



The Sonoma County Grand Jury

PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION COMPLIANCE REVIEW

July 1, 2004

Summary

The 2003-2004 Sonoma County grand jury reviewed the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 grand jury reports and the responses to those reports to determine if follow up was needed. It was decided to audit the county Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) to see if recommendations had been implemented since the department was the subject of a report by both grand juries. Many of the responses provided by PRMD stated that the recommendations made by the grand juries were partially implemented or would be implemented. The 2003-2004 grand jury has concluded that all the recommendations agreed to have not been fully implemented.

Based on the review of PRMD it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors initiate a review process to insure that recommendations agreed upon by county departments in prior grand jury reports are implemented in a timely fashion. It is also recommended that PRMD implement all of the previous recommendations it agreed to on a prompt basis.

Reason for Investigations

In tracking past grand jury reports, it was noted that often the same department or agency was the subject of a grand jury investigation. A review of these past reports indicates that some of the same issues were recurring. The 2003-2004 grand jury decided to generate an investigation to determine if recommendations from past grand jury reports, if agreed upon by the county department or agency, had been implemented.

Background

The 2003-2004 Sonoma County grand jury reviewed the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 grand jury reports and the responses to those reports to determine if follow up was needed. Past grand jury reports and required responses were sometimes ignored after the impaneling of a new grand jury. There has been little follow through by either the departments or the Board of Supervisors to insure the implementation of previously agreed to recommendations.

According to *California Penal Code* section 933.05, there are four different responses that can be given to a grand jury recommendation:

- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
- (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.

Sonoma County Grand Jury

PRMD – Compliance Review (continued)

- (3) The recommendation requires further analysis ... This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
- (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

It was decided to audit PRMD since it had been the subject of a grand jury report in 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002.

Investigative Procedures

The grand jury

Reviewed the following documents:

- Interim report of the Sonoma County grand jury, "Permit and Resource Management Department", March 2001
- *Sonoma County Grand Jury 2000-2001 Final Report*
- *Sonoma County Grand Jury 2001-2002 Final Report*
- *Responses to the Final Report of the 2000-2001 Sonoma County Grand Jury*
- *Responses to the Final Report of the 2001-2002 Sonoma County Grand Jury*
- *2000 Zucker Systems Report, Organizational Review of PRMD*

Interviewed the following Sonoma County employee:

- Director, PRMD

Findings

- F1. There is no procedure in place to verify the implementation of all agreed upon recommendations.
- F2. Zucker Systems, a professional management consultant, was hired by the Board of Supervisors to conduct an in-depth operational review of PRMD. A final report was submitted to the Board of Supervisors in January 2001. The *Zucker Report* provided 271 detailed recommendations and identified 8 key priority areas.
- F3. As of April 5, 2004, PRMD had not fully implemented agreed to recommendations made by the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 grand jury.

Some of the agreed to recommendations from the 2000-2001 report not fully implemented were:

- R3. PRMD must have a formal written policy for ongoing training and cross-training.
- R4. Each Unit within PRMD must develop formal written procedures to implement and monitor PRMD policy for both training and cross-training
- R9. The various parts of the permit process must be integrated. Steps must be taken to ensure that a citizen gets complete and accurate information as to all procedures and permits that will be required before starting a project.

The agreed to recommendation from the 2001-2002 report not fully implemented was:

- R6. PRMD must continue to make progress in implementing the recommendations of the *Zucker Report*. The Board of Supervisors should closely monitor this progress to assure that future milestones are achieved.

Conclusion

Past grand jury recommendations are not always acted upon in a timely manner causing issues to resurface that could have been put to rest if implemented as agreed.

Recommendations

- R1. The Board of Supervisors must initiate a review procedure to guarantee implementation of grand jury recommendations that have been agreed upon by county departments and agencies.
- R2. PRMD must complete implementation of the agreed upon recommendations in the *2000-2001 Grand Jury Final Report*.
- R3. PRMD must continue to make progress in implementing the recommendations of the *Zucker Report*. The Board of Supervisors should closely monitor this progress to assure that future milestones are achieved.
- R4. PRMD must provide a written timeline for implementing the agreed upon grand jury recommendations for approval by the Board of Supervisors by October 1, 2004.

Required Responses to Findings

Board of Supervisors - F3
Director, PRMD - F3.

Required Responses to Recommendations

Board of Supervisors - R1, R2, R3.
Director, PRMD - R2, R3, R4.