the Placer County VSO speaks for Placer County Veterans like a battery of howitzers.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors agrees that the Placer County VSO has been, and continues to be, a highly productive, yet modestly staffed office.

Recommendations of the Grand Jury

1. That in anticipation of a significant increase in the number of returning veterans, the Board of Supervisors should give special attention to this small yet exceedingly productive part of county government and increase both staffing and budget for the VSO, not forgetting that "A Veteran is someone who at one point in his life wrote a blank check made payable to "The US" for an amount of 'up to and including my life.'"

Board of Supervisors Response: Although the Veteran's Service Office is a State funding responsibility, Counties provide the direct services for its local Veterans. In support of Veterans Services, the Board of Supervisors provided 79% of the total program funding in FY 2010-11 with County General Funds, which has increased from \$381,554 in FY 2011-12 to \$384,420 in FY 2012-13. The County Executive Office will work with the new Veterans Services Officer, once hired, to review administrative support and other needs within the office to ensure that timely

services for the County's Veterans are maintained. As the State transitions to its new performance based funding methodology, it is anticipated that Placer County will receive increased levels of State funding to further meet the needs of our local Veterans.

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the work of the 2011-12 Placer County Grand Jury in their review of Veterans Service Office.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER

Jennifer Montgomery, Chairwoman
Supervisor District 5
Placer County Board of Supervisors

cc: Alan V. Pineschi, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
David Boesch, County Executive Officer, County of Placer
Rick Buckman, Veterans Service Officer

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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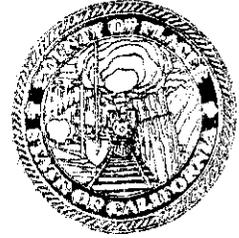
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September 25, 2012

John Wilhelm, Foreperson
Placer County Grand Jury
11490 C Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: 2011-12 Grand Jury Final Report – *Placer County Family and Children's Services: A Tough Job in Tough Times*

Dear Mr. Wilhelm,

This letter is in response to the 2011-2012 Grand Jury's Findings & Recommendations from the report titled *Placer County Family and Children's Services: A Tough Job in Tough Times*. The Placer County Board of Supervisors would like to thank the members of the 2011-12 Grand Jury for their efforts in reviewing the operations of the Children's Welfare Services (CWS) within the Children's System of Care (CSOC) Division of Health and Human Services (HHS) and for providing your findings for our response.

Findings of the Grand Jury

1. Personnel cuts for budgetary reasons have created heavier workloads for caseworkers and management, with a resultant decrease in response statistics for the 4th quarter of 2011.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding. The Board agrees that the State has historically failed to provide adequate funding for Child Welfare Services. However, given the importance of this program in protecting the children of Placer County, the Board has consistently maintained or increased annual County General Fund support for Child Welfare since 2006. Regarding response statistics, HHS reports that nearly 90% of children who are evaluated and found to be at no immediate risk have their investigations initiated within the state standard of ten days. The Department further reports that 94% of children evaluated as benefitting from an immediate investigation have an investigation by Child Welfare within 24 hours, which exceeds the State recommended standard of 90%.

2. The integrated program creates greater ability for agencies to communicate between agency programs to provide a more seamless approach to addressing the needs of families and children. The Grand Jury has a concern that cross-program supervision might make it more difficult for caseworkers to receive appropriate support from management.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors respectfully disagrees with this finding. Supervisors working in the Family and Children's Emergency Response area exceed all State requirements for supervisory competency training and have received additional training in children's mental health diagnosis and crisis response. In addition, some supervisors hold clinical licensure, which exceeds State supervisory competency requirements. The cross-program supervision model is a component of the Placer Blended Services model that has received Federal and State recognition for its client-centered focus and its level of results.

3. Placer County children in foster care are placed in out-of-county facilities because there are not enough facilities with the county. This makes it difficult for families to work toward reunification.

Board of Supervisors Response: The Board of Supervisors respectfully disagrees with this finding. Placer County consistently seeks to identify the most appropriate placement setting when it becomes necessary to place a youth outside of their homes. A number of factors are considered when seeking a placement setting to ensure the needs of the youth can best be addressed. Ideally the youth is placed as close to their home and to their parents as possible in order to facilitate reunification. However, placement with extended family members is typically preferable over placing a youth in foster care, and sometimes these family members live in neighboring counties. Placer County currently has fewer youth placed in foster or group home care than it has had in many years.

Recommendations of the Grand Jury

1. County officials at all levels should immediately seek budgetary resources to increase personnel, and significantly reduce resultant caseloads.

Board of Supervisors Response: This Recommendation is being implemented. In Fiscal Year 2012-13 the State acknowledged its history of inadequate funding for Child Welfare Services and began to restore funding cuts from previous years. This increase in State funding, along with the ongoing General Fund support by the Board of Supervisors, will allow CSOC to fund an additional 14 staff. Six of these positions have already been filled and the remaining 8 positions are in various stages of the hiring process. This staffing augmentation combined with the on-going child abuse prevention work done by CSOC and its community partners will further enhance response and investigation timelines.

3. Board of Supervisors needs to increase funds for identifying and licensing more foster care providers within Placer County.

Board of Supervisors Response: This Recommendation will not be implemented as funding for foster home or group home recruitment is a State responsibility. The number of facilities that exist within Placer County is a function of community interest and State licensing practices. However, CSOC has recently undertaken a number of program redesigns, and has recently been able to expand its foster home placement capacity with 15 new families within Placer County.

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the work of the 2011-12 Placer County Grand Jury in their review of Children's Welfare Services in the Children's System of Care Division of the Placer County's Health and Human Services Department.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER

Jennifer Montgomery, Chairwoman
Supervisor District 5
Placer County Board of Supervisors

cc: Alan V. Pineschi, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
David Boesch, County Executive Officer, County of Placer
Dr. Richard J. Burton, Director, Health and Human Services Department

