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COUNTY GRAND JURY

August 14, 2009

Ms. Victoria D. Stubblefield, Foreperson
San Diego County Grand Jury
Hall of Justice
330 W. Broadway, Suite 477
San Diego, CA 92101-3830

Re: Response to 2009 Grand Jury Report on Chula Vista Jail

Dear Ms. Stubblefield,

Pursuant to California Penal Code §933.05(a), (b), & (c), we are providing the following information in response to the Findings and Recommendations in the Grand Jury report filed May 27, 2009:

Finding #01: The net cost of conducting Chula Vista Jail operations in the City of Chula Vista exceeded \$900,000 for FY 07/08 according to figures supplied by the Chula Vista Police Department.

Response: We agree with this finding. Unfortunately, however, it does not acknowledge a reduction of more than 40% over the previous fiscal year, (from \$1.5 million), or that the net operating cost in FY 08/09 was even less, (about \$600K). Likewise, measures have been taken to reduce this amount even further for the current and subsequent fiscal years.

Finding #02: A more effective set of financial controls should be placed on the Inmate Welfare Fund to avoid the potential for fraud or abuse.

Response: We agree, and when this concern was brought to our attention, the policy and procedures were changed based on recommendations by the Grand Jury auditor. It is important to note that the Grand Jury found no evidence of fraud or abuse of this fund during their review.

Finding #03: Anticipated savings to the City of Chula Vista for the transportation of prisoners to the San Diego County facilities have been negligible.

Response: We disagree. Although the number of prisoners transported to County facilities by our officers has, in fact exceeded initial projections, there still is significant savings. While we continue to explore other options to further reduce this number, unfortunately some of these individuals, (e.g., females, warrants from other jurisdictions, parole violations only, and those with medical issues), must still be sent elsewhere.

Recommendation 09-33: Conduct an examination and assessment of the Chula Vista Jail operation to determine if the functions are cost effective in terms of fiscal responsibility and service to the community in its present form.

Response: In February 2008, such an assessment was conducted in response to a request by Council Member Ramirez. That assessment, which was provided to the Grand Jury, detailed the various benefits our community derives from having a city jail. The report also showed that the new 48-bed jail is far more cost-effective, and has a lower net operating cost, than the six-bed facility at the former police station.

Recommendation 09-34: Present a public report to the Chula Vista City Council concerning the findings of the above assessment with recommendations of any areas of concern.

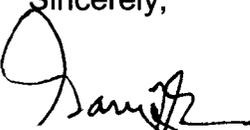
Response: The report referred to in Recommendation 09-33 was presented to City Council in February 2008.

Recommendation 09-35: Evaluate and revise the current policy and procedures relating to the accounting practices of the Inmate Welfare Fund of the Chula Vista Jail to eliminate the possibility of fraud or abuse and to conform to acceptable accounting principles.

Response: This recommendation has been implemented, (as stated in our response to Finding #02).

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Findings and Recommendations contained in your report. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (619) 691-5218.

Sincerely,


Gary Wedge
Police Captain

cc: The Honorable Cheryl Cox, Mayor
James Sandoval, City Manager