



***2012-2013***

***Del Norte County  
Grand Jury  
Final Report***



## **Del Norte County Grand Jury 2012-2013 Final Report**

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\*MOU refers to Memorandum Of Understanding  
between Crescent City and Del Norte County



## **Foreperson's Report**

*Honorable William H. Follet  
Judge of the Superior Court of Del Norte County*

On behalf of the 2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury, I submit our final report to you, the citizens of Del Norte County, the County Board of Supervisors, and to the City Council of Crescent City.

This year's Grand Jury has been fraught with its share good jurors having to resign due to reasons that shall remain personal and confidential. At the end, the Grand Jury was down to sixteen members from the originally impaneled nineteen members. The reduced number of jurors presented a challenge for the 2012-2013 Grand Jury that the members rose to and overcame with extra time and effort.

Service on the Del Norte County Grand Jury provides an important watchdog function for our local government departments, agencies and personnel. The Grand Jury not only calls attention to deficiencies exposed in its investigations, but also acknowledges efficiencies where they are uncovered as well. Grand Jury service is both a rewarding and educational experience.

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury Final Report will be released via the Internet, on the Del Norte County website, and as an insert in the Daily Triplicate. There will be additional printed copies available at the Del Norte County Clerk's office at 981 H Street, suite 160.

I would like to thank the committee chairs for keeping the momentum going in some very in-depth investigations and for the entire grand jury for their tireless effort in making this year's Grand Jury a success. Words cannot express my gratitude for a job well done by the 2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury!

This Final Report reflects not only the required investigations mandated by law, but areas of concern brought to our attention by Del Norte County citizens, and those chosen by the grand jury itself.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sandy Jay Blakely, Foreperson  
2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury*

## DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013

### ALDER CONSERVATION CAMP

#### **Summary**

Five members of the Grand Jury committee made a scheduled visit to Alder Camp on April 2, 2013, in accordance with the California Grand Jury's mandate to conduct annual visits to the county detention facilities.

#### **Background**

Alder Camp is operated under the dual direction of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Cal-Fire. The camp is located in an isolated area of southern Del Norte County and is one of thirty-nine inmate/firefighter camps in California. Alder Camp is designated a Level 1 facility. This minimum security camp has signs that designate the boundaries, and all inmates are on the honor system while in camp.

Inmates come from various California Department of Corrections institutions throughout the state. The inmates choose to be at Alder Camp and must qualify as a non-violent, non-sexual crime inmate. Their records for good behavior while in Level 2 or level 3 facilities are also taken into account. Inmates must pass a rigorous physical fitness test, participate in a state-certified, two-week fire-training course, and show a desire to become a useful citizen. Failure to comply with the rules can get them sent back to the prison from which they came.

The primary purpose of the camp is to provide inmate fire-fighting crews for fire suppression. The camp has five fire crews and one base crew that are responsible for building and grounds maintenance, along with cooking and cleaning. When not fighting wildfires, the fire crews are used by government agencies for highway cleanup, mowing, tree removal, and similar community projects.

#### **Findings**

- F1. The average time spent in this facility is 1 to 1 ½ years. During this time, the inmates can also earn other certifications, such as food preparation, becoming a barber, learning electrical skills, or carpentry. They also have the opportunity to complete their GEDs and correspondence courses through Lassen Community College. Support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous are available to them, along with various hobbies.
- F2. Alder Camp's maximum housing is 109 inmates; there were 87 men on the day of our visit. On that day the fire crews were working in both Del Norte and

Humboldt counties doing roadside cleaning, weed eradication, and levee reinforcement. The Grand Jury Corrections Committee was given a thorough tour of the facilities by several members of the staff and also given the opportunity to interview two of the inmates. Both inmates expressed their appreciation at being in an open setting and to be doing something other than sitting in a cell.

- F3. The committee's overall impression of Alder Camp was of an extremely well-run and well-maintained facility. It is a beneficial working and training experience for those inmates fortunate enough to gain placement in the facility.
- F4. One concern that came up during the committee's visit was the effect of AB109 on Alder Camp and similar facilities. This law has decreased the available candidates since the inmates being transferred to county jails are the same type that the Camp looks at – non-violent and non-sexual offenders. A fully staffed crew would have 17 inmates; at the time of our visit no crews were fully staffed. The committee was told that the normal increase in crime over the summer should alleviate some of that shortage. However, we are concerned that in an effort to alleviate the State of California budget, this program may not be used to its full potential. This is a program that helps inmates learn work and life skills, while at the same time providing invaluable services to our communities.

### **Recommendations**

None.

## DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013

### BAR-O BOYS' RANCH

#### Summary

On February 6, 2013, four members of the Del Norte Grand Jury visited and conducted a tour of Bar-O Boys' Ranch, in accordance with the California State mandate to visit, inspect, and tour correction facilities within Del Norte County.

#### Background

The Ranch is located off Highway 199, including about 40 acres of land. Bar-O is a juvenile correction camp run by the Del Norte County Probation Department. The purpose is to rehabilitate and educate non-violent boys ranging from 14-18 years of age. Other counties pay Del Norte County to house their boys at the Ranch. Del Norte wards do not have to pay because in the past, the camp made money for the county. After 9/11, many counties have chosen to keep their wards closer to home, which led to challenges for the Ranch's budget. This year, the financial situation appears to be turning around. It is a 42-bed facility, now housing 24 wards. For optimum efficiency, the facility should not exceed 36 wards.

#### Findings

- F1. Although an open setting, it is a structured environment stressing discipline and emphasizing that the boys accept responsibility for their actions. The Ranch focuses on self image; counseling is in the form of Moral Recognition Therapy, which focuses learning about one's behavior and taking charge of it. It is a 15-week program, and the boys are very enthused about it.
- F2. The staff has Juvenile Counseling Training and Peace Officer Training 832, including 40 hours of on-going training per year. Some staff lives in housing on the grounds. The ratio is 15 wards to 1 staff per Title 15 compliance.
- F3. The schooling is under the Del Norte County Unified School District, which provides a full-time teacher and a part-time Special Ed teacher to help with remedial students. A computer lab is available. The boys are involved in many community projects including Santa's Workshop, Habitat for Humanity, and coastal cleanup. The program emphasizes becoming "givers" rather than "takers."
- F4. There are numerous other programs, including vocational training. Wards can receive certificates in safe food handling, lifeguard, and wild land fire fighting. The Culinary Arts program regularly caters meals to various outside agencies, teaching social skills along with the food training.

- F5. When visiting the barracks, it was obvious that the building was outdated and in dire need of remodeling or replacement.
- F6. Grand Jury members were told that the septic system is continually backing up and has become a sanitary as well as a health issue. At times the water backs up into the shower.
- F7. Medical and dental care is available; but, occasionally, a ward is returned to his jurisdiction for services so that Del Norte does not have to pay. Non-denominational religious services are available, as well as Alcoholics Anonymous. Recently, money to assist parents in visiting was found to facilitate connection with the family.
- F8. The Ranch seems to be a well run facility with motivated and caring staff. The wards feel they are treated fairly, and as one ward stated, "The most important thing I've learned is about myself and how to take charge of my behavior." We compliment the administration and staff on their endeavors.

### **Recommendations**

- R5. Funds should be allocated for repair or replacement of the barracks at the Bar-O Boy's Ranch.
- R6. The septic system should be corrected immediately.

### **Commendation**

- C1. We compliment the administration and staff on their endeavors.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**  
**CITY OF CRESCENT CITY ADMINISTRATION, PUBLIC WORKS, & MOU**

**Summary**

The City of Crescent City has faced many challenges during the current economic downturn. The 2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury City Committee decided to ask how the City was weathering those challenges. Members of the Committee were also aware of the succession of City Managers in the last decade. We also requested numerous City documents which were promptly supplied for our review.

In addition to City Administration, we decided to request a tour of the Waste Water Treatment plant since no Grand Jury had toured the plant since it opened. In addition to the plant, we also toured the City Corporation Yard and the various components of the Water and Sewer System throughout the City and County.

We became well-versed in the problems the City has with many projects needing completion and not enough revenue to complete them. We appreciate the efforts of the current City Manager to take a strategic approach and complete five-year plans for the City in some areas in order to anticipate capital expenses and prepare in advance for what can be projected as much as possible. These plans have not been done before for Crescent City operations.

We also see the City undertaking some major projects including the Second Street Sewer Project which is being funded by a \$1.2 million grant. The Beachfront Park Master Plan was also recently completed and approved. The City recently raised water and sewer rates and is about to undergo a rate study of future rates.

We did find that there are several areas of concern due to sizeable annual revenue losses, or what may be missed opportunities to reduce costs or bring in additional revenue. Our recommendations throughout this report reflect our hope that the City will look at some of its assets and liabilities and make a concerted effort to study additional ways to save revenue, rather than rely necessarily on raising rates as the primary answer to ongoing costs.

We would like to emphasize the fact that we were amazed at how much the teams of City employees accomplish with often so few resources and reductions in staffing. Furthermore we must comment on the spirit in which they perform their jobs. Our interviews and tours introduced us to some of the most dedicated and hardworking individuals we have ever met and gave us great pride in the quality of employees performing functions at all levels of the City. We cannot recommend enough that these employees should be recognized on an ongoing basis for their contributions, and everything should be done to compensate them as much as possible for their service.

There are several agreements in which the City is engaged at the present time. The Memo of Understanding between the City and the County of Del Norte is an important document and could spell out additional areas that the two entities could collaborate for cost savings and building good will between the parties.

We started out wanting to educate ourselves about City operations behind closed doors. We feel that we succeeded in that goal and are hoping we can pass some of the information we learned to local residents. We also made our recommendations based on observations which may lead to creative approaches or solutions.

We encourage the City Council to become actively involved in considering our Findings and Recommendations as a starting point for some dialogue and goal setting at the City Council level, and as a way of educating and involving the public about some important issues and possible projects that are facing City government.

## **I. City Hall and City Administration**

### **Background**

The City Committee looked at the list of City agencies that were reviewed by a Grand Jury in Del Norte County going back to the early 1990's. Committee members decided to concentrate on agencies that had not been reviewed in that time period and conduct routine reviews.

Our goal in visiting City Hall and meeting with members of City Administration was to ask questions that would not only educate ourselves but also result in our ability to educate the public through our Final Report.

### **Methodology**

#### **Documents**

The Grand Jury reviewed the following documents:

2012-2013 Presentation Document Budget Workshop General Fund

2012-2013 Presentation Document Budget Workshop Housing Authority

2012-2013 Adopted Budget

2012 Annual Financial Report and Audit

Strategic Plan 2012

Injury and Illness Prevention Program including Job Safety, Workplace Violence Program and Blood-borne Pathogens and Tuberculosis Exposure

Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

Administrative Policies and Procedures including Personnel Policies and Policies on Substance Abuse, Discipline, Drug & Alcohol Testing, Sexual Harassment, Wireless Device Allowance, Cell Phone Use, Vehicle Use, Use of Public Resources, City Equipment Use, Driving Standards, Information Technology, Information Disclosure, and Use of Private Vehicles

Personnel Memos on Time Sheets, Personal Business, City Work Hours, Swim Pool Passes, Family Medical Leave, and Smoking Policies

Airport Authority Joint Powers Agreement

Animal Control Services Agreement between City and County

City of Crescent City and Crescent Fire Protection District Renewal Agreement

Memo of Understanding between City of Crescent City and County of Del Norte

Memo of Understanding between Tri-Agency Economic Development Authority and the City of Crescent City

Memo of Understanding regarding the Wonder Bus

Volunteer Information Form

## **Site Tour**

City Hall

## **Interviews**

City Committee members conducted many formal and informal interviews with current and former employees at City Hall including Managers, Directors and Direct Service staff.

## **Discussion**

City Management

The current City Manager is from Lake Tahoe and has served as City Manager since August 2011. At the time he was hired, he advised the City Council he hoped to hold the position for 3-5 years. He is the latest in a long line of City Managers both hired as permanent employees and as interim employees.

During his tenure, the City Manager has successfully completed two five-year plans that were approved by the City Council for the General Plan and for Water and Sewer. He had to renegotiate three expired contracts with City employees concerning their benefits packages. He has overseen the creation of the Beachfront Park Master Plan. He and the City Council raised sewer and water rates in spring 2013, and have commissioned a Sewer and Water Rate Study.

Policies and Procedures

We requested and were provided in a very timely manner numerous Policies and Procedures. In reviewing them we saw that many were very out of date and were ten years old or older.

City Hall

A tour of the City Hall revealed that employees are working in cramped workspaces with inadequate storage and ventilation. The layout of City Hall is chopped up into smaller areas that often overflow with paperwork and things that need to be stored away. The general impression is of a building that has passed its prime and is in need of replacement.

Cultural Center

The City Committee asked numerous questions about the budget for the Cultural Center. The Center operates at an annual deficit of approximately \$40,000 per year. In addition to that deficit, the City subsidizes the Chamber of Commerce by giving them free rent and utilities (except for phone) and an operating stipend of \$72,000 per year.

Since the Cultural Center was built, there have been buildings constructed (not city owned) that include event and conference space. The latest example is the Events Center at the Smith River Rancheria. Even when the Cultural Center was a primary site for events, the poor acoustics made it inadequate for events that otherwise might have been held there. The City raised rates to try to bring in more revenue from the building but bookings have decreased.

#### Fred Endert Pool

The City Committee did not review the pool as that was done by the 2011-2012 Grand Jury. We did inquire into the budget of the pool and were advised that it operates at an annual deficit of approximately \$250,000. The most recent idea, to mitigate heating costs at the pool by using warm wastewater in a closed loop from the Waste Water Treatment Plant for passive heating, will probably not occur since the targeted grant will not work for that purpose.

### **Findings**

- F1. The City of Crescent City has been plagued by short term City managers for many years. Many of the City employees commented on the number of City Managers they have seen during their terms of employment and have the expectation that City Managers spend a relatively short time working for Crescent City and move on.
- F2. City Administration has outgrown City Hall and a better work environment would benefit the employees as well as presenting a better impression of Crescent City to residents and visitors.
- F3. Many City Policies and Procedures are very out of date and in need of review and updating.
- F4. The financial drain of the Cultural Center on the City budget has been supported for too long and needs to be addressed.
- F5. Fred Endert Pool is a huge asset for the City and is essential for the health and recreation of many local residents, but the annual loss needs to be addressed.

### **Recommendations**

- R1. When future City Managers are hired the City Council should make a concerted effort to hire someone for a longer term to fill that position, and is encouraged to look for someone within Del Norte County who understands local needs and issues and has a history of service to this community.
- R2. Money spent to improve the entrance to City Hall is not money well spent; rather a search committee should be appointed to look at alternative locations for City Hall including the possibility of utilizing the Cultural Center to house City Hall and the Housing Authority.
- R3. City Policies and Procedures should be reviewed and signed off annually by the Departments in charge of implementing them, and recommendations for additions and changes should be made to the City Manager.

- R4. A committee of City Council members, City employees and interested citizens should be formed to study possible ways for the City to rid itself of the budget deficit from the Cultural Center and consider creative solutions for future use of the building. Some possibilities that should be examined are turning the Center into the location for City Hall and the Housing Authority, offering it as an art gallery and/or mixed use artists' work and retail facility, offering reduced fees to non-profit organizations to perhaps increase use of the facility in the short term, using it as a youth center or community center in collaboration with other agencies and creating a destination conference facility.
- R5. There may be ways to reduce the Fred Endert Pool deficit. We recommend appointment of an ad hoc committee to study such things as the rate structure, fees paid by Physical Therapists to use the pool with their clients, the feasibility of opening the pool on Sunday and possible community partnerships that might help to subsidize operations.

### **Responses Required**

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury requests that the City Manager responds to Recommendations #1-5 including input from the City Council.

### **Commendations**

- C1. The longevity of some City employees and the overall dedication and spirit of teamwork among employees cannot be acknowledged enough.
- C2. The recent implementation of online bill paying for Sewer and Water bills has been a very positive step in applying technology to ease operations.
- C3. The Beachfront Park Master Plan is an excellent step in making the City more tourist friendly and allowing the City to implement parts of the plan in phases and seek grant funding.
- C4. The two Five-Year Plans (General Fund and Water/Sewer) are excellent steps in helping the City anticipate future needs and make decisions in a broader context.
- C5. The staff at City Hall does amazing work under poor conditions in cramped quarters with little work and storage space.

## **II. Public Works**

### **Background**

The City Committee looked at the list of City agencies that were reviewed by a Grand Jury in Del Norte County going back to the early 1990's. Committee members decided to concentrate on agencies that had not been reviewed in that time period and conduct routine reviews.

Our goal in visiting Public Works installations and speaking with staff was to ask questions that would not only educate ourselves but also result in our ability to educate the public through our Final Report.

## **Methodology**

### **Documents**

Sewer System Capital Improvement Projects PowerPoint

Water System Capital Improvement Projects PowerPoint

### **Presentations**

The Many Facets of Crescent City Public Works

### **Site Tours**

Waste Water Treatment Plant and Laboratory

Corporation Yard

Water System including Water Plant, Lift Stations, Pump Stations, and Storage Facilities

### **Interviews**

City Committee members conducted many formal and informal interviews with employees of the Public Works Department.

## **A. Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Water System**

### **Discussion**

The original Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) was built in 1958. It was upgraded in 1973 and 1979. By 1997 the first Cease and Desist order was imposed by the State Water Resources Control Board prohibiting new connections due to the inability of the plant to handle new environmental regulations. The order was revised several times but was not lifted until the current WWTP was completed in 2011. The final construction cost for the new plant was \$37,679,775.

The City Committee was interested to see the physical plant since this would be the first time any Grand Jury had done so since the plant opened. Prior to the plant tour we gathered for a very informative PowerPoint presentation about the history and construction of the plant as well as the various components of the operation. The key components of the WWTP are the Headworks, the Liquid Process and the Solids Process.

The plant itself is a maze of upper and lower chambers and buildings with many different kinds of equipment, many moving parts, many pipes, valves, tanks and numerous electrical panels. One of the first things that struck us on our tour is the cleanliness of a plant that treats raw sewage as its primary function and has done so since 2011. In addition to that impression is one of overall awe at the diversity of the physical operation, as well as the skill level needed to function as an employee in such a state-of-the-art facility. All of the Policy and Procedure manuals for the operation are centralized in one room and they are also being put into a computer database.

The plant is manned by what we considered a relatively small staff. There are 25 full time and 6 part time positions in the entire Public Works Department as approved in the

current City budget. Those employees staff not only the WWTP but also the Corporation Yard, Water System and Sewer System as described in the preceding Discussion section. These employees are apt to be called out at any time of night or day in extremes of weather to deal with any malfunctions or emergencies resulting from problems at any of the sites within their areas of responsibility. Several of the employees work at more than one location and they have even broader areas of responsibility than if they just worked at one facility.

The entire plant is run by the System Control and Data Acquisition computer system (SCADA) which controls pumps and settings, stores historical data, displays the “real time” condition of the water system and sets off notification alarms in case of malfunctions or emergencies.

Staff members working at the plant attain different levels of certification through Sacramento State University, and are either in the training stage or are designated as a Level 1, 2 or 3 operator licensed by the State. At least one level 3 operator is required in order for the plant to operate.

One of the main problems the WWTP has with staffing is the revolving door of employees. Once an operator reaches a Level 3 certification he/she can earn considerably more in pay and benefits working for the State in the prison system versus working for the City. As a result the City has trained and lost numerous operators to date to Pelican Bay and High Desert State Prisons as well as other facilities.

The solid waste that results at the end of the treatment process is hauled by a local company to White City, OR for disposal.

The laboratory for testing is another pristine state of the art facility. At present testing is done there not only for the WWTP but for other sites in the water system. In addition there is some testing done for private clients. There have been discussions about doing tests for local property owners who want to test their well water.

The key components of the Water System are the Ranney Collector Well, Chlorination Building, Elevated Tank, Washington Storage Reservoir, Amador Storage Reservoir, Transmission Mains, Distribution Mains and the SCADA computer monitoring system. The Water System was purchased by the City in 1957 and the Chlorination Building and Elevated Tank were built in 1958. A Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan was recently approved for the system repairs and upgrades to be made to the system into 2018 with an overall estimated cost of \$4,850,000.

## **Findings**

- F1. Crescent City has an impressive WWTP that hopefully will keep pace with changing regulations and serve the needs of the City and County Service Area for many years to come.
- F2. In order to work in the WWTP facility workers need a high level of training and ability and must be certified by the State, but the City experiences significant turnover once staff members reach a certain level of certification.
- F3. Solid waste from the WWTP is hauled to White City, OR for disposal at an annual cost to the City of over \$100,000.

- F4. The WWTP has the ability to accept sludge from outside sources such as RVs and local septic tanks but is waiting for a State permit to be able to do so.
- F5. The WWTP Laboratory is capable of expanding testing now that a third position at the plant has been recently filled.
- F6. It is commendable that the WWTP and Water System are so well run with a relatively small but cohesive team, however attention must be paid to ensure the safety of workers who are handling highly technical and heavy equipment and are expected to be available 24/7 for emergencies. These same workers have done jobs in house that would have cost considerably more if contracted out.
- F7. As members of the public, the City Committee members were amazed at the tour presentation, the intricacy of the WWTP and Water System operations and the expertise and dedication of the staff.

### **Recommendations**

- R1. The City needs to ensure that all possible steps are taken to ensure proper maintenance of the physical WWTP, as well as having adequate levels of staff to run and safely maintain that facility. We question current staffing levels which leave the plant unmanned at night and on weekends and monitored by computer. We recommend a review of WWTP staffing levels.
- R2. The City should look at ways to offer more competitive salaries to WWTP personnel due to the high level of technical ability needed for most positions. The idea of making the WWTP into a training facility, perhaps through a partnership with College of the Redwoods could be explored as only one way to offer higher salaries to Class 3 certified trainers who would oversee a training program to provide help in the plant as well as possible revenue or cost cutting at the trainee level.
- R3. The possibility of treating the WWTP solid waste with two more steps through an additional digester and a heat process should be explored as soon as possible; in relation to potential local uses for the waste and cost for additional processing weighed against the annual cost of the current solution of hauling the waste for disposal.
- R4. Any avenue to expedite the State permit to accept RV and septic tank sludge at the WWTP should be pursued.
- R5. Additional testing of local well water and any other ways to bring additional revenue into the WWTP laboratory should be fast-tracked.
- R6. Cost savings from Public Works teams taking the initiative to do some major jobs in house should be looked at as a possible means of rewarding those employees for performing above and beyond their basic job requirements. . When work is done in potentially dangerous situations, there should always be a minimum of two qualified employees present to perform tasks and provide back up.
- R7. The presentation and tour of the WWTP and Corporation Yard could be assets for the City in building relations with local residents and educating school

classes. Volunteer docent-led tours of both facilities should be developed and offered as a way of showing residents what their rates are supporting.

### **Responses Required**

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury requests that the Director of Public Works and/or City Manager respond to Recommendations #1-7

### **Commendations**

- C1. Staff members working for Public Works are among the most dedicated workers we have ever encountered. We cannot thank them enough for conscientious performance above and beyond the call of duty at all hours of day and night and in all-weather to keep the vast array of Public Works equipment and operations functioning. They personify teamwork at its best.
- C2. The decision to hire a consultant to oversee the WWTP has resulted in definite advances in applying the existing technology, as well as refining internal operations and organization and supporting staff.

## **B. Corporation Yard**

The City of Crescent City Public Works Department has multi-faceted responsibilities which include 23 miles of roads in downtown, 5 downtown parking lots, 750 street lights, 55 acres of public land, 7 public restrooms, and over 85 vehicles. The Water System includes 4,500 water connections, 2,300 valves, and 492 hydrants along 60 miles of water mains. The Sewer System includes 3,850 sewer connections and 20 lift stations along 51 miles of sewer lines servicing the City and Community Service Areas. Annually 54,000 water meters are read. There are 8 municipal facilities as well as a Waste Water Treatment Plant, Laboratory and Multiple Water Facilities.

The Corporation Yard for the City of Crescent City is located on 10<sup>th</sup> Street behind the Flynn Center. The crew from the Corporation Yard is responsible for maintenance and special projects associated with the above listed City systems.

Scheduled maintenance includes street lights, restrooms, parks, sidewalks, roads, sewer and water lines, lawns, and vehicles. Special projects that have been undertaken by the crew include the rebuilding of a Parks Dump Truck, the Corporation Yard Facelift, and Installation of a WWTP Chemical Storage Tank. The crew also assisted with the El Patio Motel Burn, replaced a Primary WWTP Clarifier and rehabilitated Elk Valley and Harbor Water System Lift Stations. They build Pedestrian Access Ramps in our sidewalks as well as completing the Pedestrian Access Improvements at Beachfront Park. They removed trees and were responsible for removing Tsunami Landing. They are also the Emergency response team for malfunctions and emergencies. Among other things they are the people who go out in a storm in the middle of the night with rain and wind blowing sideways to repair a lift station or alleviate a flooding problem.

The Corporation Yard houses all of the equipment necessary for them to do their jobs; from auto shop tools to carpentry tools to heavy equipment to trash cans to innumerable parts and supplies. The Corporation Yard is an impressive, clean and well-organized facility that mirrors the skill and dedication of an extraordinary team.

## **Findings**

- F1. The Corporation Yard and equipment is extremely well-maintained and organized.
- F2. The members of the team are exemplary not only because of their skills and dedication, but also because of the attitude that they are a team and “have each other’s back”.
- F3. There is a lack of connection between the employees at the Corporation Yard and City Hall.
- F4. There are ongoing safety issues due to the type of jobs this team does as well as the equipment they handle and the hours they are sometimes called out to perform emergency response.
- F5. The County stores emergency generators in the yard and there is a cooperative arrangement for their use.

## **Recommendations**

- R1. The Corporation Yard is highly organized and well maintained especially given the nature of the work done there and should be considered as a showpiece for the City and opened to the public through docent led tours.
- R2. Every possible effort should be made to compensate and recognize the superlative performance of the Public Works team and educate the public about their accomplishments.
- R3. Public Works direct service employees do not feel connected with City Hall and more visits from the City Manager and Finance Director to interface with the crew and support their achievements is highly recommended and should be done on an ongoing basis.
- R4. A safety committee including members of the Public Works crew should be formed as soon as possible with the specific purpose of studying what can be done to alleviate the fact that there is one skilled heavy equipment operator, one electrician, one plumber and one carpenter and other team members often take on their tasks even though they are less skilled and it may be dangerous for them to do so. When work is done in potentially dangerous situations, there should always be a minimum of two qualified employees present to perform tasks and provide back up.
- R5. The City and the County should continue their cooperative arrangement and consider other ways to cooperate with equipment or manpower.

## **Responses Required**

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury requests that the Director of Public Works and/or City Manager respond to Recommendations #1-5

## **Commendations**

- C1. The Public Works crew cannot be recognized enough for performing Herculean tasks under difficult conditions for comparatively little pay than they could earn in another setting.
- C2. Not only are the team members highly effective at doing their jobs but they perform with a sense of camaraderie and teamwork that is enviable.

### **III. Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Crescent City and the County of Del Norte**

#### **Summary**

The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County of Del Norte and the City of Crescent City is a step in the right direction of cooperation between the two entities, reducing duplication of services and increasing cost savings. Recent actions on the part of the City seem to be a step backwards in the process. This committee would urge preservation and possible expansion of the MOU in the best interests of our community.

#### **Background**

The Grand Jury got input from the City by hearing both sides of how the MOU between the City and the County was working in reality and whether there were other possible areas of future cooperation between the two entities.

#### **Methodology**

#### **Documents**

Memorandum of Understanding between City of Crescent City and County of Del Norte

#### **Discussion**

The most recent MOU was signed by the County of Del Norte and the City of Crescent City in August 2012. Stated purposes in the document are to “reduce duplication of services, increases cooperation to benefit the public, and provide location efficiencies without loss of existing personnel”.

Under the agreement the County employs a Hearing Officer who is shared with the City. Other services that are covered in the MOU are Plan Check Services, Building Permits, Zoning and Land Use Planning Public Information Distribution, reciprocal Code Enforcement, Wastewater Collection System employees, Grants and Housing Development, Hardware and Software Development, Acquisition and Installation, certain Law Enforcement Programs, Tower Climbing Staff, and Engineering Services.

The MOU is renewed after a joint meeting and discussions between the County Board of Supervisors and the City Council. Even though the last MOU was signed in August 31, 2012, the Term of the Agreement ends in August 2013 and it is automatically extended for periods on one year unless either party presents a written Notice of Termination.

Other areas to be looked at in the future could include Roads and Road Improvement, Parks, Community Development as the economy strengthens, Wildlife Conservation and Sewer Line Maintenance.

The recent retirement of the City Engineer puts the item in the MOU of sharing an engineer up for discussion. Recently the City Council and City Manager decided to hire a half-time Building Inspector. The reasons cited for this decision were that the Strategic Plan and Council priorities call for an increased effort to reduce blight and the County does not have the capability to undertake that effort on the behalf of the City. The City also wants to ensure that all buildings are inspected when business licenses are granted and that is not happening currently. If the County performed these functions, their fee would have to be added into the business license fee.

A joint meeting of the City Council and the County Board of Supervisors was held on May 21, 2013. The entire joint meeting took 3 hours and only the last 24 minutes of the meeting addressed the MOU. The County CAO referred to the fact that all City Building Permits will now be handled by a part-time Building Inspector hired recently by the City. The County CAO received a letter shortly before the new Inspector started work, to inform him that the City had taken that action. Previous to this hiring, the County had been issuing all City Building Permits as a result of the MOU. This arrangement had evolved in spite of the fact that the MOU referred to County services being used only on an as needed basis. The County CAO pointed out that budgeting and customer service issues arise for the County out of this new direction.

City Council members and the City Manager spoke about the new direction that the City wishes to take with emphasis on blight abatement and receiverships. One City Council member also stated that the City had quite a number of permits taken out and never closed out by inspection. From the City point of view, the MOU reads "as needed" regarding City use of County Building personnel, so there should not be an issue with their actions.

The County CAO pointed out that closing out permits is based on the code and is not an indicator of whether the Building Inspector is doing their job. He also stated that early coordination and communication from the City about their concerns and direction would have been beneficial.

A County Supervisor pointed out that at the two-by-two meetings (meetings between two members of the City Council and two members of the Board of Supervisors) nothing was asked of the County. There was no disclosure that the County was not adequately addressing Building Inspection and Permit needs. He went on to say that the agreement seems to have been undermined without asking the County if they could fulfill the needs.

A City Council member stated that the City was given a fee structure and hiring a part – time person seemed more cost effective. The Mayor stated that if the County did not want City business they should just say so. The City Council made the hiring decision as a business decision right now, and admitted that it may not work.

The entire 24 minutes devoted to the MOU were spent reviewing the issues surrounding the changes in the day-to-day execution of the City/County cooperative effort that had evolved for Building Permits and Inspections. There was no discussion of the MOU as a whole or any other ways to expand or continue cooperation between the two entities.

At the end of the meeting a Supervisor mentioned that he hoped there would still be movement towards establishing a one-stop arrangement for the entire Building Permit and Inspection process. The per-hour cost of chasing down a permit is ultimately passed on to the consumer. It was also mentioned that perhaps the two-by-two meetings should occur quarterly or every two months to improve communication in the future.

### **Findings**

- F1. The current MOU opened the door for possible savings of tax dollars by co-opting some services and grouping some purchases.
- F2. In the current economic climate preserving and expanding the MOU seems to be a prudent way to save money for both entities.
- F3. The City is making light of a serious document. Whether the City had adequate discussions with the County about their additional needs for Building Inspection and Code Enforcement is questionable.
- F4. At a time that the City cannot afford to hire enough staff to cover the services they already provide, the addition of a half-time Building Inspector is questionable. There should have been a joint meeting of the City and County to thoroughly discuss the possibility of the County meeting the increased needs of the City, before the City took the step of hiring a part-time Inspector.

### **Recommendations**

- R1. The May 21 review of the MOU should have included a review of all the existing items including possible expansion of those items or additional items. Further cost savings and reduced duplication of services should be major goals for both the County and the City in this economic climate.
- R2. Any areas of cost savings would help to alleviate the budget challenges faced by both the County and the City and might even result in money that could be channeled into the ongoing issue of preservation and adequate compensation for employees.
- R3. The City Manager and City Council should make every effort to have excellent communication with the County about any items in the current MOU and seek solutions within the MOU in a spirit of cooperation; rather than going outside of the MOU at a time when in this committee's view it should be preserved and expanded rather than undone. The City's recent actions have undermined the credibility of the current MOU and it is imperative that the importance of the MOU be restored and any trust issues be resolved. We recommend that two-by-two meetings be held at least monthly as an immediate step in the right direction.

- R4. As suggested at the end of the May 21 meeting, communication between the City and the County needs to be greatly improved. An ad hoc committee comprised of City Council members, Board of Supervisors members, City Manager, County Chief Administrative Officer should be appointed as soon as possible to not only study the renewal of the current MOU but to do a concentrated and serious review of any other areas of possible cooperation and cost savings such as Roads, Parks, Recreation, Purchasing, Maintenance and Law Enforcement.

### **Responses Required**

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury requests that the City Manager and the City Council respond to Recommendations #1-4.

Recusal: This report of the City of Crescent City is issued by the 2012-2013 Grand Jury with the exception of one member of this Grand Jury who is a former employee of the City of Crescent City. This Grand Juror was excluded from all parts of the investigation as a Grand Juror, which included interviews, deliberations, and the making and acceptance of this report.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**  
**DEL NORTE COUNTY JAIL**

**Summary**

Five members of the 2012/2013 Grand Jury made an unannounced visit to the Del Norte County Jail on October 3, 2012, in accordance with the California Grand Jury's mandate to conduct annual visits to the county detention facilities. In addition, there were two scheduled visits with the Del Norte County Sheriff.

**Background**

The original jail was built around 1960. In approximately 1993/1994, it was remodeled and an entire new wing was added to the facility. The jail has a capacity for 146 inmates; there are now approximately 87 inmates, 20 to 30 of whom are women. (This is an increase from the 6-8 in the past.) There is a self-imposed capacity of 85/90 inmates; otherwise, more help is needed.

**Findings**

- F1. There are no maximum security inmates; all inmates are moderate to low security risk. There are cell checks five to six times a shift.
- F2. The "new" wing has provisions for persons with medical issues. Medical care and expenses are a concern. Previously, the Sheriff's budget had to cover 100% of the costs. It is not uncommon to spend \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 per month for medications.
- F3. There is a locked medical station on the premises. Inmates can make appointments for a check-up for non-emergency issues. An LVN is available three times a week, a Registered Nurse every day (Monday through Friday), and a Physician's Assistant twice a week. When an inmate is first incarcerated, he/she is ascertained per medical risk. If needed, an officer takes the inmate to the hospital for a blood test; since an officer has to be with the inmate, this is a concern and expense. If possible the inmate is checked out of the jail and ordered back after treatment is received, then the jail is not charged.
- F4. Inmates can work in the kitchen where approximately 3-4 inmate helpers assist a hired cook. They prepare meals which consist of breakfast, a sack lunch and dinner. They assist in organizing and cleaning. Meals and menu are regulated by the State, and a yearly evaluation is made.
- F5. There is a Control Pod where a correctional technician receives all calls, views all cameras, and controls all locks. (These locks can be controlled manually, if necessary.) There is a back-up generator. There is a fire evacuation plan. The less security risks are evacuated. The higher risks are taken to Pelican Bay State

Prison. In case of a tsunami, inmates serving time for lesser, non violent crimes would be released and given a time and place to report back. Other inmates would be taken to Pelican Bay.

- F6. There are three teams of three correctional officers and non-sworn support, such as office and computer technology control. The officers are required to attend an approved academy. There are two female officers employed by the Del Norte County Sheriff's Department, although there is not always a female officer available for each shift. When booking a female inmate, it is necessary that a female officer is available.
- F7. The jail is going through a transition phase and will be changing regulations regarding inmates who will now go to a county facility and not state prison. Previously, the maximum sentence was for one year; now there will be long-term sentences to be served in the county jail. If a person is sentenced to seven years, he will serve about half of that time. These will be non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual crimes. More serious crimes will still go to San Quentin State Prison. Our jail does not have programs for these inmates with long sentences.
- F8. Services such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Parenting are available. Non-denominational religious services are available. Television, newspapers and phone services are provided and monitored. Visits with family/friends/attorney are permitted, and communication takes place via phones with a window separating the inmate and his or her visitor.
- F9. Recreation Room is available three times a week.
- F10. The Del Norte County Jail appears to be well administered with concerned, professional, capable staff who is well informed about their duties and the jail. The State mandated AB109 is causing economic burdens by requiring the counties to take inmates, normally housed by the state, without adequate compensation. In addition, the housing of more long term inmates will necessitate more programs and recreational space, and has the potential to devastate the budget through required conditions and medical care.
- F11. The Del Norte County Jail facility is in need of maintenance. Jurors noted many areas of the jail with paint peeling off the wall as well as missing ceiling tiles in many of the cells.
- F12. During our tour, it was noted that the jail did not provide a room or safety cell where an inmate could be isolated from others and not be able to injure himself or herself.
- F13. There are many blind spots in cells that are not viewable by person in a control pod using existing cameras. Holding cells do not have cameras.

F14. The laundry facilities are inadequate for the large amount of laundry currently required. If a washing machine or dryer is not functioning properly, laundry is taken to an outside source for laundering.

### **Recommendations**

R6. There is a need for a female officer on each shift.

R11. General maintenance by the County is needed, as exemplified by the ceiling tiles that have been missing for years, peeling paint in the kitchen and broken windows in D tank.

R12. We feel there is a need for a safety cell for the safety of the inmates and officers, acknowledging that it will create additional budgetary and management issues.

R13. Cameras should be placed in the holding cells and in more efficient areas in the general population, as there are blind spots not viewable.

R14. There is an absolute need for additional washers and dryers in the laundry facility.

### **Commendations**

C10. The Sheriff and staff are to be commended for what they do with the limited amount of funding.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**  
**JUVENILE HALL**

**Summary**

On September 19, 2012, four members of the 2012/2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury met with the Supervising Deputy Probation Officer II at the Del Norte County Juvenile Hall, in accordance with the California Grand Jury's Mandate to conduct annual visits to the county detention facilities.

**Background**

Juvenile Hall is operated by the County Probation Department and reports to a Del Norte County Superior Court Judge. Deputy Probation Officers have at least a Bachelor's Degree. Staffing is state certified, and staff must attend a five-week training seminar in Sacramento. The Juvenile Hall is a state-of-the-art facility built in 2001, and has the potential to accommodate 44 persons. Staffing is only available for 12. The facility is co-ed, and the ground level is multi-purpose with individual sleeping rooms on the upper level. Some personal items and books are permitted.

Most of the wards at Juvenile Hall are teenagers, although they have had some as young as 12 years old. Juveniles can only be at Juvenile Hall until their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. Some wards are sentenced to specific dates; some are pending placement or hearings. Rehabilitation is the primary concern. The staff work with new arrests and probation violations. Some wards are from Curry County. Some Bar-O boys (also operated by the Probation Department) are sent back for fighting and program failure. Only a few minors have had to be sent to Juvenile Justice Department. Regular family visitations are available, unless it is restricted by the court

**Findings**

- F1. Admittance to Juvenile Hall is through a sally port where the individual is checked and required to shower and change to juvenile hall clothing; everything is filmed.
- F2. Schooling is provided by an accredited teacher in a group, co-ed fashion. Personnel are available for any disruption needing physical restraint. Elk Creek School is part of the Del Norte Unified School District, so the curriculum is standard, and credit is given for work completed at student's level.
- F3. Medical professionals, including a physician, a physician's assistant, a registered nurse and mental health specialists are available as needed. Wards can be taken to the hospital, if needed. Mental Health Counseling is available three times a week. Medication is provided on a daily basis, if needed, by nursing staff. There

have been no suicide attempts, or suicides, or deaths of wards. Staff is diversified, so there appears to be no cultural or language barrier.

- F4. Grand Jury members interviewed two wards (a girl and boy) and questioned them about food and treatment. They thought they were treated well, and they felt safe. There is a grievance policy which allows a ward to have the matter reviewed by the Supervising Deputy Probation Officer II and seems fair. Mandatory exercise is required in the gym or outdoors, or they can choose free time.
- F5. The facility, including the kitchen, is clean and in good repair. Minors can help with some of the food preparation, which they enjoy doing.
- F6. The Probation Department is to be commended in separating the services provided for juveniles from those of adults. All minors are now seen at the Juvenile Hall facility. Previously, they reported to the Probation Department in Crescent City. This is especially relevant now that state prison parolees will report to the Probation Department. The staff seems to be well trained and dedicated to the positive rehabilitation of the minors. There seems to be a good program in place with the emphasis on the well-being of the minors.
- F7. Staffing is only available for twelve youths.
- F8. Last year's Grand Jury recommended the temperature of the refrigerator be taken care of, and it is now in compliance with Health Codes.
- F9. The Juvenile Hall is currently using a washing machine that is not adequate to handle the amount of laundry for the wards housed at the facility.

### **Recommendations**

- R7. Funding for more staffing should be appropriated as required.
- R9. The washing machine needs to be upgraded to a commercial-grade machine, which would cut water and power usage by diminishing the number of loads required.

### **Commendations**

- C1. The Probation Department is to be commended in separating the services provided for juveniles from those of adults.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**  
**DEL NORTE COUNTY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**WITH CRESCENT CITY**

**Background**

The City Committee undertook to get input from Del Norte County out of interest in hearing both sides of how the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the County was working in reality and whether there were other possible areas of future cooperation between the two entities.

**Methodology**

**Documents**

Memo of Understanding between City of Crescent City and County of Del Norte

**Interviews**

Chief Administrative Officer, Del Norte County

**Discussion**

The most recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the County of Del Norte and the City of Crescent City in August 2012. Stated purposes in the document are to “reduce duplication of services, increases cooperation to benefit the public, and provide location efficiencies without loss of existing personnel”.

Under the agreement, the County employs a Hearing Officer who is shared with the City. Other services that are covered in the MOU are Plan Check Services, Building Permits, Zoning and Land Use Planning Public Information Distribution, reciprocal Code Enforcement, Wastewater Collection System employees, Grants and Housing Development, Hardware and Software Development, Acquisition and Installation, certain Law Enforcement Programs, Tower Climbing Staff, and Engineering Services.

Even though the last MOU was signed in August 31, 2012, the Term of the Agreement ends in August 2013, and it is automatically extended for periods of one year unless either party presents a written Notice of Termination. The MOU is renewed after a joint meeting and discussions between the County Board of Supervisors and the City Council. The next meeting occurred on May 21, 2013.

At the May 21st meeting the County CAO referred to the City change in policy with new building permits all being run through the City now rather than through the County. The County will be on an on-call basis only for building permits and building inspections. This does not work for County due to budgeting issues and problems with having a seamless process.

From the County point of view there is satisfaction with the way the current MOU is working to date. When asked if there were additional areas that could be looked at for collaboration of services and cost savings; the response was that most anything can be combined but the question is what the savings would be to the taxpayer and if the level of service would remain the same or improve.

Other areas to be looked at in the future could include Roads and Road Improvement, Parks, Community Development as the economy strengthens, Wildlife Conservation and Sewer Line Maintenance.

There have been discussions between both entities about the Building Inspection services, and recently County Administration found out by seeing an advertisement in the Triplicate that the City wanted to hire a half-time Building Inspector. Subsequently a letter was received from the City Manager shortly before the half-time Building Inspector was hired advising that the City was doing so.

### **Findings**

- F1. The current MOU opened the door for possible savings of tax dollars by co-opting some services and grouping some purchases.
- F2. In the current economic climate, preserving and expanding the MOU seems to be a prudent way to save money for both entities.
- F3. The County is satisfied with the way the MOU has worked and is very open to looking at additional ways the two entities can cooperate.

### **Recommendations**

- R1. The May 21st meeting addressed only MOU issues concerning Building Permits and Inspections. The meeting should have included discussion of not only the existing items but expansion of those items. Expanded or additional items in the MOU could possibly result in cost savings and reduce duplication of services, which should be major goals for both the County and the City in this economic downturn.
- R2. Any areas of cost savings would help to alleviate the budget challenges faced by both the County and the City, and might even result in money that could be channeled into the ongoing issue of preservation and adequate compensation for employees.
- R3. The County CAO and Board of Supervisors should support the appointment of an ad hoc committee to give this entire issue concentrated and serious attention as soon as possible. This ad hoc committee should include the City Manager, County CAO, two members of the City Council and two Members of the Board of Supervisors. The committee should meet a minimum of once monthly to discuss, reinforce and possibly expand the MOU and to improve communication between the City and the County.

### **Commendations**

- C1. The County Chief Administrative Officer should be commended for his positive and open attitude about looking at ways for the County and the City to maintain current cooperative efforts and explore ways of expanding those efforts through future discussions.

### **Responses Required**

The 2012-2013 Grand Jury requests that the County CAO and the Board of Supervisors respond to Recommendations #1-3.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**  
**DEL NORTE COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**Summary**

On November 14, 2012 and February 22, 2013, Del Norte County Grand Jury met with County Administrator Jay Sarina and Emergency Services Manager Cindy Henderson for a regular department review.

Over the years, emergency services in Del Norte County were handled by a variety of departments and part-time positions. Seven years ago the County hired its first full-time dedicated emergency services position, manager Cindy Henderson. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates the overall County preparation and response to disasters.

**Background**

OES has 4 main objectives: 1) developing plans and procedures for response to and recovery from disasters; 2) developing and providing preparedness materials for the public; 3) coordinating all agencies there respond to a disaster; 4) ensuring resources are available and mobilize in times of disaster.

OES is housed within the administration department of Del Norte County. County Administrator Jay Sarina supervises Emergency Services Manager Cindy Henderson. OES has an annual budget in fiscal year 2012–2013 of \$263,632.00. Approximately 95% of the entire budget is funded through various grants with only a small portion coming from county general fund.

While Emergency Services Manager Cindy Henderson occupies a single office in the Flynn Center on H Street in Crescent City, the activities of OES occur throughout Del Norte County. The Office of Emergency Services maintains a command center at the Crescent Fire building on Washington Boulevard. The Crescent Fire District building is also the site of many monthly, bimonthly, quarterly, and annual meeting and trainings for the various programs OES coordinates.

Outside of Crescent City, emergency preparedness meetings are held in Gasquet, Klamath, and other locations. OES has also distributed several large containers of medical supplies and equipment in strategic locations throughout the county.

OES has a dual role: provide preparation and training so that residents and agency personnel are prepared for a disaster; and provide a coordinated countywide response in the event of an actual disaster. This is an enormous task as disasters come in many

shapes and forms. While training and preparation includes any type of disaster, the most commonly expected disasters in Del Norte County are tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, & forest fires. OES also makes plans for response to man-made events such as school shootings, acts of terrorism, pandemics, and other events that we hope never happen here but for which we must prepare for nevertheless.

Emergency preparation and training coordinated by OES can be broadly divided into agency preparation and training and resident preparation and training. This requires careful planning and broad mutual understanding and cooperation between a myriad of organizations and agencies as well as hundreds of community members. Preparation and training activities center around the knowledge that 80% of the response to a disaster is from volunteers. For overall coordination, OES has established an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This is a unified command for the city, county, Rancheria, and Tribal jurisdictions: everyone within the borders of Del Norte County. Every other month, 60–90 people attend EOC meetings to train and coordinate responses to a potential disaster. The emergency operations center requires extensive planning and coordination. For instance over 30 memorandums of understanding are in place, outlining how all the various governmental entities agencies and organizations will work in partnership in the event of a disaster. The many different agencies also frequently train through simulated disaster events.

## Findings

- F1. Additional training for the community is held through several active volunteer groups.

Community Emergency Response Teams or CERT training. CERT is the primary organized community response in the event of a disaster. This is the central premise behind the *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* response effort. In a disaster, help from emergency service personnel, communications systems such as cell phone service, and travel may be very restricted or nonexistent. OES is teaching Del Norte County residents that the best practice for emergency preparation is for individual neighborhoods and communities to have an organized plan to provide for their own needs in an emergency. Currently there are 36 high school students who are part of a Teen CERT, and over 100 people were part of an adult CERT. New classes begin throughout the year, and new volunteers are always welcome.

Disaster Animal Response Teams or DART training. DART plans a coordinated response to assure the safety of pets and livestock in the event of a disaster.

- F2. The *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* program was actually created specifically for Del Norte County. A local retired teacher modified disaster preparation curriculum and training and rewrote it specifically for the needs of our rural community. Broader goals of *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* include neighborhood watch programs, community gardens and other elements of healthy vibrant communities.
- F3. Grant funding has helped increase the number of staff working on disaster preparedness. Grants have funded a few part time staff to work on specific projects such as disaster training lesson plans (including *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*), outreach and promotion, and training within schools. In the current fiscal year there are at least five different grants to manage, provide reports, etc. The Red Cross is a great partner helping provide training and opening shelters in the event of an emergency.
- F4. While the majority of the work of OES is preparation, training and planning, in the event of a real disaster all these plans are called into action. On March 18, 2011, when the 9.0 earthquake in Japan triggered a tsunami that was later to strike Crescent City, OES activated the Emergency Operations Center, coordinating a calm and efficient evacuation of over 1,500 residents and visitors from the tsunami zone. Between the hours of midnight and 5:00 am every person and pet within the tsunami zone was evacuated to a safe place without delay and notably, without a single injury. This real-life event speaks to the success the training and preparation that OES has coordinated with a multitude of agencies and residents over the past several years.
- F5. While Del Norte County is a leader among West Coast emergency preparedness communities, there remains much work to do to fill gaps in our own preparedness. Identified gaps were: emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities; emergency preparedness and preparation for persons who speak languages other than English; increasing the number of organizations and individuals involved in emergency preparedness efforts.
- F6. Del Norte County is no stranger to disaster. Floods and tsunamis have devastated our communities and have tragically taken lives. Yet we are a resilient community. Our rural isolation has taught us to depend on each other in everyday life, so we are prepared to do the same when facing a disaster. OES plans, trains, and prepares our entire community to survive any disaster that may come our way.

## **Recommendations**

None.

## **Commendations**

- C1. The Office of Emergency Services is commended for creating from scratch a community wide, resident focused, gold standard emergency preparedness program.
- C2. We also recognize OES' ability to obtain grant funding to support community wide preparedness and training.

## **DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013**

### **DEL NORTE COUNTY RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

#### **Summary**

On February 25, 2013, Del Norte County Grand Jury met with Recreation Coordinator John Horner for a regular department review. Earlier, on November 14, 2012, Del Norte County Grand Jury met with County Administrator Jay Sarina, as he supervises the Recreation Coordinator.

Del Norte County has operated a recreation programs for the general public for years, typically as an employee's part time duties. Six years ago, John Horner was hired full time to coordinate all aspects of the various recreation programs. The Recreation Department is part of the Administration Department. In fiscal year 2012-13, the Recreation Department budget was \$233,011.00, with just under 25% of the budget raised through recreation fees, vending sales, and sponsorships. The remainder of the budget comes from the county general fund.

#### **Background**

Aside from the full-time Recreation Coordinator, the department hires seasonal, part time field maintenance workers, as well as many referees and umpires for games. Mr. Horner grew up in Del Norte County, participating in recreation programs as a youth, and began working as a scorekeeper when he was in his teens. He continued to work part-time in various aspects of the recreation department, actually training under current County Administrator Jay Sarina, who managed the recreation department at that time.

The Recreation Department has two main functions: maintain sports facilities and operate leagues. The county owns and maintains a gym, called the recreation gym, next to the Flynn Center on H St. Adjacent, the county owns and maintains two softball/baseball fields. Known as Pike's Field, this facility sees constant use during the season. The county leases a building at the fairgrounds, the roller rink. This building is used for indoor tennis, indoor soccer, and roller-skating. The department maintains use agreements with the Del Norte School District, allowing use of school gyms and fields at no charge.

#### **Findings**

- F1. The department operates several sports leagues & activities: Adult Softball leagues operate from June-November each year. Six years ago there were ten teams in the league. Upgrade of facilities and dedicated promotion by Mr. Horner

has steadily increased the number of teams. Last year thirty-two teams competed in the adult softball league with over 700 players. Also increasing is the number of adult softball tournaments. There are now six tournaments per year, up from one per year five years ago. The tournaments draw teams from out of the area, as far as Redding. These out of town teams fill local motels and restaurants during the tournaments. Improvements to Pike's Field have been key to the increased tournament participation, as teams want to come to a well-maintained, top-notch facility.

- F2. Little League Baseball, involving 500 kids, also uses Pykes Field. Little League is run independent of the Recreation Department; the league rents the fields as needed.
- F3. Adult basketball leagues operate March – May each year. Over the past five years, interest has grown here as well, with the number of teams increasing from six to seventeen teams this year, involving almost 400 participants.
- F4. Adult indoor soccer has become very popular since the first league was organized three years ago. There are currently three separate leagues, with eight teams per league, operating throughout the year at the rollercade building at the fairgrounds. Over 250 adults compete in the indoor soccer leagues.
- F5. The Del Norte Tennis Association rents space at the rollercade building. The Tennis Association operates independent of the Recreation Department. The local roller derby club, the Tsunami Sirens, organizes an open skate at the rollercade on Friday nights. The facility is also rented on weekends for private skate parties.
- F6. The only youth sport organized by the Recreation Department is basketball. The youth basketball league is open to youth ages 5-12. (Middle schools have teams that serve older youth.) Games are held at the middle school gym, high school gym, and recreation gym. This popular program serves over 250 youth and employs over twenty-five teen coaches. Community support for youth basketball is very evident, with fifty-six local businesses & organizations providing sponsorships last year. The goal of the youth basketball league is to allow youth to have fun, and gain skills.
- F7. Independent of the Recreation Department, many local organizations are dedicated to youth sports, including Del Norte Youth Football (& Cheer), Del Norte Youth Soccer Association, Del Norte United FC soccer league, Del Norte Little League baseball, Del Norte Babe Ruth baseball, Del Norte Youth Wrestling, Crescent City Swim Club, and others.

- F8. The toughest issue the Recreation Department deals with is facilities. Repair and maintenance of facilities is costly, with many needed repairs and/or upgrades beyond the scope of the department budget. Another factor is simply not enough fields to accommodate interested teams. For instance, if there were additional softball fields, leagues and tournaments could expand. County and City officials had some discussion in the past of building a large sports field/ recreation area on old mill property behind Safeway, but that remains just an idea at this time.

### **Recommendations**

- R1. The Recreation Department consider a website to communicate more easily any league sign-up times, schedules, and other recreation department information.

### **Commendations**

- C1. The 2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury recognizes Recreation Coordinator John Horner for his dedication to local sports & recreation, and recognizes the growth in public participation in such programs over the past six years while Mr. Horner has been Coordinator.

## DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013

### KLAMATH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

#### **Summary**

The Klamath Fire Protection District is comprised of 12 Volunteer Firefighters, of whom three are also Emergency Medical Technicians, a Chief who receives a small stipend, and a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of five members, one position currently unfilled, and Board members are also eligible to receive a small stipend. The department has a Command Center, unmanned, used for meetings and training, and three fire stations. Station #33 is in the Glen, #34 is the Redwood Station and #35 is the Hunter Creek Station. Each station is equipped with a fire pumper truck and a rescue truck. Hunter Creek has a non-operational water tanker truck. This vehicle should be available to provide the fire trucks with fire suppressing water when hydrants are not available; 60-70% of the area is without hydrants. Redwood Station has a utility trailer with a compressor to replenish firefighter's emergency breathing tanks. Most vehicles are of 70's and 80's vintage and in need of replacement. The purchase of a water tanker is of major importance for life and property safety. The overall impression of the physical stations was disorganized, messy and cluttered. Equipment and supplies were strewn on the floors and counter tops at all three stations. In addition, there was no visible posted inventory of equipment and supplies that was on hand at each station. Monies spent on the remodel of the Command Center should have been put to better use for vehicle repair and replacement.

#### **Background**

The Klamath Fire Protection District has a checkered history of misuse of public funds, theft of public property and poor leadership. This has resulted in a lack of trust with the community it serves. Starting in 2012, a new Board of Directors and a returning Fire Chief are attempting to turn around a dysfunctional department.

The Del Norte County Grand Jury received a written complaint from a citizen of Klamath citing the following:

- It is difficult for the citizens of Klamath to contact Klamath Fire in an emergency, except to call individual members at home.
- Multiple violations of the Brown Act by the Klamath Fire Board, i.e., holding secret meetings, not posting advance notice of public meetings, not posting advance agendas of upcoming meetings, not providing for public input or comment at meetings, and secret meetings.

- Minutes and agendas of KFD Board meetings written by the Board Secretary changed outside the meeting without the knowledge of the Secretary.
- Klamath Fire Board not following their own By Laws.
- Items discussed in private by three KFD Board Members are brought to a public KFD Board meeting and pushed for approval with no discussion.
- All Klamath Fire files were removed from the Command Center and placed in the KFD Board President's home.
- The remodel of the Command Center was done without public input and only 3 of the 5 KFD Board members were included in the design and money decisions. \$14,000 was expended and an accounting was requested by some members of the board and public. The request was denied by the KFD President.
- Members of the public who attend KFD Board meetings are routinely denied the ability to make comments, ask questions of the Board or get on the agenda.
- The KFD Board meetings are not held on a regular basis. The KFD By Laws state the meetings are to be held every two weeks. Sometimes the frequency is months between meetings.

The Klamath Community does not have confidence in Klamath Fire's ability to provide adequate fire protection or emergency medical response. Currently the Yurok Tribal Police are responding to medical emergencies to assist the community. Weekdays, during regular working hours, there are only 2-3 volunteer Firefighters in the Klamath area who are available to respond to calls. In summer months, Cal Fire mans a station in Klamath, and when available will respond to Klamath fires and medical emergencies. All other times, Crescent Fire is dispatched with an estimated time of arrival of 20-30 minutes. Alder Camp Fire and Orick Fire are also part of the Mutual Aid set up to assist Klamath Fire. Klamath is further burdened with set fires—cars, sometimes stolen, furniture, trash, vacant buildings/trailers, etc. Some are set for retribution; some are the result of drugs or alcohol. No matter the reason, this taxes an already overwhelmed department. When faced with a fire of moderate or greater size, the best that Klamath Fire can hope for is to try and contain it until help from an outside fire department arrives.

### **Klamath Fire Interviews**

- Grand Jury met with the Complainant
- Grand Jury met with the KFD Board president
- Grand Jury Special Districts Committee met with the Del Norte County Auditor re: budget
- Grand Jury Special Districts Committee met with Del Norte County Board of Supervisor re: concerns of Klamath safety

- Grand Jury Special Districts met with Del Norte County Clerk Recorder to verify reelections compliance
- Grand Jury Special Districts met with the Fire Chief of Crescent Fire Protection District
- Grand Jury Special Districts met with a Klamath Fire Auxiliary member
- Grand Jury Special Districts spoke with a member of the Office of Emergency Services to discuss KFD radio inventory

In December 2012, two members of the Grand Jury Special Districts Committee went to attend the Klamath Fire Protection District annual Board meeting. The date of this meeting is published in the KFD by laws as the second Wednesday of December. Instead, the meeting was postponed an additional week, with much confusion as to when the actual meeting would take place. The meeting, was attended by the KFD Board, several KFD Firefighters, 5 members of the Klamath Fire Auxiliary (a separate citizens committee), and an additional 10 persons, including two members of the Grand Jury. The meeting was poorly run with a gross lack of organization. The election of Officers was via assignment by the President and in several instances those positions were declined by the people being offered the position. The elections resulted in only 2 of the 4 vacancies being filled, President and Vice President. The elections of Secretary and Treasurer Positions were held over to a future meeting. There was no Treasurer's report, and there was no Treasurer present. There was no Fire Chief's report, and there was no Fire Chief present. There was obvious tension in the meeting between the President of the Board and the audience. A member of the Fire Auxiliary was very angry at the Board because of the way the KFD Board felt entitled to access of the Auxiliary funds on demand. The Auxiliary said they would only fund projects for KFD if KFD presented the Auxiliary with a written request and justification, and the Auxiliary would discuss it in their meeting and vote on it. This year was the first in many that the annual Auxiliary fund raiser did not occur. The reason was that the person who organizes the event was tired of doing it. It was obvious, witnessing this meeting, that there is a disconnect between the KFD Board and the community it serves. Several months after the meeting, it was announced that the President of the Board is also the Treasurer and the Vice President is also the Secretary.

Two members of the Grand Jury took a tour of the Klamath Fire District Stations to verify the condition of vehicles and the placement of portable radios. Providing the tour were the President of the Board and the KFD Fire Chief. The inventory of vehicles matched the supplied Klamath Fire list of vehicles. There was no accounting present of the portable radios that are assigned to Klamath Fire, 12 were issued and the Grand Jury members were told that all 12 are issued to Klamath Volunteer Firefighters. This is not verified.

## **Findings**

- F1. The Grand Jury has serious concerns about the ability of the Klamath Fire Protection District to provide adequate protection from fire and reasonable response to medical emergencies.
- F2. The current Klamath Fire Board operates in blatant violation of the Brown Act, this has resulted in a lack of accountability and transparency.
- F3. Grand Jury members witnessed equipment in disrepair. No visible posted inventory of equipment and supplies available at each station. Overall lack of organization and signs of neglect and decay.
- F4. A lack of ability on the part of the KFD Board to oversee operations of Klamath Fire. A lack of good judgment on the part of the KFD Board to make sound fiscal decisions, i.e. to expend \$14,000 on the remodel of the Command Center rather than spend funds to repair the only water tanker and put it back into operation.
- F5. No operational water tanker.
- F6. The relationship that exists between the Yurok Tribe, the Klamath Fire Auxiliary, and the greater Klamath Community is strained and adversarial.

## **Recommendations**

- R1. Recruit additional local Volunteer Firefighters who would be able to respond to emergency calls during regular weekday work hours. Establish a reliable communications system to allow Klamath Citizens to easily contact Klamath Fire.
- R2. The current Klamath Fire Board needs to be instructed in all aspects of the Brown Act, how to conduct a meeting, and how to openly work with the Klamath Volunteer fighters, The Yurok Tribe, the Klamath Fire Auxiliary, and the Greater Klamath Community. If the above fails to accomplish satisfactory results, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors must take over as the Board of the Klamath Fire Protection District until such a time that a suitable KFD Board can be installed. The Citizens of Klamath deserve nothing less.
- R3. Replace or repair unreliable vehicles. Develop budgeting priorities that place basic vehicle, material repair and purchases as a top priority.
- R4. All KFD Board members must be included in discussions about spending and given enough time in an open forum discussion to make a fair and informed majority decision .

- R5. Repair or replace the existing water tanker. Once it is in service, it should be operated at least weekly to ensure it is operational. This vehicle should be parked under a roof to be kept out of the weather.
- R6. The Klamath Fire Protection District Board is to make a priority of reestablishing a good relationship with the Citizens of Klamath, the Klamath Auxiliary, and the Yurok Tribe.

**Commendations**

- C1. The people of Klamath who volunteer and continue to support the Klamath Fire department and attend meetings.
- C2. The members of the Klamath Fire Auxiliary who continue to help Klamath Fire and the Community.
- C3. The Del Norte Board of Supervisor who was consulted by the Grand Jury, and who spent time and energy going over the concerns and pledging support for solutions.

## DEL NORTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT, 2012-2013

### PELICAN BAY STATE PRISON

#### **Summary**

On May 6, 2013, four members of the 2012-2013 Del Norte County Grand Jury made a scheduled visit to Pelican Bay State Prison. The Grand Jury members were given a thorough tour of the prison by the Public Information Officer. When finished with the tour, jury members met with the Chief Deputy Warden to ask all remaining questions they had about Pelican Bay State Prison.

#### **Background**

Pelican Bay State Prison opened in December 1989 in Del Norte County. Pelican Bay State Prison is a maximum security state prison housing some of the most serious criminal offenders in the California State prison system. Pelican Bay also houses non-violent, minimum security prisoners in a separate facility. The prison currently has 2,870 inmates. The prison capacity is 3,191 inmates.

#### **Findings**

- F1. Security is taken very seriously at the prison. All jury members were checked for ID's when entering the prison at the main security gate. Grand Jury members were given security passes, asked to sign in and out of the prison, and required to show ID's when entering and leaving each lock down area.
- F2. The prison currently employs 1,421 people, 1000 of whom are custodial employees. Pelican Bay Prison is currently short approximately 100 Corrections Officers; therefore many officers are asked to work double shifts to maintain security.
- F3. Pelican Bay operates its own psychiatric unit, hospital, dental facility, pharmacy, and fire department; however inmates are frequently treated by physicians at Sutter Coast Hospital in Crescent City and specialists from out of the area.
- F4. Inmates have educational programs available to them such as general education courses, high school diploma, literacy, and college courses; additionally Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and other mental health programs are available to the inmates as well.

- F5. There are many different religious services available to the inmates. Inmates are allowed to have family visits on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. There are four housing facilities available for overnight visits.
- F6. There have been no escapes from Pelican Bay's maximum security prison since its inception in 1989.
- F7. Pelican Bay State Prison is a well-run institution. All staff is well-trained and does an excellent job maintaining security.
- F8. Pelican Bay State prison is extremely expensive to operate. The cost to California taxpayers to house one general population (GP) inmate is \$58,324 per year; one security housing unit (SHU) inmate is \$70,641 per year; one administrative segregation unit (ASU) inmate is \$77,740; one psychiatric services unit inmate (PSU) is \$71,857 per year; and one Level 1 inmate \$43,640 per year. In addition, operating costs at Pelican Bay State Prison continue to increase yearly.

### **Recommendations**

None.

Recusal: This report of Pelican Bay State Prison is issued by the 2012-2013 Grand Jury with the exception of one member of this Grand Jury who is a former employee of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation at Pelican Bay State Prison. This Grand Juror was excluded from all parts of the investigation, which included interviews, deliberations, and the making and acceptance of this report. This report is based on information obtained from outside sources with none of the information being obtained from the excluded Grand Juror.