



CITIES AND JOINT POWERS COMMITTEE

MISSION STATEMENT

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee of the 2014-2015 Grand Jury is responsible for reviewing and overseeing the eleven incorporated cities and the joint powers agreements within the County of Kern pursuant to California Penal Code §925a. The Committee investigates and reports on the records, accounts, officers, departments and functions of the eleven cities and files final reports with possible recommendations. In addition, the Committee is also responsible for investigating and responding to complaints from private county residents.

Scott Shaw, Chairman
Loretta Avery
Sandra Essary

CITIES AND JOINT POWERS COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee has written and published the following reports:

- California Living Museum
- City of Arvin
- City of Bakersfield Parks & Recreation McMurtrey Aquatic Center
- City of California City
- City of Ridgecrest
- City of Shafter
- City of Taft
- City of Wasco

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee handled 2 complaints.

The members of the Committee were also involved in numerous other committees and projects during the year.

The total of investigative miles traveled by the Committee 715 miles.

CALIFORNIA LIVING MUSEUM

CALM PLANS EXCITING FUTURE

PREFACE:

The California Living Museum (CALM) is one of California's zoos that features flora, fauna, and fossils native to California and, more specifically, to Kern County. CALM exists to teach respect for all living things through education, recreation, conservation, and research.

Setting it apart from many zoos is the fact that the animals permanently featured at CALM are ones that cannot be released back into the wild. In addition to being unreleasable, some of the animals at CALM are endangered, which provides the public a chance to learn about animals that they would not otherwise see.

Besides animals, CALM exhibits several replicated plant communities and other exhibits. The gardens are planted to represent natural life zones growing throughout California. The DiGiorgio Education Center houses various displays and exhibits representing Kern County from 20 million years ago to the present.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) reviewed CALM pursuant to California Penal Code §925.

PROCESS:

On March 5, 2015, the Committee interviewed CALM's Zoo Manager, Curator of Animals, and the Chief of Staff of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS). The Zoo Manager gave the Committee a tour of CALM.

BACKGROUND:

Founded in 1980 and opened to the public in 1983, CALM's purpose is to provide a place both to educate the public about native wildlife and to help injured and orphaned wild animals. Those that can be released into the wild are, while those that cannot be released are cared for in the facility.

In 1998, KCSOS assumed the day-to-day operations of CALM. The zoo and botanical gardens became an official school site. Over 16,000 school children annually visit CALM's 14 acres and its over 80 species of animals (more than 300 animals total), learning about California's flora, fauna, and fossils through on-site programs. Off-site programs are presented to classrooms, organizations, and at community events.

FACTS:

- A. CALM received accreditation from the Zoological Association of America in 2010.
- B. In 2014, CALM had over 104,000 visitors, including school children. Attendance increases by approximately 10% each year.
- C. CALM has fifteen full-time and seven part-time staff, as well as 52 volunteers and 65 docents. Some of the types of volunteers include Animal Keeper Assistant, Maintenance Assistant, Eagle Scouts, and Wildlife Rehabilitation Volunteers.
- D. CALM is a permitted rehabilitation facility and rehabilitates approximately 500-600 injured and orphaned birds, mammals, and reptiles annually. The primary goal of rehabilitation is to release the wildlife back into their natural habitat.
- E. CALM has staff trained to care for injured wildlife but no full-time veterinarian. Some staff are graduates of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Volunteer Program. Two veterinarians are on call.
- F. The total budgeted income for CALM in 2015 is \$1,227,448. CALM's operating funds come from KCSOS, admissions, memberships, educational programs, and other local revenues. Donations are also a big part of CALM's funds. Donations from Chevron and private parties topped \$200,000 in 2014.
- G. During the holiday season in December, CALM hosts a month-long event called Holiday Lights. CALM is decorated with millions of lights that form scenes of animals and Kern County landscapes. In 2014, Holiday Lights netted \$240,000. These funds support new exhibits and enhancements.
- H. Other special events at CALM include the Spring Fling, Boo at the Zoo, Twilight in the Zoo, Feast for the Beasts, CALM's Birthday Bash, Ice Cream Zoofari, Breakfast with the Otters, and other fundraising events.
- I. Additionally, CALM offers birthday parties, weddings, corporate picnics, and other group events. CALM hosts two to three birthday parties per weekend.
- J. Besides word-of-mouth, CALM lets the public know about itself through advertising on radio and TV. CALM is also listed in the Kern County Visitor's Guide and in the AAA Travel Guide. Other advertising efforts include magazine articles, various speaking engagements, and CALM's quarterly newsletter that reaches over 5,000 subscribers.



Unreleasable Burrowing Owl at CALM

- K. CALM seeks to accommodate older visitors and the disabled. Monday is Senior Discovery Day during which seniors age 60 and up receive a 50% discount on their admission and a 10% discount in the gift shop. Usually, on Senior Discovery Day there are CALM docents strolling the grounds with birds of prey or other educational opportunities. There are five wheelchairs available free of charge for those that need them.
- L. The Big Horn Sheep Exhibit is the newest of the larger animal habitats.

FINDINGS:

- F1. While there is reason to hire a full-time veterinarian, CALM currently does not have the funds to do so.
- F2. CALM is adequately staffed with well-trained personnel. There are volunteer training programs in place.
- F3. A significant amount of CALM's income comes from special events. In particular, the Holiday Lights event in December brings in the most income of all special events.
- F4. The building of bigger habitats for larger animals (bear, cougar, and big horn sheep) has resulted in much better environments for these animals.
- F5. An animal enrichment program is in place at CALM, providing environmental and sensory stimulation such as making feeding more challenging, requiring the animal to solve simple problems, and enhancing the animal's habitat. Such stimulation improves or maintains an animal's physical and psychological health.
- F6. CALM plans to open a high ropes challenge course and zip line in 2015 that will generate additional revenue.
- F7. In the future, CALM plans to upgrade the Veterinary Clinic, purchase a digital X-ray machine, acquire a food concession, open an interactive California Coast exhibit, improve the signage on the highway, and develop a new major habitat (for example, for Tule elk, pronghorns, or river otters).
- F8. CALM is 32 years old, and upgrades are needed for this aging facility.



Black Bear at CALM

COMMENTS:

The Committee found CALM to be clean, adequately staffed, well-organized, and forward-looking. The Committee would like to thank the Zoo Manager, the Curator of Animals, and the Chief of Staff of KCSOS for their time, for an extensive tour of CALM, and for their quick responses to post-visit questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. When funds are available, CALM should hire a full-time veterinarian. (Finding 1)
- R2. CALM should continue to develop its staff and volunteer training programs. (Finding 2)
- R3. CALM should develop and advertise its events as much as the budget allows plus create more events if possible. (Finding 3)
- R4. CALM should continue to build better habitats for its animals. (Finding 4)
- R5. CALM should continue to develop its animal enrichment program for all permanently exhibited animals. (Finding 5)
- R6. CALM should implement its plans for the opening of new activities and exhibits. (Findings 6 and 7)
- R7. CALM should budget enough funds for the upgrades and repairs necessary to keep CALM looking well-maintained, clean, and fresh. (Finding 8)



Cougar Enjoys Larger Habitat at CALM

NOTES:

- The California Living Museum and the Kern County Superintendent of Schools should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at www.co.kern.kern.ca.us/grandjury.
- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website www.co.kern.kern.ca.us/grandjury.

RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**CC: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**



CALM

Foundation

California's premier native zoo and garden

June 8, 2015

Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, 2nd Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

We are pleased to respond to the Grand Jury's report regarding the California Living Museum (CALM). We appreciate the time and attention that the Grand Jury members gave to their visit, and for the positive report regarding CALM's outcomes and future plans.

In response to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations, we offer the following responses:

Findings

- F1: CALM agrees and hopes to secure funding for an on-site Vet in the next few years. In the meantime we are working to complete the physical aspects of our Vet Clinic.
- F2: The volunteer and docent program has increased significantly over the past few years and is crucial to CALM's ability to carry out our mission.
- F3: HolidayLights is CALM's largest fundraiser. We will also bring back the Beastly Ball in an effort to diversify our funding base.
- F4: The Cats of California and Bighorn Sheep exhibits are brand new exhibits that allow us to feature these majestic animals.
- F5: Animal enrichment is a key component to the care of our animals. CALM is looking at ideas on ways to involve the public, such as having kids help with enrichment activities during school field trips and birthday parties.

(More→)

- F6: CALM received Planning Commission approval of our challenge course at the end of May. Due to community opposition, CALM has dropped its plans for a zip line. The challenge course (high & low ropes course and climbing wall) is scheduled to open in late 2015 or early 2016.
- F7: Upgrades to the Vet Clinic are underway with the recent addition of a new blood analyzer and a digital x-ray machine, donated by Omni Health. We are in the process of looking for a food vendor; implementing our signage master plan and developing our new California Coast exhibit in 2016.
- F8: CALM continues to enhance existing exhibits and create new exhibits as funding becomes available.

Recommendations:

- R1: CALM agrees and hopes to secure funding for an on-site Vet in the next few years. In the meantime we are working to complete the physical aspects of our Vet Clinic.
- R2: The volunteer and docent program has increased significantly over the past few years and is crucial to CALM's ability to carry out our mission. We hope to secure more intern opportunities through partnerships with CSUB and BC.
- R3: We agree and are committed to advertising more via social media and the creation of a new dynamic website and CALM app. We always are open to events and plan to bring back the Beastly Ball, an event that used to generate in excess of \$50,000 annually.
- R4: CALM's enclosures are well maintained and in compliance with industry standards. A recent Zoological Association of America inspection commented on the excellent conditions CALM has created for its animals. We will continue to improve exhibits as needed and as fund are available.
- R5: We agree and believe enrichment is crucial to animal wellness.
- R6: CALM received Planning Commission approval of our challenge course at the end of May. Due to community opposition, CALM has dropped its plans for a zip line. The challenge course (high & low ropes course and climbing wall) is scheduled to open in late 2015 or early 2016 as is the new California Coast Room exhibit.

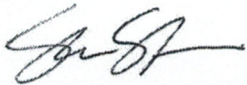
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Grand Jury Response
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R7: Upgrades to the Vet Clinic are underway with the recent addition of a new blood analyzer and a digital x-ray machine, donated by Omni Health. We are in the process of looking for a food vendor; implementing our signage master plan and developing our new California Coast exhibit in 2016. We agree and will continue to seek funding to allow us to grow and thrive while maintaining a top-notch facility.

We appreciate the time and effort of the Grand Jury and we look forward to continued growth at CALM. Please call me at (661) 636-4000 if I may answer any questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Sanders
Chief of Staff

Cc: Foreman, Kern County Grand Jury

CITY OF ARVIN

THE GARDEN IN THE SUN

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) visited the City of Arvin (City) on March 12, 2015, to inquire into the operation and management of the City pursuant to California Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

The Committee met with the new City Manager and the Acting Chief of Police. The meeting was held at City Hall located at 200 Campus Drive, Arvin, California 93203. The Committee also researched several public information online websites about the City.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Arvin is located 15 miles southeast of Bakersfield at an elevation of 449 feet and encompasses 4.9 square miles. The City was named after Arvin Richardson, the son of one of Arvin's original settling families from San Bernardino. The City was incorporated on December 21, 1960, with a General Law form of government, and has a five member City Council.

The Arvin Post Office was established in 1914. Birdie Heard petitioned for the addition of the Post Office and submitted proposed names including Bear Mountain, Walnut and Arvin. Officials in Washington, D.C. chose Arvin as it was the only proposed name which was not already in use in California. Birdie was the City's first Postmaster. She set up the Post Office in her living room originally, but it was later moved to the General Store owned by the Staples family. The in-store Post Office was also the area's first informal library until an official branch of the Kern County Library was established in 1927.

The Mountain View Oil Field, which underlies the town and much of the surrounding area, was discovered in 1933 and developed extensively in the 1930's. Many oil wells still surround the town; some are slant-drilled to reach formations directly underneath inhabited areas.

The City has a 90% Hispanic cultural identity, and many of the storefronts and signs are in Spanish. The City developed a reputation as a majority Hispanic community in the late 20th century. This is the result of the high volume of Mexican and Central American farm laborers migrating into what was once an "all-white" farming community.

The Arvin Migratory Labor Camp was the first federally operated farm labor camp opened by the Farm Security Administration in 1937. The camp was one of the many “New Deal” programs created during the Franklin D. Roosevelt presidency in response to the Great Depression. This agricultural camp was considered a model when built by the Resettlement Administration.

FACTS:

- A. In 2007, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed the City as having the highest level of smog of any community in the United States. The City’s level of ozone, smog’s primary component, exceeded the EPA’S acceptable limits an average of 73 days per year between 2004 and 2006 (latest figures).
- B. The population was 19,304 as of the 2010 US Census, up from 12,956 in the 2000 US Census.
- C. The economy of the Arvin community is primarily based on agriculture. The employment statistics show seasonal variations. Approximately 28% of Arvin’s residents were out of work in March 2015, the highest percentage of any city in Kern County.
- D. The City Manager has been on the job for two months and commutes from the Las Vegas, Nevada area weekly.
- E. The Acting Chief of Police has been on the job since November 2014.
- F. The Finance Manager has been on the job less than a year.
- G. As recommended by the 2012-2013 Kern County Grand Jury, the City developed a Mission Statement. This was adopted in 2014 by the City Council and states: “Embracing Partnerships between the Community and City Government to Enhance the Quality of Life in the City of Arvin”.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The largest employers are Grimmway Farms, Arvin Union School District, Vallarta Market and the Kern High School District.
- F2. The Arvin Union School District consists of Sierra Vista, Bear Mountain, El Camino Real, Haven Drive Middle School and Arvin State Preschool. The Arvin Union School District also serves the community with the Arvin Family Resource Center and Grimmway Charter Academy.
- F3. The City is served by other nearby school districts, which include Di Giorgio, Vineland and Lamont.

- F4. The City is presently considering building a development called “Jewett Square” with shopping and a new housing development.
- F5. There is an urgent need for professional child care for employees that work in the City but live outside the area.
- F6. The City is working with California State University, Fresno on an economic plan to bring in new business to the area such as new sit-down restaurants and a hotel.
- F7. New businesses are Tasteful Selections (a potato processing plant), Dollar General, Dollar Tree, Subway, Burger King, and McDonald’s.
- F8. The City has an aggressive graffiti crew keeping the problems with graffiti under control.
- F9. A park of 20 acres that belongs to the Kern County Parks and Recreation Department (KCPRD) is located in the City. The KCPRD is not keeping the park up to par with the City owned park. The City is currently exploring the possibility of acquiring the County owned park.
- F10. The City has hired a grant writer.
- F11. The City Council has allotted between \$50,000 and \$60,000 from sales tax revenue to start repairing the streets as there are many potholes throughout the City.
- F12. In 2013, the City received a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Homeland Security for:
- A computer room, which has been completed
 - Helping the Police Department to conduct DUI check points throughout the City
 - Helping the Police Department to establish a better organized evidence room

COMMENTS:

The Committee would like to thank the City Manager and the Acting Chief of Police for their time, input and consideration. Their cooperation was helpful and greatly appreciated. Both employees have been in the office a short time and are working toward the betterment of the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The City should encourage private professional child care for employees that reside out of the area. (Finding 5)
- R2. The City should continue to repair the City streets when funds become available. (Finding 11)
- R3. The Police Department should better organize their evidence room. (Finding 12)

NOTES:

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BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

CITY OF BAKERSFIELD RECREATION AND PARKS

McMurtrey Aquatic Center

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

Pursuant to California Penal Code §925(a), the Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) reviewed the McMurtrey Aquatic Center (Aquatic Center) operations, rules and policies.

PROCESS:

The Committee visited the Aquatic Center, reviewed the posted rules and met with the staff. The Committee also reviewed the City of Bakersfield Recreation and Parks (City) 2014 Summer and Fall Brochures and the Aquatics Manual revised on March 2013 and May 2014. The Committee also interviewed staff and patrons.

BACKGROUND AND FACTS:

The Aquatic Center was named after the McMurtrey family, long-time residents of Bakersfield, who donated the sum of \$250,000 on March 13, 2003. It opened in June 2004 and is located at 1325 Q Street in Bakersfield, CA. The Aquatic Center is open year round; however, the hours vary. Information regarding hours and fees can be obtained on the City website www.bakersfieldparks.us.

The Aquatic Center pool and facility rules are displayed in the lobby, the activity pool and the Olympic pool. The patron's receipt includes the Aquatic Center's refund policy.

A. The facility features:

- Olympic size competition pool
- Water slides (patrons must be at least 48" tall)
- Zero depth entry with child play features
- One meter and three meter diving boards (diving programs /special events)
- Men's and women's locker rooms with showers
- Picnic areas for public use and party rentals
- Snack bar (outside food and drinks not allowed)
- Activity pool

B. The Aquatic Center provides a variety of programs including:

- Swim lessons for all ages
- Lap swimming
- Water walking
- Deep water intervals

- Aquatic conditioning
- Kayaking
- Open swimming

C. Program Goals of the Aquatic Center are:

- Provide safe facilities where the public can acquire or strengthen swimming skills
- Provide relief from hot summer weather
- Provide a fun, safe, supervised facility for guests to learn new skills
- Provide a family-oriented environment for guests to socialize and play together
- Provide opportunities for guests to exercise and get physically fit

D. Rates for the use of the facilities are determined by the City Council.

E. The Aquatics Manual used in training staff has an in-depth explanation of the pool rules and policies.

- Proper swim attire is required
- No cut-offs, baggy street clothing or cotton t-shirts are allowed
- Board shorts, biker shorts, sports bras, polyester/spandex/nylon t-shirts, Under Armour® or rash guard shirts are allowed
- Cotton fabric is not permitted as cotton tends to shed and eventually clogs the pool filter
- As of 2014, the Aquatic Center can provide rash guard shirts at cost for patrons that do not have the proper attire

FINDINGS:

- F1. The Supervisor informed the Committee that patrons are given a copy of the rules when a daily and/or monthly pass is purchased.
- F2. The Committee interviewed multiple pool patrons and was informed that none had received a copy of the pool rules.
- F3. The Aquatic Center has approximately 75 to 125 staff members, depending on the season. There have been 108,386 visitors this year to the Aquatic Center as of September 2014.
- F4. Lifeguards receive extensive training before being assigned to work in the pool and have on-going training including an annual Lifeguard Olympics (in-service training). Lifeguards are paid \$9.50 to \$10.25 per hour and 60% to 70% return for another year.

- F5. Recording security cameras are installed in the lobby and back office. Digital recordings are preserved for three months.
- F6. Not all pool rules are in the posted rules, the City's brochure or the receipt that is given to the patron. Only the Aquatics Manual for staff contains the complete rules. This results in confusion for some patrons.
- F7. Swim diapers are required for all diapered patrons. The Aquatic Center provides swim diapers at cost for patrons that do not have them.
- F8. The City reserves the right to refuse and/or revoke admittance to anyone deemed a threat to the safety of himself, patrons and/or the Aquatic Center Staff.

COMMENTS:

The Committee would like to thank the Aquatic Center Supervisor and staff for their cooperation and courtesy during the Grand Jury visit to the Aquatic Center and for graciously providing all information requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. Proper swim attire requirements should be posted at pool entrance and in locker rooms. (Findings 2 and 6)
- R2. Safety and conduct rules should be posted in conspicuous places around the pool area. (Findings 2 and 6)
- R3. A complete copy of the written rules found in the Aquatics Manual should be made available to all patrons upon request. (Findings 2 and 6)

NOTES:

The City of Bakersfield Recreation and Parks McMurtrey Aquatic Center should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.

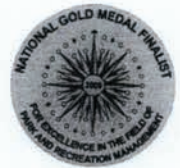
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RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:

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BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**cc: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**



B A K E R S F I E L D

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS

DIANNE HOOVER, DIRECTOR

December 17, 2014

Honorable Colette M. Humphrey
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Second Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Foreperson Dennis Mike Elliott
2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 600
Bakersfield, CA 93301

RE: Response to November 17, 2014 Grand Jury Letter

Dear Ms. Humphrey and Mr. Elliott:

Based on our phone conversation on Tuesday, December 16, 2014 please see attached revisions of the Grand Jury letter previously submitted.

If you have further questions, my direct number is (661) 326-3014.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dianne Hoover".

Dianne Hoover, Director

cc: Richard Iger, Associate Attorney
Terri Elison, Recreation Supervisor

RE: Response to November 17, 2014 Grand Jury Letter (revised on December 16, 2014)

F1. The Supervisor informed the Committee that patrons are given a copy of the rules when a daily and/or monthly pass is purchased.

The Supervisor confirmed that this was information provided to the Committee.

F2. The Committee interviewed multiple pool patrons and was informed that none had received a copy of the pool rules.

It is the practice of the McMurtrey Aquatic Center to email the pool rules to patrons that purchase a monthly pass. It is possible that the email could go to their spam mail, thus the indication that they have not received them. Patrons that renew their passes do not receive a list of the rules each time they renew. Pool rules are posted on the city's website for public review.

F3. The Aquatic Center has approximately 75 to 125 staff members, depending on the season. There have been 108,386 visitors this year to the Aquatic Center as of September 2014.

This is a correct statement; no further comment necessary.

F4. Lifeguards receive extensive training before being assigned to work in the pool and have on-going training including an annual Lifeguard Olympics (in-service training). Lifeguards are paid \$9.50 to \$10.25 per hour and 60% to 70% return for another year.

No further comment is needed; this is a factual statement.

F5. Recording security cameras are installed in the lobby and back office. Digital recordings are preserved for three months.

Yes, as usual practice the digital recordings are preserved for a three month period. However, if there are incidences that need further review or attention, such as theft, threatening behavior to staff or patrons, and/or damage to persons or property then that portion of the video recording is saved in a separate file for further review or action.

F6. Not all pool rules are in the posted rules, the City's brochure or the receipt that is given to the patron. Only the Aquatics Manual for staff contains the complete rules. This results in confusion for some patrons.

The Aquatics Manual for staff is a complete training manual which includes extensive information on being a lifeguard at the city pools and also provides some examples of proper swim attire, handling difficult patrons, rotations, scanning and detailed safety information. The Aquatic Manual is specifically designed for staff training and is used as a tool to reinforce the extensive training each staff member receives. It is not typically given to pool patrons, however, a copy can be provided through a records request at the City Clerk's office. The posted pool rules in the lobby, in the pool area and on the city's website are consistent with Aquatic industry standards and have been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.

R1. Proper swim attire requirements should be posted at pool entrance and in locker rooms.

Within the aquatic industry and through the City Attorney's office, the rules indicate that "proper swim attire" should be worn at all times. It would be improbable to list all the creative and infinite possibilities that are unacceptable attire in a public pool. The current wording in the posted rules of "proper swim attire required" is understood by the majority of pool patrons and staff is willing to assist in clarification if needed. In addition, staff works with patrons that need assistance in finding proper swim attire due to religious or medical needs. Staff provides swim diapers and rash guards for purchase, and the city does an annual swim suit drive that helps in providing swim suits to those that cannot afford them. These swim suits are available for free to those requesting them, if available in the proper size. Pool rules are currently posted in the lobby area and two locations in the pool area. We will add the pool rules at the entrance in each locker room – both men's and women's.

R2. Safety and conduct rules should be posted in conspicuous places around the pool area.

Two large signs (60" by 42") with rules indicating expected safe behaviors of all patrons in the pool are posted in two separate areas – one at the activity pool and one at the Olympic pool. An additional one is posted in the lobby area. As stated in **R1**, city staff will post another rule sign in each locker room. McMurtrey Aquatic staff will provide copies of the posted pool rules on the front counter for distribution and inform patrons of the posted rules on the website to review at their convenience.

R3. A complete copy of the written rules found in the Aquatics Manual should be made available to all patrons upon request.

The Aquatics Manual is an extensive staff training manual developed for lifeguarding, pool management, customer service, possible scenarios, emergency procedures and much more. If a patron is truly interested in the Aquatics Manual, he/she may go through the City Clerk's office and complete a records request form.

The Aquatics Manual is reviewed and revised annually, based on changing health standards, state and federal laws and Aquatics Industry standards. The 2015 manual will be titled: **Aquatics Staff Training Manual**. The posted pool rules will be identified on page 2 of the revised manual. For training purposes, and for staff to properly enforce the rules, some guidelines on "frequently asked questions" will be enhanced under the topic of **Customer Service; Rule Enforcement**. It is the job of a trained lifeguard to be able to correctly interpret the pool rules and politely explain the rules to those that have questions. The examples and scenarios provided in the **Aquatics Staff Training Manual** are not necessarily all inclusive, but simply provide examples of what are acceptable/unacceptable rules and behaviors. It is management's job to provide a variety of training tools, examples and guiding principles to assist them in their job duties.

CALIFORNIA CITY

PROPOSITION 218 AND WATER IN THE DESERT

PREFACE:

Less than 400 feet under the dry Mojave Desert, situated below California City (City), lies an enormous supply of groundwater. Even so, the City's water problems are multiple and complex. The City's ability to supply water to its residents is being hampered by the constant need for repairs to the City water lines.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

Adding to the complexity of the water system repairs is Proposition 218, approved by California voters in 1996. This affected the City Council's recent decision to raise water rates. Citizens have questioned the City's compliance with Proposition 218, thus prompting the City and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury to investigate. This investigation is pursuant to California Penal Code §925(a).

PROCESS:

The Committee obtained background information for this report from the following:

- Interviewing the City Manager and the Director of Public Works
- Interviewing private citizens in the City
- Researching public information found on the City's website, online research and other sources
- Studying various engineering reports commissioned by the City

BACKGROUND:

In 1958, private land developers bought 80,000 acres of Mojave Desert land with the intention of building a master-planned city that would rival Los Angeles in scope and size. A total of 204 square miles makes the City the 3rd largest city in area in California.

Since the time the City was incorporated in 1965, it has experienced a significant level of growth from a population of 617 residents to the current population of approximately 14,200 (US 2010 Census). The City was conceived as master-planned community with over 53,000 lots.

The City has owned and operated its own water utility since its takeover from the original developer. In the 1960's, the City's initial developers built out much of the initial water transmission system, utilizing 4" to 10" uncoated steel water mains from WWII surplus that had an estimated life of 30 years. Expecting rapid growth, the infrastructure of water and sewer lines plus miles of paved roads were laid out and put in place all at once.

One advantage this desert community has is an extensive aquifer that lies directly under the City. Even with this virtually unlimited supply of water, the expected growth did not occur. The idle infrastructure began to show signs of deterioration. The City currently has a significant number of old, inaccurate meters which are beyond their useful life.

The major deficiency in the City's system is old and dilapidated water mains. The 2002 Water Master Plan recommended that the water main replacement be phased in over 10 to 15 years. While some mains were replaced in 2007 through a USDA bond issue, a large portion of the mains have yet to be replaced. The City currently is experiencing as many as 440 waterline breaks and leaks per year due to deterioration of the pipes. Photos in the appendix show typical examples.

FACTS:

- A. The Fremont Valley Aquifer is the primary water source for California City and the communities of Mojave and Cantil.
- B. The City, the Mojave Public Utility District, and the Antelope Valley East Kern Water Agency have recently formed the Fremont Basin Water Management Group. This group will be working to develop the Basin Plan to determine each community's usable "safe yield". "Safe yield" is defined as the "attainment and maintenance of a long term balance between the annual amount of ground water withdrawn by pumping and the annual amount of recharge".
- C. Local soil chemistry accelerates the deterioration process of the pipe infrastructure.
- D. The City has two golf courses, both City owned. Potable water is used to irrigate the greens. Reclaimed water is used to water the fairways.
- E. The State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has recently leased the privately owned facility that may operate as a 2,500 capacity Level II prison. At that level, the facility could employ as many as 650 personnel. The prison is a water and sewer customer of the City.

FINDINGS:

- F1. To be fully compliant with Proposition 218, the City must bill all water usage, even water used by the City.
- F2. Water engineering studies calling for a rate increase have been completed. The water customers were notified per Proposition 218 and given the proper time to protest. Approximately 20 letters of protest have been received. Several customers from the community protested at the City Council meetings. While there was a limited protest regarding the increased rates, most water customers were silent.

- F3. The City has only recently (November 2014) billed itself for water used at the City golf courses.
- F4. The golf courses have an extremely high evaporation rate.
- F5. The population of the City may not justify having two golf courses.
- F6. At the present time, the prison cannot expand due to a limited sewer system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The City should continue to comply with Proposition 218 by continuing to bill itself for water and sewer service on city-owned property. (Findings 1 and 3)
- R2. Landscaping on the golf courses should be changed to a desert landscape. (Finding 4)
- R3. Given the population of the City, they should consider closing one of the golf courses. (Finding 5)
- R4. The City's wastewater facility should be modified, allowing expansion of the prison population. (Finding 6)

NOTES:

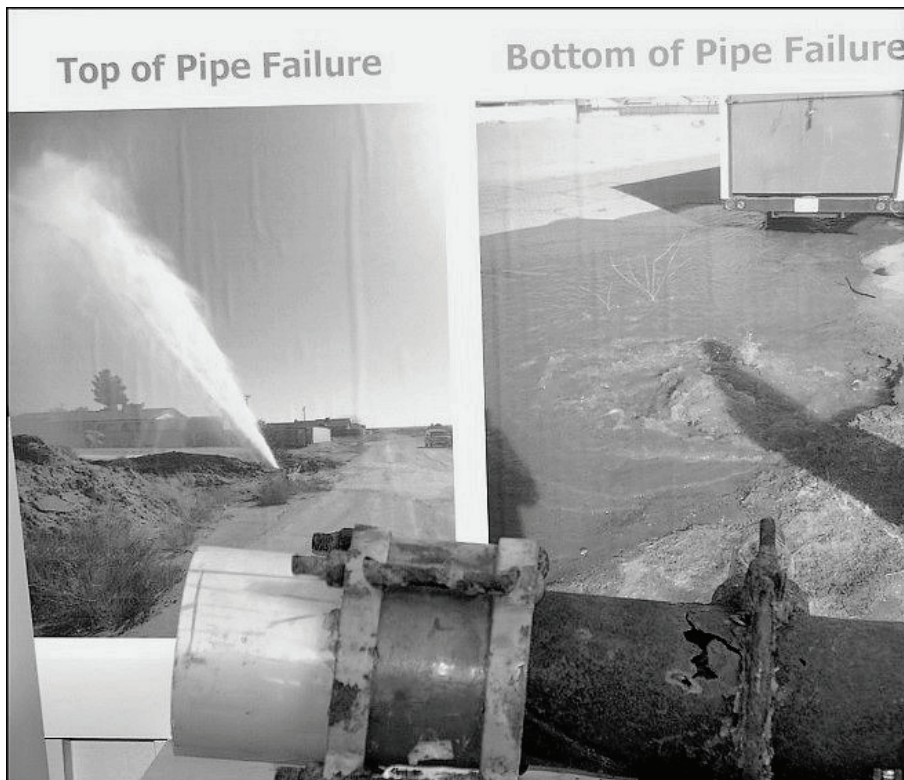
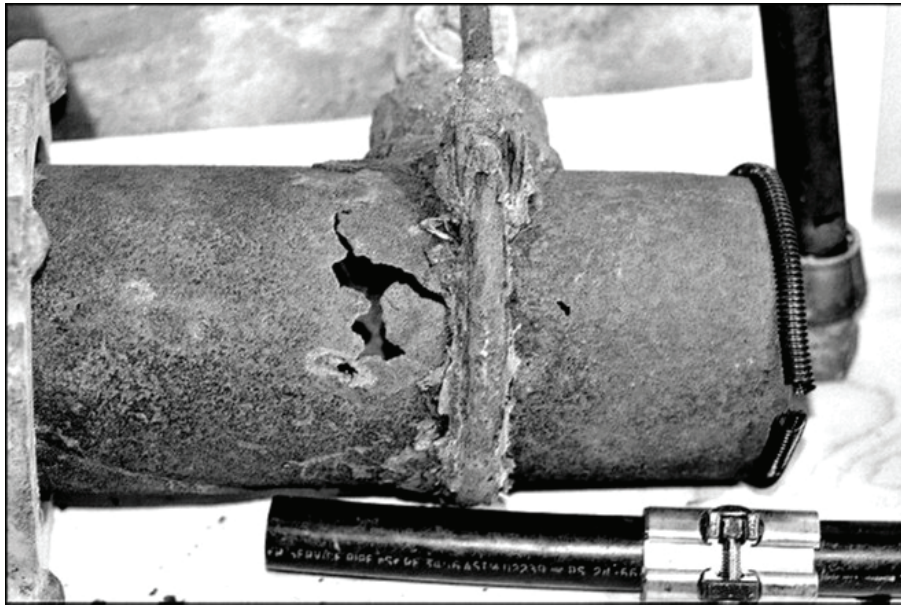
- The City of California City should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
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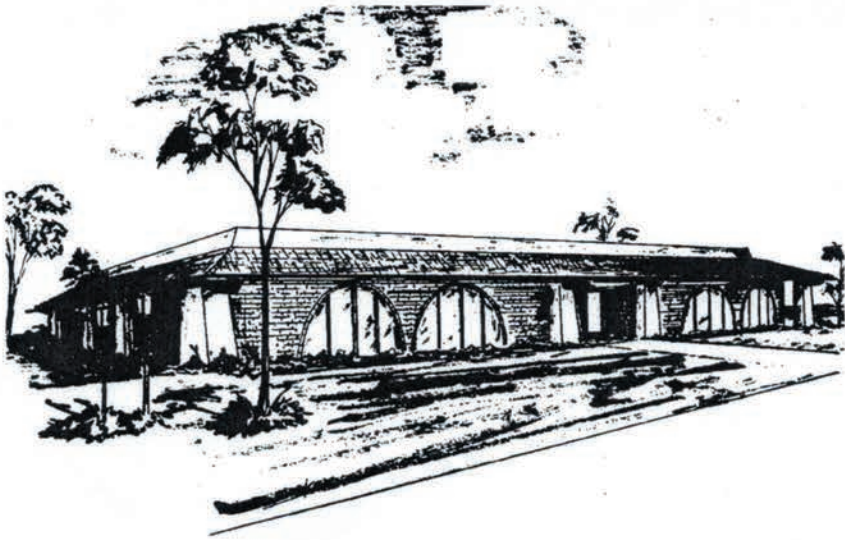
RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

CC: **FOREPERSON**
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301

APPENDIX





Incorporated 1965

City of California City

City Hall



PHONE (760) 373-8661

21000 HACIENDA BLVD. - CALIFORNIA CITY, CALIFORNIA 93505

March 25th, 2014

Honorable John Somers
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxton Avenue, 2nd Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Presiding Judge Somers,

The City and Joint Powers Committee has released their report on our Proposition 218 and Water in the Desert on March 5th, 2015. They have made four recommendations which each are addressed as follows:

R1. The City should continue to comply with Proposition 218 by continuing to bill itself for water and sewer service on city-owned property.

The City of California City recognizes the requirement under Proposition 218 and has established accounts for all city owned property so that both water and sewer fees are collected for usage incurred. Each department within the city will have added line items within their budget to itemize costs each month in the budget year.

R2. Landscaping on the golf courses should be changed to a desert landscape.

There have been discussions in the past about the possibility of eliminating the fairways and creating a "Target Green" for golfers with a desert landscape taking the place of the fairway. However, the fairways greenery allows for the ability to discharge our recovered Tertiary water from the Waste Water Treatment plant. This recycling effort not only aids in the natural beauty of the golf course but eliminates the need for building additional storage ponds for the Tertiary water supply.

R3. Given the population of the City, they should consider closing one of the golf courses.

The City has two golf courses within our community. Tierra Del Sol is a championship 18 hole course that is under a public private contract for the maintenance and operation of the facility/course.

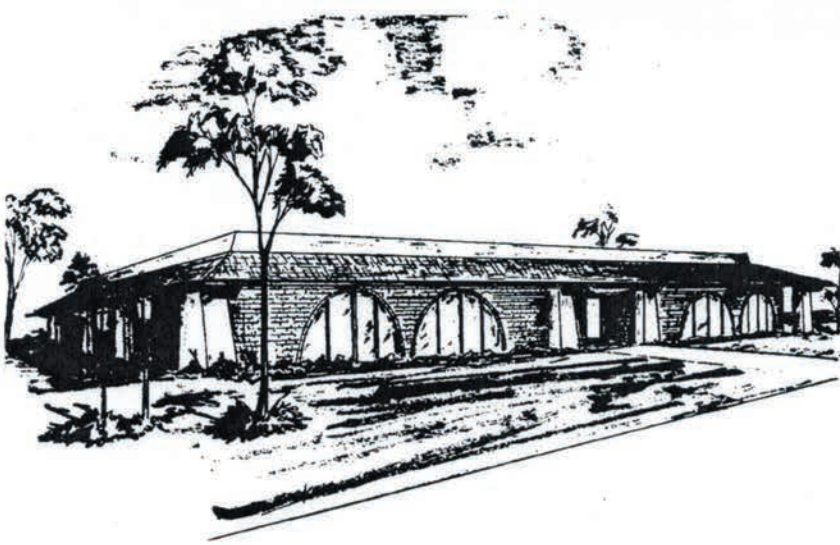
City of California City

City Hall



PHONE (760) 373-8661

21000 HACIENDA BLVD. - CALIFORNIA CITY, CALIFORNIA 93505



The Par 3 golf course is much smaller in size and is operated by our Parks and Recreation Department. Our Public Works is looking at converting this irrigation system over from fresh water to tertiary water next fiscal year. Once again this will provide a benefit for the disposal of the excess tertiary water while providing the community a recreational asset.

R4. The City's waste water facility should be modified, allowing expansion of the prison population.

The City under the 218 process has recently raised rates for both water and sewer to allow for much need upgrades to take place in the years ahead. The prison is currently at capacity now with 2,500 prisoners and 640 staff. Additional development for expansion would be negotiated with both the State and Corrections Corporation of America, the private owner of the site, on the costs associated with increasing the waste water treatment plant's capacity.

As always we welcome visits by the Committee as an opportunity to share our current successes along with future goals for our community. Please contact me at 760-373-7170 if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William T. Weil Jr.".

William T. Weil Jr
City Manager

CITY OF SHAFTER

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) visited the City of Shafter (City) on August 5, 2014, to inquire into the operation and management of the City pursuant to California Penal Code §925(a).

PROCESS:

Penal Code §925(a) also authorizes the Grand Jury to investigate and report upon the operations, accounts, and records of the officers, departments, functions, and the method or system of performing those duties.

In preparing this report, the Committee reviewed the City's website, the Municipal Service Review Update provided by the City and interviewed the City Manager. The Committee called the City's cooling center and verified that it opens its doors to the public during hot weather. Past Grand Jury reports were reviewed for continuity.

BACKGROUND

The City is located in the San Joaquin Valley, approximately 17 miles northwest of downtown Bakersfield and 100 miles north of Los Angeles. Shafter is a Charter City and operates according to the Charter approved by the voters June 6, 1995, operating as a City Council-City Manager form of government. The City currently has an estimated population of 19,000. The City's industrial area employees are drawn from throughout Kern County.

FACTS:

1. The City Manager has been in office since March 1, 2014.
2. The City operates a correctional facility staffed by city correctional personnel and is under contract with the State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to house State inmates.
3. The primary source of revenue for the City is sales tax and additional revenue received from the CDCR.
4. Shafter has built its own fiber-optic network to serve commercial clients, local government, schools as well as its citizens. The network is another source of revenue for the City.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The City has an emergency plan; however, they are behind on *table top* exercises and plan to schedule a drill by year end.
- F2. The City has created the Shafter Learning Center (Center) located in the Kern County Library Shafter Branch building. The City invested over \$355,000 to renovate and upgrade the technology at the facility. The Center officially opened on June 9, 2014, and provides a wide variety of classes and a computer lab. The lab is used by students to complete on-line courses. Other community members prepare resumes, apply for jobs or even shop on-line when no access is available in the home. The Center is now open 68 hours per week.
- F3. The City provides a cooling center with the help of funding by PG&E that is open to senior citizens and the general public. The Shafter Recreation and Park District makes the determination to open the cooling center when the temperature exceeds 105 degrees, unfortunately, the cooling center is underutilized.
- F4. The City completed a tranceiver tower and other measures to provide reliable public safety communications in case of natural or man-made disasters. This tower project has been integrated with the City's fiber-optic project to assure high speed reliable communications for local businesses and residents. Construction is complete and commercial operation is now being utilized.
- F5. The Ross Dress for Less distribution center is expected to be completed by mid-2015. The American Tire distribution center is expected to be completed by the end of 2015. When completed, these projects will employ over 1,500 workers.

COMMENTS:

The Grand Jury commends the City and its leaders for attracting new revenue-contributing firms that will benefit the City and Kern County and for a job well done.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The City should schedule emergency training drills for all employees by year end. (Finding 1)
- R2. The City of Shafter should promote better utilization of the cooling center prior to and during periods of high temperature. (Finding 3)

NOTES:

The City of Shafter should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.

Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury, click on: Sign up for early releases.

Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed through the Kern County Library system and the Kern County Grand Jury website: www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury.

RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**cc: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**



December 18, 2014

336 Pacific Avenue · Shafter, California 93263

The Honorable Colette Humphrey
Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, 2nd Floor
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Re: City of Shafter

Dear Judge Humphrey:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury issued its report on the operation and management of the City of Shafter. The following is the response to the findings and recommendations contained in the report:

FINDING 1: *"The City has an emergency plan; however, they are behind on table top exercises and plan to schedule a drill by year end."* **Response:** The City of Shafter agrees with Finding 1.

FINDING 2: *"The City has created the Shafter Learning Center (Center) located in the Kern County-Library Shafter Branch building. The City invested over \$355,000 to renovate and upgrade the technology at the facility. The Center officially opened on June 9, 2014, and provides a wide variety of classes and a computer lab. The lab is used by students to complete on-line courses. Other community members prepare resumes, apply for jobs or even shop online when no access is available in the home. The Center is now open 68 hours per week."* **Response:** The City of Shafter agrees with Finding 2.

FINDING 3: *"The City provides a cooling center with the help of funding by PG&E that is open to senior citizens and the general public. The Shafter Recreation and Park District makes the determination to open the cooling center when the temperature exceeds 105 degrees, unfortunately, the cooling center is underutilized."* **Response:** The City of Shafter disagrees partially with Finding 3. The cooling center program is a County of Kern program funded by a grant the County receives from PG&E. The County contracts the cooling center services in Shafter with the Shafter Recreation and Park District. The County does not contract the cooling center services with the City of Shafter.

FINDING 4: *"The City completed a transceiver tower and other measures to provide reliable public safety communications in case of natural or man-made disasters. This tower project has been integrated with the City's fiber-optic project to assure high speed reliable communications for local businesses and residents. Construction is complete and commercial operation is now being utilized."* **Response:** The City of Shafter agrees with Finding 4.

The Honorable Colette Humphrey
December 18, 2015
Page 2

FINDING 5: *"The Ross Dress for Less distribution center is expected to be completed by mid-2015. The American Tire distribution center is expected to be completed by the end of 2015. When completed, these projects will employ over 1,500 workers."* **Response:** The City of Shafter agrees with Finding 4.

RECOMMENDATION 1: *"The City should schedule emergency training drills for all employees by year end. (Finding 1)"* **Response:** Recommendation 1 has not yet been implemented. An emergency training drill is tentatively scheduled for April 23, 2014.

RECOMMENDATION 2: *"The City of Shafter should promote better utilization of the cooling center prior to and during periods of high temperature. (Finding 3)"* **Response:** Recommendation 2 has been implemented. The City of Shafter is cooperating with the Shafter Recreation and Park District to improve awareness and utilization of the cooling center. To promote better utilization of the cooling center, the City of Shafter website and facebook page have been programmed to publicize the cooling center from May 15 to September 15.

Please direct any questions you may have to me at (661) 746-5000.

Sincerely,



Scott Hurlbert
City Manager

cc: Dennis Mike Elliot, Foreperson, Kern County Grand Jury

CITY OF TAFT

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

On August 28, 2014, the Cities and Joint Powers Agreement Committee (Committee) interviewed the City Manager in Taft, California (City). An inquiry by the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Jury) was made regarding the operation and management of the City pursuant to Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

The Committee met with the City Manager, the Human Resources Director, and the Finance Director at City Hall located at 209 East Kern Street. The Committee reviewed prior Kern County Grand Jury reports, the City website; City Council meeting agendas and minutes along with various publications to prepare questions pertinent to the inquiry.

BACKGROUND

Taft is located in the foothills approximately 30 miles southwest of Bakersfield. The City was originally called “Siding Number Two” by the Sunset Railroad in the early 1900’s. The name Moron was also used to refer to Taft until a fire burned much of the town. The name was changed to Taft in honor of the 27th President of the United States. The City’s approximate population is 9,700, which includes 2,700 prison inmates. There are two prisons in Taft, the Modified Community Correctional Facility (MCCF), owned by the City, and the Taft Federal Prison.

FACTS:

- A. The City Manager was appointed to the office in July, 2012 by the City Council.
- B. The City employs a full time Grant Writer who has obtained grants to revitalize downtown by repairing sidewalks, curbs and resurfacing the City streets. Bus shelters were built and security cameras were installed in the five City buses. Five additional police vehicles were purchased with grant money.
- C. The City has signed a four year agreement with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to house up to 640 inmates at the MCCF. The term of the agreement is from December 1, 2013, through June 30, 2018.
- D. Approximately 35% of the City’s population is retired Chevron employees living on their stock holdings and retirement.
- E. The City’s primary source of revenue is from Sales Tax at \$1.6 million and \$3.6 million from the MCCF.

- F. New businesses currently under construction are a Best Western Motel and a Taco Bell restaurant. There is also a need for housing and a tract of approximately 40 homes is under construction.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The Committee found the City Manager to be very well prepared and most cooperative in providing the Standard Agreement regarding the MCCF, the City's Annual Financial Report for fiscal years ending June 30, 2012, and June 30, 2013.
- F2. The City has a disaster plan; however, the City Manager reported they coordinate with the Kern County Fire Department. Funding is needed to develop the City's supplemental disaster plan. Disaster training and exercises are planned within the next six to twelve months.
- F3. The City's water is provided by West Kern Water District. The City has been assured a water supply for the next ten years.
- F4. The West Side Recreation & Park District provides a well-rounded, wholesome program of leisure time activities for people living in the City. Recreational programs include:
- Bowling alley
 - Senior Activities
 - Nutritional meals
 - Bus trips to Eagle Mountain Casino
 - Swimming at the Natatorium

COMMENTS:

The City Manager's office was well prepared for our visit, appears to be running efficiently and takes great pride in serving their community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The City should schedule emergency training drills for all employees by June 30, 2015. (Finding 2)

NOTES:

The City of Taft should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review. Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury, click on: Sign up for early releases.

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RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS TO:

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, 2ND FLOOR
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**cc: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**



February 23, 2015

The Honorable John Sommers
Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, 2nd Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301

Re: City of Taft

Dear Judge Sommers:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury issued its report on the operation and management of the City of Taft. The following is the response to the finding and recommendations contained in the report:

FINDING 1: *"The Committee found the City Manager to be very well prepared and most cooperative in providing the Standard Agreement regarding the MCCF, the City's Annual Financial Report for fiscal years ending June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2013."* **Response:** The City of Taft agrees with Finding 1.

FINDING 2: *"The City has a disaster plan; however, the City Manager reported they coordinate with the Kern County Fire Department. Funding is needed to develop the City's supplemental disaster plan. Disaster training and exercises are planned within the next six to twelve months."* **Response:** The City of Taft agrees with Finding 2.

FINDING 3: *"The City's water is provided by West Kern Water District. The City has been assured a water supply for the next ten years."* **Response:** The City of Taft agrees with Finding 3.

FINDING 4: *"The West Side Recreation & Park District provides a well-rounded, wholesome program of leisure time activities for people living in the City. Recreational programs include: Bowling alley, Senior Activities, Nutritional meals, Bus trips to Eagle Mountain Casino, Swimming at the Natatorium."* **Response:** The City of Taft agrees with Finding 4.

ADMINISTRATION • FINANCE • PLANNING • PUBLIC WORKS
209 E. KERN STREET • TAFT, CA 93268
661 / 763-1222 • 661 / 765-2480 Fax
www.cityoftaft.org

The Honorable John Sommers
February 23, 2015
Page 2

RECOMMENDATION 1: *“The City should schedule emergency training drills for all employees by June 30, 2015. (Finding 2)”* **Response:** Recommendation 2 is in the planning stage. The City plans to have emergency drills completed by June 30, 2015

Please direct any questions you may have to me at (661) 763-1222.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Craig Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig Jones
City Manager

cc: Dennis Mike Elliott, Foreperson, Kern County Grand Jury

THE CITY OF WASCO

A ROSE OF A CITY

PREFACE:

Roses are a trademark of the City of Wasco (City), as is evidenced by a prominent rose in the City's logo. However, with the severe drought in California and various other problems, the rose industry in Wasco has wilted. The City has agriculture and other industries to keep it going, but are they enough to take up the slack for the drastic drop in the rose industry?

Incorporated in 1965, the City has much more than the rose industry to boast about and is perhaps standing on the edge of rapid growth. Caltrans has spruced up the south entrance to Wasco, and a Walmart Supercenter is scheduled to open in October 2015. Those, plus other factors, add up to Wasco being one of California's great small towns.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Agreement Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury reviewed the City pursuant to California Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

On February 5, 2015, the Committee interviewed the City Manager, Planning Director, and the Public Works Director on a visit to the City Hall. The City Manager gave the Committee a tour of the area, including the Walmart Supercenter site and the Caltrans street project on Highway (Hwy.) 43.

BACKGROUND:

Located in northwestern Kern County, the City is a growing and vibrant community in the heart of one of the most diversified agricultural regions in the world. The City has a population of nearly 26,000. The City has grown to a comfortable size while retaining all the benefits of a small city.

Wasco's economy is based primarily on agriculture production and related industries. Water in the Friant-Kern Canal is used to cultivate thousands of acres of roses, alfalfa, cotton, potatoes, grapes, sweet potatoes, melons, almonds, and a variety of other fruits and vegetables.

In addition to agricultural goods, a number of area-wide manufacturing plants engage in the production of asphalt and concrete pipes, farm tools and equipment, chemicals, nursery crops, and building materials.

With a variety of recreational facilities and growth initiatives supported by local government and business, the City continues a healthy pace of residential and commercial development. Citizens take pride in their community, which is evident in the excellent quality of life offered there.

The City completed a Caltrans project, improving the overall appearance approaching the City limits. Located on Hwy. 43 from Filburn Street to Poso Drive, these improvements give people a better first impression of the City.

Some of the improvements include:

1. Placing a block wall on the east side of the road will minimize traffic noise to residents who live near Hwy. 43.
2. Removing all grass and replacing it with synthetic turf allows the City to save nearly 1,000,000 gallons of water per year, which is in line with the Governor's request to reduce water use by 20%.

The City has one of the first synthetic turf projects in the State that was approved by Caltrans and is used as a demonstration site for numerous entities (cities, schools, private enterprises, etc.).

FACTS:

- A. A new Walmart Supercenter broke ground on February 23, 2015, with a scheduled completion date of October 23, 2015, including a penalty for every day past that date that construction is not completed. The City anticipates that the Walmart Supercenter and other supporting stores will generate 150-300 jobs.
- B. Major employers of the Wasco community include Sunny Gem, Wasco Union Elementary School District, and the Certis USA Chemical Plant.
- C. The City had a total population of 25,545 as of the 2010 US Census, up from 21,263 at the 2000 US Census. Included in the total population is the inmate population at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Wasco State Prison-Reception Center (Prison). As of February 4, 2015, that number is 4,874.
- D. The Prison was designed to hold 2,984 inmates. This represents a 163.3% occupancy rate. The Prison is a reception center, one of seven such centers out of a total of 38 facilities in the State Prison system.
- E. The City Council voted against placing the Charter City measure on the ballot in November 2014. The vote was taken during a Council meeting where many citizens voiced their displeasure about the proposed ballot measure.

- F. Funds from a Pacific Gas and Electric grant were used to replace 252 street lights with energy saving lights.
- G. The Caltrans project was completed in Phase I & II with a construction cost of \$499,994. The synthetic turf portion of the project is estimated to pay for itself in less than six years. The average life of synthetic turf is 12 to 15 years.
- H. The water tower is considered to be an historic landmark.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The Wasco rose industry is in decline. Blackstreet Capital Management purchased the premium rose company, Jackson & Perkins, and its sister company, Park Seed, out of bankruptcy in August 2010. The parent company, J&P Acquisitions Inc., is based in Hodges, South Carolina, but still has operations in Wasco. The rise of big box stores and the collapse of the housing market aided in the downtrend of the rose industry.
- F2. Despite the decline in the rose industry, the City has kept a rose as the primary image in its logo and still celebrates the Festival of Roses on the second Saturday in September.
- F3. The City is in continued talks with the California High Speed Rail Authority (HSR) regarding the alignment of the project through the City and its implications for property owners and businesses. HSR representatives indicate that they will be proactive in the City's desire to relocate farm labor camp housing from the east side of Hwy. 43 (its present location) to the west side of Hwy. 43. This will make the housing closer to schools and commercial centers. The City is concerned about farm labor camp residents crossing the railroad tracks illegally rather than using appropriate rights-of-way. This situation will be improved when the housing is moved.
- F4. The Committee found a clean community with no graffiti or litter and well-kept lawns and gardens.
- F5. Wasco has a traditional downtown with a variety of shops.
- F6. City employees removed the tree grove at the site of the new Walmart Supercenter on Hwy. 46 at Central Avenue. This job was not bid out in order to save city funds.
- F7. The historic water tower needs to be painted.

COMMENTS:

The Committee would like to thank the City Manager and his staff for their quick response to the Committee's questions. The City appears to be a positive place to raise a family.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The City should continue to work with HSR to move the farm labor camp. (Finding 3)
- R2. The City should continue the excellent work of the timely removal of graffiti and litter. (Finding 4)
- R3. The City should repaint the historic water tower as soon as funds become available. (Finding 7)

NOTES:

- The City of Wasco should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
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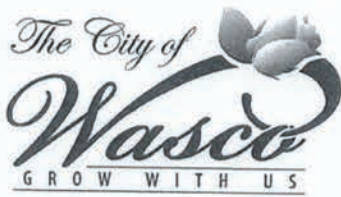
RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**CC: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

DISCLAIMER:

This report was issued by the Grand Jury with the exception of a juror pursuant to PC §916.2(a). This juror was excluded from the writing and approval of this report, all parts of the inquiry/investigation (including interviews), and all deliberations related to this report.



4/20 /2015

Honorable John S. Somers
Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 212
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Judge Somers,

I am pleased to respond to the Grand Jury Final Report prepared by the Cities and Joint Powers Agreement Committee of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury. After receipt of the report, copies were forwarded to the City Council for discussion and review. The City Council has delegated to me the responsibility to respond to the report on their behalf.

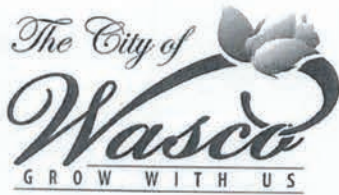
I would like to indicate the Grand Jury members we met with, Mrs. Loretta Avery and Mr. Vaughn Scott Shaw, were inquisitive and seemed to be genuinely interested in the operations of the City. My staff and I were pleased to note they were aware of our progress in many areas. I would like to also advise you and the Grand Jury that the City Council has carefully considered the comments and recommendations of the jurors.

As per Penal Code Section 933.05 (a), the City of Wasco agrees with the **findings** of the Grand Jury.

As per Penal Code Section 933.05 (b), the three **recommendations** contained within the report have been embraced or otherwise implemented, to wit:

R1. The City should continue to work with HSR (High Speed Rail) to move the farm labor camp.

City Response - The City continues to work regularly with HSR in order to address several mitigation efforts, one of which involves the move of the farm labor camp located in the area described as south of 6th Street, west of J Street, north of 9th street, and east of H Street. The City maintains regular communication with HSR in this endeavor, and HSR has pledged several million dollars in an effort to assist in the move.



R2. The City should continue the excellent work of the timely removal of graffiti and litter.

City Response - The City has spent considerable time and effort in maintaining the esthetics desired by its citizenry. City staff has been directed to be vigilant and responsive to observations and reports of graffiti. Additionally, citizens have several options available to report graffiti and litter, including the City website and apps for mobile phones utilizing GPS.

R3. The City should repaint the historic water tower as soon as funds become available.

City Response - City staff have presented several options to the City Council regarding the painting of the historic City of Wasco water tower during fiscal year 2014 - 2015. In 2013 and 2014, estimates were received indicating the repainting would cost between \$100,000 to \$250,000. City staff have presented to local clubs and citizens the idea of repainting the water tower, which has generally been met with positive response. Additionally, a poll was added to the City's website in order to garner further opinion. As of this writing, 75% of the citizens polled indicate they support the repainting. As the water tower is non-functioning, it does not provide a service to the City other than that of being a landmark and a historic asset. City staff will present to the City Council for fiscal year 2015- 2016 a request to fund the repainting of the water tower.

If you should have any questions regarding this response or any components of the Grand Jury Report, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

J. Paul Paris
City Manager

CC: Foreperson
Kern County Grand Jury
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 600
Bakersfield, CA 93301

THE CITY OF McFARLAND THE TOWN BEHIND THE MOVIE

PREFACE:

Until now, “McFarland” has evoked images of a mid-1980s “cancer cluster” scare that primarily affected children, the rise of gang violence during the same time period¹, and scenes of immigrant workers toiling in the fields under a blazing sun – all issues covered by both local and national news.

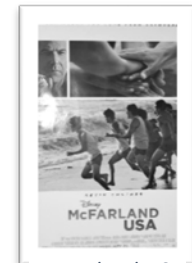


City of McFarland Logo

Poverty, gang problems, even water that supposedly caused cancer – one would hardly think a Disney movie would be set in such a town. Yet that is exactly what happened. McFarland is the setting for the Disney movie, *McFarland USA*, which was released in February 2015, the year of this report. The movie tells the story of a championship cross-country team set against the backdrop of a largely agricultural, Hispanic community that has struggled with its overall image.

After the release of the movie, instead of thinking of McFarland as portrayed by the news, people might begin to think of young Latino runners rising above overwhelming challenges to win numerous consecutive cross country championships.

Neither the movie version nor the news version is complete or even wholly accurate. Just a few months after the release of *McFarland USA*, the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) set out to discover the true nature of the City of McFarland (City).



McFarland USA
Movie Poster

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Committee (Committee) of the Grand Jury reviewed the City pursuant to California Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

On May 26, 2015, the Committee interviewed McFarland’s City Manager, Chief of Police, and Community Development Director. The Committee was given a copy of the City’s annual budget report. After the interview, the Committee toured the City.

BACKGROUND AND FACTS:

One’s initial impression of McFarland is of a typical, sleepy agricultural town in California’s San Joaquin Valley. Yet just below the surface boils a gathering force of progressive plans aimed at this burgeoning City’s future.

McFarland's beginning wasn't particularly auspicious. It began as a homesteaded area in the 1860's and grew into an area known as Hunt's Siding. There was no town there at that time, just 50 families and a number of livestock pens². Then in 1907, James B. McFarland purchased 160 acres of unimproved land on the present site of the City of McFarland and, with W.F. Laird, began to lay out and build a community in December of that year³. In 1908, McFarland was founded.



J.B. McFarland was the first in the area to irrigate crops with a pumping system and held an interest in a dairy farm southwest of town. He established a lumber mill in the Greenhorn mountain range, produced award-winning butter out of the McFarland creamery, and manufactured ice for local consumption. He raised prize Percheron Norman horses and sat on the board of directors of the First National Bank of McFarland. Mr. McFarland later went on to serve as a member of the Kern County Board of Supervisors and served on the Grand Jury.

By 1914, the City had grown to a population of 300. In 1957, the City was officially incorporated. Today, according to the City Manager, McFarland's population is 14,037.

FINDINGS:

F1. The City has completed the installation of solar panels at the wastewater facility as recommended by a previous Kern County Grand Jury⁴.

F2. The City's website needs to be updated.

F3. The City does not currently have a Mission Statement.

F4. During the filming of the movie, *McFarland USA*, Disney built a children's playground for the community in one day with 300 volunteers – 150 from Disney and 150 from the community.



F5. McFarland is a city of superlatives. The Police Department won the "Best Car of the West" in 2010 for state of the art equipment, weaponry, and electronics, beating out major cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco. McFarland is one of the few California cities that have electric police motorcycles. McFarland High School's athletic teams have won numerous, consecutive cross country championships and continues to win state and national events. The City's high school Division VI baseball team took 1st place this year⁴.



F6. According to the Chief of Police, the Police Department is working with local gangs by actively talking with them. "We let them know we're here and we're not going anywhere."

F7. Relations continue to improve with community outreach such as “Cops with Candy” at Halloween, an Easter egg hunt with local police, a Neighborhood Watch program, and similar events and programs. “We want to let them know we have transparency,” stated the City Manager.

F8. The City has an 1800 acre “General Plan Amendment” that includes redoing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters on East Sherwood Avenue and also includes zoning for residential, industrial, and commercial construction. A twelve-acre park is planned on East Sherwood Avenue.



F9. The City has a full-time grant writer.

F10. The City is planning to create an educational center that could provide the community access to tutoring, job training, accredited college classes, and possibly a library.

F11. The biggest challenges facing McFarland are: 1) enough funding to meet the City’s vision for itself, 2) economic development, and 3) expanded health services for the community.

F12. At the time of this report, \$20-\$30 million in City-funded construction projects were in progress, with many more planned.



City-Funded Street Development

COMMENTS:

The Committee found the City of McFarland to be in the hands of an enthusiastic, forward-looking City Government that has far-reaching plans for improvement of the City. The Committee would like to thank the City Manager, Chief of Police, and Community Development Director for their generous time, information, and for an informative, eye-opening tour of the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The City should:

- R1. Update the City website:
 - a. Include a photo of the Police Chief and all department heads.
 - b. Identify names of anyone pictured on the website.
 - c. Expand on the history of McFarland.(Finding 2)
- R2. Create a Mission Statement for the City. (Finding 3)

- R3. Continue to encourage improvement of health services in the City, such as forming McFarland's own hospital district. (Finding 11)

NOTES:

- The City of McFarland should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at www.co.kern.kern.ca.us/grandjury.
- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website www.co.kern.ca.us/grandjury.

RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS

**PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**CC: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

DISCLAIMER:

This report was issued by the Grand Jury with the exception of a juror pursuant to PC §916.2(a). The juror recused her/himself from all parts of the inquiry/investigation, including interviews, deliberations, and the writing and approval of this report.

ENDNOTES:

¹ <http://www.bakersfield.com/News/2007/05/13/Gang-siege-terrorizes-McFarland-community.html>

² <http://www.kernsheriff.com/fieldops/substations/mcfarland/Pages/default.aspx>

³ Morgan, Wallace M. *History of Kern County, California*. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1914.

<http://mediasvc.ancestry.com/v2/image/namespaces/60623/media/f5b48aa2-17ec-4398-b319-91241b082ee7.jpg?client=Boards>

⁴ [Kern County Grand Jury 2013-2014 Final Reports](#), Cities and Joint Powers Committee, City of McFarland



401 W. Kern Avenue
McFarland, CA 93250
661-792-3091 Office
661-792-3093 Fax

Response to the Grand Jury Report Letter Dated February 8, 2016
Attn: Honorable John Somers, Presiding Judge.

Date: February 12, 2016

RE: Responses.

My apologies to the Grand Jury for not responding. It was an oversight.

Recommendations:

R1. Update the City Website:

- A. Include a photo of the Police Chief and all department heads.
- B. Identify names of anyone pictured on the website.
- C. Expand on history of McFarland.

Response to R1:

The City of McFarland has completed a brand new website that has photos of all Department Heads and a description of their departments and duties. The City of McFarland continues to work and improve its website. Although the website is limited on the ability to post description of the pictures, the city is working with the website designer improve that function. The City's history page has been changed and updated. We continue to add more information about the city as staff obtains the history from long-term residents.

R2. Create a Mission Statement for the City.

Response to R2:

The City of McFarland set up a meeting with other agencies and citizens to formulate the City's Mission Statement. After several meetings, the group formulated the City's Mission Statement

"Advance a model of professionalism that ensures the delivery of high quality products and services, continuously improves efficiency and removes barriers for future development."

The Mission Statement can be located on our website under "Our Community" page.

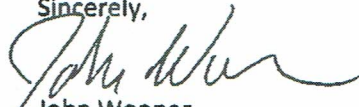
R3. Continue to encourage improvement of health services in the City, such as forming McFarland's own hospital district.

Response to R3:

The City of McFarland is diligently working with health providers to come to McFarland. This is ongoing project and the City will continue to work on bringing quality health care to the City of McFarland.

Should you have any questions please call me at 661-792-3091 or email at jwooner@mcfarlandcity.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Wooner", written in a cursive style.

John Wooner
City Manager
City of McFarland

CITY OF RIDGECREST

THE KEY TO NEW HORIZONS

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Cities and Joint Powers Agreement Committee (Committee) of the 2014-2015 Kern County Grand Jury visited the City of Ridgecrest (City) on April 20, 2015, to inquire into the operation and management of the City pursuant to California Penal Code §925a.

PROCESS:

The Committee interviewed the City Manager in City Hall at 100 West California Avenue, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. The Committee also researched several public information websites.

BACKGROUND AND/OR FACTS:

The City is surrounded by four mountain ranges – the Sierra Nevada on the west, the Cosos on the north, the Argus Range on the east, and the El Paso Mountains on the south. The three nearest major urban centers are the Lancaster/Palmdale area (approximately 82 miles away) and the Bakersfield and San Bernardino areas, which are each about 116 miles away.

Originally, the City was known as Crumville. In the early 1910's, the brothers Robert and James Crum settled in the area and ran a dairy that produced products for the local mining community. By late 1942, a small community developed around the dairy. The City's first post office opened that same year.

In 1941, the City received its official name by a community vote. The community originally wanted its name to be "Sierra View", but this was overturned by the postal authorities because there were too many "Sierras" in California. The community voted for a new name suggested by Ada Thompson – "Ridgecrest" – which won by a single vote over the name "Gilmore".

The City was incorporated in 1963 as a general law city and operates under a Manager/Council form of government. The City Council representatives are elected through citywide elections for four-year terms. The City Manager is the administrative head of the City government under the direction and oversight of the City Council.

When looking for a remote test site for weapons development, the United States Navy found the high desert area of Ridgecrest to be ideal. In 1943, the Naval Ordnance Testing Station (NOTS) was established at the Inyokern Airport (originally named Harvey Field). Following the end of World War II, Harvey Field was deactivated and NOTS aviation operations were transferred to the new Armitage Field at China Lake. Through the

following decades, the City was highly impacted by the changes in NOTS, later China Lake Naval Weapons Center. Today, it is known as the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake. During World War II, components of the first atomic bombs were developed and manufactured on the base. The Sidewinder air-to-air missile and the Harpoon anti-ship missile were both developed at the base.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The City has a well-educated populace with a high percentage of people who hold advanced graduate degrees.
- F2. The City is mostly graffiti free with three graffiti patrol employees and approximately 50 volunteers.
- F3. NAWS China Lake makes the City a “Company Town” and the largest employer in the area as illustrated in Table 2-2.
- F4. The population of the City is over 27,000 according to the 2010 US Census.
- F5. The Ridgecrest area is served by the Sierra Sands Unified School District (District) which consists of two high schools, two middle schools, five elementary schools, and one continuation school. Several District facilities are located on the NAWS China Lake installation. The District also serves Inyokern and Johannesburg, each with one elementary school.
- F6. Cerro Coso Community College was established in 1973 as a separate college within the Kern Community College District. Cerro Coso has five instructional sites (Eastern Sierra Center Bishop, Eastern Sierra Center Mammoth, Indian Wells Valley, Kern River Valley, and South Kern) which together form the largest geographical service area (18,000 square miles) of any community college in California. Together these locations serve a population of approximately 85,000. The Cerro Coso Community College has an enrollment of about 24,000 students throughout its five locations.

Table 2-2. Top Ten Employers of the City of Ridgecrest

Employer	Type of Business	Number of Employees
Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, and Tenant Commands	Defense Research & Development	Civilian: 3,388 Contractor: 2,434 Military: 767
Seales Valley Minerals	Mining of Soda Ash Products	625
Sierra Sands Unified School District	Education	620
Ridgecrest Regional Hospital	Acute-Care Hospital	340
Wyle Laboratories	Defense Contractor	280
AltaOne Federal Credit Union	Credit Union	215
SA-Tech (Systems Applications & Technologies)	Defense Contractor	187
Wal-Mart	Discount Department Store	185
Cerro Coso Community College	Education	175
Desert Area Resources and Training	Training and Social Service	142

Source: <http://ci.ridgecrest.ca.us>, 2008
China Lake data provided by installation, September 2007

F7. The City has a number of cultural attractions:

Museums: Desert Tortoise Natural Area
Historic Rand Mining District
Maturango Museum
Naval Museum of Armament and Technology

Parks: Freedom Park
Helmer's Park
James M. Pearson Memorial Park
Kerr McGee Community Center
Kerr McGee Youth Sports Complex
Leroy Jackson Park Sports Complex
Moyer Park
Ridgecrest Skate Park
Sgt. John Pinney Memorial Pool
Upjohn Park

COMMENT:

The Committee would like to thank the City Manager for his cooperation in the gathering of information about the City.

RECOMMENDATION:

R1. As the City of Ridgecrest is predominately a "Company Town" with one major employer, the City should seek to develop a broader employer base.
(Finding 3)

NOTES:

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RESPONSE REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS

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KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
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BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

**CC: FOREPERSON
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**



CITY OF RIDGECREST

Telephone 760 499-5004
100 West California Avenue, Ridgecrest, California 93555-4054

July 22, 2015

RECEIVED

Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 212
Bakersfield, California 93301

JUL 30 2015

By 

Subject: Response to the Findings and Recommendation of the City of Ridgecrest 2014-15 Grand Jury Report

Honorable Presiding Judge:

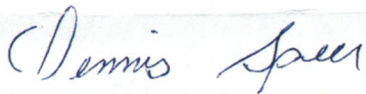
The purpose of this letter is to respond to the referenced sections of the subject report.

After reviewing the report, the City generally agrees with the findings and the recommendation. However, with respect to the recommendation, the City offers the following comments:

- The City is actively engaged in economic diversification efforts.
- The City utilizes Retail and Industrial Development consultants for this purpose.
- The City has invested Tax Allocation Bonds in several companies providing economic diversity.
- The City is investing in the necessary infrastructure to attract new businesses.
- The City is enlisting members of the community to participate in economic development committees.

The City thanks the Grand Jury for its efforts in preparing the subject report.

The City extends its appreciation to the Grand Jury for the opportunity to respond to the report.



Dennis Speer
City Manager

CC: Foreperson
Kern County Grand Jury
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 600
Bakersfield, California 93301