

PLACER COUNTY GRAND JURY

RESPONSES TO THE 2022-2023 FINAL REPORT



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 30, 2023



PLACER COUNTY GRAND JURY

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October 30, 2023

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge, Superior Court
County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

The Honorable Trisha Hirashima
Advising Judge, Superior Court
County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Subject: Responses to the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury Final Report

Dear Judge Pineschi, Judge Hirashima, and Citizens of Placer County:

The current Placer County Grand Jury has received, reviewed, and assembled the responses to the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury Final Report which was published in June 2023.

The final report contained ten individual reports. Six of the reports did not contain any recommendations from the Placer County Grand Jury and therefore no responses were legally required. Those reports are not included in this report.

This report contains responses received by the statutory deadline of October 1, 2023. One legally required response from the City of Colfax was not received. The Town of Loomis did submit a response, but it was received on October 18, 2023, after the statutory deadline. While some responses may not adhere to the legal requirements of California Penal Code § 933.05, they are published as received by the current Placer County Grand Jury. The Grand Jury does not comment on the responses received.

This report is being published in electronic form and will be available on the Placer County Superior Court's website at: [Grand Jury Reports for 2022-2023 | Placer County Superior Court \(ca.gov\)](https://www.placercountyca.gov/grand-jury-reports-for-2022-2023). Hard copies are available by request only. To obtain a hard copy please contact the Placer County Grand Jury at info@placergrandjury.org. Please include your name, title, agency name, department name, and a complete mailing address.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ferguson, Foreperson
2023-2024 Placer County Grand Jury

cc: The Honorable Suzanne Gazzaniga

INTRODUCTION

On June 27, 2023, the Placer County Grand Jury released its Final Report for 2022-2023 term. A copy of the report can be found on the superior court's website at: [Grand Jury Reports for 2022-2023 | Placer County Superior Court \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov/grand-jury-reports).

Penal Code § 933.05 spells out the State law regarding responses to the Grand Jury including the timeframe in which a recommendation will be implemented and if the respondent agrees with the findings.

Government offices, agencies, and local entities cited in the Final Report for a response are required to respond to the Final Report within 60 days (elected officials who head county agencies) or 90 days (governing bodies of public agencies).

CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE § 933.05

(Emphasis added)

- (a) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Penal Code § 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
- (1) The respondent agrees with the finding.
 - (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding; in which case **the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefore.**
- (b) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Penal Code § 933, as to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
 - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, **with a timeframe for implementation.**
 - (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, **with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe** for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. **This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.**
 - (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, **with an explanation, therefore.**
- (c) However, if a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the board of supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the board of supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision-making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.
- (d) A grand jury may request a subject person or entity to come before the grand jury for the purpose of reading and discussing the findings of the grand jury report that relates to that person or entity in order to verify the accuracy of the findings prior to their release.
- (e) During an investigation, the grand jury shall meet with the subject of that investigation regarding the investigation, unless the court, either on its own determination or upon request of the foreperson of the grand jury, determines that such a meeting would be detrimental.
- (f) A grand jury shall provide to the affected agency a copy of the portion of the grand jury report relating to that person or entity two working days prior to its public release and after the approval of the presiding judge. No officer, agency, department, or governing body of a public agency shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.



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A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office

The Placer County Veterans Service Office presented an overview of their services to the Placer County Grand Jury. As a result, the grand jury decided to further investigate the Veterans Service Office and its operations. During its investigation, the Placer County Grand Jury found the Veterans Service Office performs much needed services for veterans, regardless of county or state of residency.

The Veterans Service Office is an integral part of the county's Department of Health and Human Services. The veteran population in Placer County currently stands at 24,986, ranking fifteenth among the fifty-eight counties in the state. This office aids veterans in receiving benefits by confirming veteran status, assisting with filing compensation claims, and providing guidance with pension and tuition information for family members. The lack of accredited staff, however, has resulted in a loss of funding from the CalVet County Subvention Program.

Despite the office having a limited staff and ruled by federal regulations required in filing an application, the veterans service representatives strive to process all claims in a timely manner. The grand jury found the Veterans Service Office staff to be dedicated to their job and to the veteran's seeking assistance.

Findings

The grand jury found that:

- F1:** The Veterans Service Office is underfunded.
- F2:** The Veterans Service Office does not have adequate accredited veteran service representatives to answer phones and process approved claims in a timely manner to receive subvention funds.
- F3:** There are opportunities to partner with other programs in the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services to further support veterans.
- F4:** The Veterans Service Office's social media presence is insufficient in providing online information and promotion of their services.
- F5:** The Veterans Service Office is working to increase their outreach through the Veterans Advisory Council.
- F6:** There are benefits available to veterans and their families of which they may not be aware.
- F7:** The Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act broadens the benefits and services for which veterans may be eligible.
- F8:** There has been a high turnover of the County Veteran Service Officer over the past five years.
- F9:** The grand jury found the Veterans Service Office staff to be dedicated to their job

and to the veteran's seeking assistance.

F10: Depending on the complexity of the claim, it can take an accredited staff member up to four hours to compile required documentation and manually input into VetPro.

Recommendations

The grand jury recommends that:

- R1:** The Veterans Service Office budget be increased dramatically to reflect the importance of our veterans and their service to our country by January 1, 2024.
- R2:** Additional accredited Veterans Service Office positions be added to process claims and answer phones by January 1, 2024.
- R3:** The Placer County Department of Health and Human Services will identify opportunities to cross train CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and Veterans Service programs by December 1, 2023.
- R4:** The Veterans Service Office will work with the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services to develop and implement a social media presence by January 1, 2024.
- R5:** The Veterans Service Office continue with the Veterans Advisory Council to increase outreach among veterans.

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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BONNIE GORE
District 1
SHANTI LANDON
District 2
JIM HOLMES
District 3
SUZANNE JONES
District 4
CINDY GUSTAFSON
District 5



September 26, 2023

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

RECEIVED

OCT 02 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

Re: Board of Supervisors Response – A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office

Dear Foreperson and Members of the Grand Jury:

After careful review of the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, the Placer County Board of Supervisors ("Board") is pleased to submit the following responses to the *FY 2022-23 Grand Jury Final Report – A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office*.

FINDINGS

The Board agrees with the findings F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10.

The Board partially disagrees with the findings F1, F2.

Finding No. 1: The Veterans Service Office is underfunded.

The Board partially disagrees with this finding. While the County would absolutely benefit from additional funding for the Veterans Service Office (VSO), there are some options already in place that could be, or are being, expanded upon that could lessen the need for additional General Fund. The VSO is a component of the Human Services division in HHS, and as such, benefits from the extensive resources that Human Services can provide. These include, but are not limited to:

- staffing, as the VSO utilizes some Human Services staff, particularly when there are vacancies;
- equipment and facilities can be shared, such as vehicles, as well as office spaces in Auburn and at Camelian Bay that are provided wholly by Human Services;
- leadership, as the Veterans Services Officer is a member of the Human Services management team and receives input, assistance, and counsel from the directors and managers there.

It was noted in the Grand Jury report that because the VSO budget is so restrictive, subvention funding is critical to the VSO and its operations. This is true in the fact that the work that program staff do directly impacts the funding it receives. With the potential investment of additional General Funds, and additional staff, it is possible that the VSO could increase subvention funds and thus increase the VSO budget, eventually negating the need for that additional General Fund. Some activities of the VSO do not directly result in an increase in subvention funding. Therefore, any additional County funds could expand the VSO's reach in these areas.

September 26, 2023
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603
Re: A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Office

While additional funding is likely to raise the profile of the VSO and increase the program's ability to serve veterans, HHS reports that they have put steps into place following the Grand Jury's report that have already bolstered the office's ability to serve the veteran community.

Finding No. 2: The Veterans Service Office does not have adequate accredited veteran service representatives to answer phones and process approved claims in a timely manner to receive subvention funds.

The Board partially disagrees with this finding. When the Grand Jury's FY 2022-23 investigation into the VSO began, the VSO was in fact short on accredited staff. A promotion created a domino effect wherein two claims representative positions were then left vacant. Since then, both of those positions have been filled; both staff members have gained accreditation; and the office now has four accredited claims representatives. Additionally, the new Veterans Services Officer will be accredited in August of 2023. Therefore, in September 2023, the VSO should have sufficient accredited staff.

Finding No. 4: The Veterans Service Office's social media presence is insufficient in providing online information and promotion of their services.

The Board agrees with this finding. The VSO should be more visible in the community and should work to ensure most of the local veterans are aware of our services. Placer County VSO has made a commitment to increase awareness through outreach and social media presence and have put steps in place to bolster the office's ability to serve the veteran community.

Finding No. 6: There are benefits available to veterans and their families of which they may not be aware.

The Board agrees with this finding. There are many more veterans in Placer County than are currently being serviced by Placer County VSO. It is likely that many veterans are unaware of the benefits that may be available to them; however, as mentioned above, Placer County VSO has made a commitment to increase awareness through outreach and social media.

Finding No. 9: The grand jury found the Veterans Service Office staff to be dedicated to their job and to the veterans seeking assistance.

The Board agrees wholly with this finding. The Placer County VSO staff exhibit dedication, passion, and commitment to their work serving Placer County's veteran community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The Veterans Service Office budget be increased dramatically to reflect the importance of our veterans and their service to our country by January 1, 2024.

Recommendation 1 will not be implemented in the proposed timetable as it is not reasonable due to fiscal year budget timelines.

Providing adequate services to our Veterans remains a priority and therefore analysis will be conducted for potential additional funding (or positions) requests to be included in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Health and Human Services budget. Analysis will include potential grant opportunities, braiding of funds from other Human Services programs, ways to increase subvention funding, as well as identification of any available general funds.

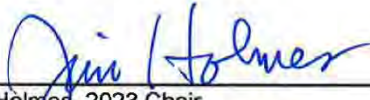
R2. Additional accredited Veterans Service Office positions be added to process claims and answer phones by January 1, 2024.

Recommendation 2 has already been implemented.

Three additional staff members have become accredited since the Grand Jury began work on the report. As mentioned above, further analysis will also occur to help determine which, if any, additional positions are needed.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER



Jim Holmes, 2023 Chair
Placer County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Karin Schwab, Placer County Counsel



August 25, 2023
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

RECEIVED

SEP 01 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

Re: A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office

Dear Foreperson and Members of the Grand Jury,

After careful review of the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, I am pleased to submit the following responses to the *Grand Jury Final Report – A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office*.

FINDINGS

I agree with finding F3-F10.

I disagree partially with the following findings: F1-F2.

Finding No. 1: The Veterans Service Office is underfunded.

I disagree partially with this finding.

The Grand Jury's finding that the Veterans Service Office (VSO) is one worthy of additional investment is a welcome one that acknowledges the hard work of our dedicated staff and the benefit to our community in having its veterans served at the highest level. While HHS would of course embrace any additional funding for the VSO, there are some options already in place that could be, or are being, expanded upon that could lessen the need for additional funds, at least from the County General Fund.

In the Grand Jury's report, it was noted that the VSO is the lowest funded division of HHS. In fact, the VSO is not considered a division but a component of the Human Services division, and as such, it benefits from the extensive resources that Human Services can provide. These include, but are not limited to:

- staffing, as the VSO utilizes some Human Services staff, particularly when there are vacancies;
- shared equipment and facilities can be shared, such as vehicles, as well as office spaces in Auburn and at Carnelian Bay that are provided wholly by Human Services;
- and leadership, as the Veterans Services Officer is a member of the Human Services management team and receives input, assistance, and counsel from the directors and managers there.

The report notes: "Because of such a restrictive budget, subvention funding is critical to the VSO and its operations." This is true, and the work that the program's staff does directly impacts the funding it receives. With the potential investment of additional General Funds, and additional staff, it is likely that the VSO could increase subvention funds and thus increase the VSO budget, eventually negating the need for that additional General Fund investment.



Grand Jury Response
A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office
Page 2

Some activities of the VSO, such as outreach, connecting veterans with resources, addressing veteran homelessness, and representing the County at important veteran events, do not directly result in an increase in subvention funding. Therefore, any additional County funds could expand the VSO's reach in these areas.

Moreover, a survey of neighboring counties indicates that most counties spend more on their Veterans Services Officer salary when compared with that county's number of veterans. Placer County has a relatively large number of veterans and spends less dollars per vet on the Veteran Services Officer than does most of the neighboring counties.

While additional funding is likely to raise the profile of the Veterans Service Office and increase the program's ability to serve veterans, actions and steps put into place since the Grand Jury's work on this report began have already bolstered the office's ability to serve the veteran community.

Finding No. 2: The Veterans Service Office does not have adequate accredited veteran service representatives to answer phones and process approved claims in a timely manner to receive subvention funds.

I disagree partly with this finding.

At the start of the Grand Jury's investigation, the Veteran Service Office was indeed short on accredited staff. An Eligibility Supervisor position had recently been provided to the program, and a resulting promotion created a domino effect wherein two claims representative positions were left vacant. Since then, both of those positions have been filled; both staff members have gained accreditation; and the office now has four accredited claims representatives. Additionally, the new Veterans Services Officer will be accredited this month. Therefore, we have sufficient accredited staff presently.

Finding No. 3: There are opportunities to partner with other programs in the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services to further support veterans.

I agree wholly with this finding.

The Placer County Veterans Service Office is connected with a number of veteran organizations throughout the county and region, primarily through the Veterans Services Officer's involvement with the Veterans Advisory Council. The VSO also connects with Human Services and HHS staff to better connect vets to services they may benefit from, ranging from food benefits to mental health, and is connected to the Department of Veteran Affairs local offices.

Finding No. 4: The Veterans Service Office's social media presence is insufficient in providing online information and promotion of their services.

I agree with this finding.

There is a need for the Veterans Service Office to be more visible in the community and for local veterans to be more aware of our services, and we believe social media has a role in making that happen. While the county has shared general information about the VSO on its many channels, we are making efforts to increase and deepen the VSO's social media profile.

Grand Jury Response
A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office
Page 3

Finding No. 5: The Veterans Service Office is working to increase their outreach through the Veterans Advisory Council.

I agree wholly with this finding.

The Veterans Services Officer is intricately involved with the Veterans Advisory Council, attending and participating in all meetings and regularly communicating with its members on veterans issues.

Finding No. 6: There are benefits available to veterans and their families of which they may not be aware.

I agree wholly with this finding.

There are many more veterans in Placer County than are serviced by our office, and likely many of these are unaware of what benefits may be available to them. It is the VSO's goal to increase awareness through outreach and social media presence.

Finding No. 7: The Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act broadens the benefits and services for which veterans may be eligible.

I agree wholly with this finding.

Many veterans that have in the past applied for benefits under prior regulations and deemed ineligible may now be eligible under new federal rules. It is important for the VSO to get this message out to the veteran community.

Finding No. 8: There has been a high turnover of the County Veteran Service Officer over the past five years.

I agree with this finding.

Five veterans have filled the role of Veteran Services Officer in Placer County in approximately the past five years. Some of these were prior to the Veterans Service Office becoming part of Human Services, which as stated previously, helped augment the VSO with additional resources. The present Veterans Service Officer has indicated his intention for a long career with Placer.

Finding No. 9: The grand jury found the Veterans Service Office staff to be dedicated to their job and to the veterans seeking assistance.

I agree wholly with this finding.

Our VSO staff exhibit professionalism, dedication, and commitment to their work serving Placer County's veteran community.

Finding No. 10: Depending on the complexity of the claim, it can take an accredited staff member up to four hours to compile required documentation and manually input into VetPro.

I agree wholly with this finding.

Filing claims with the Department of Veteran Affairs is complicated, intricate and often painstaking work. The success of a claim is largely dependent on the knowledge, training and devotion of the claims representatives in our office.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The Veterans Service Office budget be increased dramatically to reflect the importance of our veterans and their service to our country by January 1, 2024.

Recommendation 1 will not be implemented in the proposed timetable as it is not reasonable due to actual fiscal year budget timelines. However, analysis will be conducted for potential additional funding to potentially be included in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget. Analysis will include potential grant opportunities, braiding of funds from other Human Services programs, additional subvention funding, and General Fund allocations.

Moreover, Placer County expends fewer dollars per veteran on the Veteran Services Officer than the majority of neighboring counties. Further analysis of spending both in Placer County and other counties is required for an accurate picture.

All Department budgets are subject to CEO review and Board of Supervisors' approval.

R2. Additional accredited Veterans Service Office positions be added to process claims and answer phones by January 1, 2024.

Recommendation 2 has already been implemented as three additional staff have become accredited since the Grand Jury began work on the report. Further analysis will also occur to help determine which, if any, additional positions are needed. Initial analysis of neighboring VSOs indicate that many have a higher number of full-time staff allocations than Placer County, and that Placer County allocates less staff per veteran in the county when compared to other counties' veteran populations.

R3. The Placer County Department of Health and Human Services will identify opportunities to cross train CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and Veterans Service programs by December 1, 2023.

Recommendation 3 has already begun to be implemented. Veteran Service staff have begun training other Human Services staff in making referrals to the VSO to improve veteran awareness of the services and benefits available to them through the VSO. Similarly, VSO staff are being trained on Human Service programs, such as CalFresh, Medi-Cal and housing options through the Housing Authority. The Veteran Service Office will conduct outreach to other HHS divisions, and the Human Services Outreach team will be further trained on VSO services to present these when working with various community partners. These efforts will be ongoing but will all be in place by no later than December 1, 2023.

R4. The Veterans Service Office will work with the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services to develop and implement a social media presence by January 1, 2024.

Recommendation 4 has presently been implemented, and will be a major component of our communication, education and information sharing strategy moving forward. The Veteran Service Officer is working extensively with HHS Public Information Officer on implementing a strategy to inform the veteran community, as well as all Placer County residents, about the services and benefits available to them through the VSO. Moreover, as the community often misunderstands the roles and duties of the VSO vis-à-vis the Department of Veteran Affairs, and confuses the two, effort will be made to differentiate and showcase the VSO as a Placer County program and office.

Grand Jury Response
A Closer Look at Placer County Veterans Service Office
Page 5

R5¹. The Veterans Service Office continue with the Veterans Advisory Council to increase outreach among veterans

Recommendation 1 has already been implemented. The connection between the VSO and Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) is a necessary and required relationship written into Placer County Code. Presently, the Veterans Service Officer attends and participates in VAC meetings monthly. Moreover, he regularly communicates with VAC members through written, telephone and face-to-face contact to address issues veterans are experience, both those affecting all vets, and those specific to individuals.

Sincerely,



Dr. Robert Oldham, Director

Placer County Health and Human Services

Cc: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Karin Schwab, Placer County Counsel

¹ Penal Code Section 933(c) limits application to responses to the Board of Supervisors, elected county officers and agency heads. Accordingly, this response incorporates the requested responses to both HHS Division Director for Human Services and the Veteran's Services Officer, both of whom were separately requested to provide responses. Neither are elected county officers nor agency heads and report to the HHS Director. The Grand Jury report did not request a response for Recommendation Number 5 to the Director of Health and Human Services, but it did request a response to Recommendation Number 5 to the Veterans Service Officer. This response includes a response to Recommendation Number 5 so that the Department could respond to it.

South Placer Fire District Fiscal Challenges and Station Closures

South Placer Fire District was formed in 1952 as a special district. Special districts are a form of local government created by a community to meet a specific need. Inadequate tax bases and competing demands for existing taxes can make it hard for cities and counties to provide services for citizens. When landowners want new services or higher levels of existing services, they can form their own district to pay for and administer them.

The South Placer Fire District has reported ongoing financial difficulties over the past several years, due in part to its operational costs increasing faster than its sources of funding. Increased administrative and operational costs, diminished revenue streams, and changing service provision demands have required Division 2 of the South Placer Fire District to make significant changes to maintain their level of community service. These challenges, however, are not unique to South Placer Fire District, as they are being reported throughout the State of California. Financial shortfalls within established revenue collections are requiring fire districts to become more creative in manpower distribution, facility usage, and asset allocations. In many instances, potential reorganization of districts is a necessary, viable solution, allowing for increased overall efficiency.

Findings

The grand jury found that:

- F1:** South Placer Fire District existing revenue streams are insufficient for the district to maintain their current level of operations.
- F2:** South Placer Fire District Division 2 parcel assessment is insufficient for the division to maintain their current level of operations.
- F3:** South Placer Fire District constituents seem unaware of the district's performance and operating needs.
- F4:** Budget shortfalls will result in additional justification for reorganization of South Placer Fire District.

Recommendations

The grand jury recommends that:

- R1:** South Placer Fire District explore other revenue resources by September 20, 2023, to maintain their current level of operations.
- R2:** South Placer Fire District Division 2 continue efforts to reintroduce a special assessment ballot measure, that will also adjust for inflation, by November 30, 2023.
- R3:** South Placer Fire District increase constituents' awareness of district performance and operating costs by proactively advising the public through town hall meetings, newsletters, social media, email, and direct mail before the next special election date by November 30, 2023.
- R4:** South Placer Fire District and the Local Agency Formation Commission reorganize and consolidate administrative and/or operational functions with neighboring districts by December 31, 2023.



South Placer Fire District

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Granite Bay, California 95746
Ph (916) 791-7059 Fax (916) 791-2199
www.southplacerfire.org

Board of Directors

Chris Gibson DC
Gregory Grenfell
Terri Ryland
Tracy Randall
Michael Johnson
Ken Musso
Dan Bajtas
Fire Chief
Mark Duerr

Providing Exceptional Service to Our Community

September 22, 2023

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B AVE
Auburn, CA 95603

RECEIVED

SEP 25 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

RE: South Placer Fire District Fiscal Challenges and Station Closures

After carefully reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, we are pleased to submit the following responses to the Grand Jury's final report – South Placer Fire District, Fiscal Challenges, and Station Closures.

Findings

We agree with Findings F2 and F3.

We disagree wholly or partially with Findings F1 and F4.

F1. When the Grand Jury report was published, the District had already made significant changes, listed below, due to the failed benefit assessment. If the question in Finding One is based on the time of the benefit assessment process or pre-operational changes of September 2022, then the District agrees with the Finding. However, if, based on the time of publication, the District disagrees with the Finding based on the following:

After the District Benefit Assessment failed to gain majority support in July 2022, the District acted swiftly to address the budget imbalance. Revenues needed to be increased to maintain the current level of service in July 2022, which was the main point of the benefits assessment. In September 2022, the District reorganized its operations to deliver a service commensurate with its revenue. The necessary changes included:

- Closure of Station 19 at 7070 Auburn Folsom Road.
- Relocate District staff from an open station (Station 15 at 4650 East Roseville Parkway) to a formerly closed station (Station 16 at 5300 Olive Ranch Road) for better response times.
- Closure of a Truck company – an apparatus specializing in search and rescue, ventilation, and auto extrication because this equipment lacks sufficient

- firefighting capabilities for delivering water at a fire. District resources are spread too far to leave an area without fire suppression capabilities.
- Reduction in staff by six full-time equivalent positions through attrition.
 - These six positions were the third firefighter on the engine companies at Station 15 (now 16) and Station 20.

It is the District's position that these changes were necessary to provide a service level consistent with revenues, and in making these changes, the District will be in a more solid financial position in the future.

F4. Further reorganization within the District is not out of the question; however, the Board and the District have worked diligently to manage and reduce expenses to mitigate the risks associated with fluctuating revenues and ever-increasing costs. The District has taken aggressive steps to increase its reserves to address possible downturns in revenue, and it has renegotiated labor contracts to decrease certain expenses. For instance, the new labor contracts now place the post-employment health care (OPEB) responsibility on the employee groups that benefit, reducing the District's overall OPEB liabilities by nearly \$300,000 per year.

These efforts enabled the District to position itself for long-term stability but only within its new service delivery model. Future reorganizations may still be required, and to prepare for this possibility, the District has partnered with LAFCO in 2023 to commission an independent third party to assess its operations and provide a Master Plan. This plan will provide much-needed data and insight into the District's financial position current operational deployment, and recommend future changes based on call volume, density, travel time, severity, and available resources.

Recommendations

Recommendations numbered R1 and R3 have been implemented.

R1: The Board established a committee to explore all possible revenue sources. The committee has regularly met with Board members, staff, labor, and the public to identify opportunities for increasing District revenue. To address the shortage of staff, the District applied for a FEMA Grant known as SAFER, which is a short-term solution. Additionally, a regional grant was submitted to replace outdated radio equipment. The committee recognizes that these are only temporary solutions and has been exploring long-term revenue options, such as seeking local, regional, state, and federal funding sources, reviewing current charges, making necessary adjustments, and considering another benefits assessment or Special Tax proposition.

R3: The District shares the same concern as the Grand Jury regarding increasing public awareness regarding the issues mentioned in the recommendation. To address this concern, the District is taking various measures such as strengthening its social media presence, organizing quarterly open houses, actively participating in community meetings and events, collaborating with local chambers of commerce, and reintroducing an annual report for public review.

Recommendations numbered R2, and R4 require further analysis. The further analysis will be completed by February 28, 2024.

R2: The District will need time to analyze whether a Proposition 218 benefits assessment is appropriate for increasing revenue. The previous attempt brought to light several concerns that will present challenges in the second attempt. The two major concerns are the cost disparities amongst various property types and being able to provide a proper explanation to all members of the community as to the amount they are being asked to tax themselves. The second concern is Initiative #21-0042A1 (aka #1935), or "The Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act." According to the California Special Districts Association, this initiative would restrict the ability of local agencies and the State of California to fund services and infrastructure by:

- Adopting stricter rules for raising taxes, fees, assessments, and property-related fees.
- Amending the State Constitution, including portions of Propositions 13, 218, and 26, among other provisions, to the advantage of the initiative's proponents and plaintiffs, creating new grounds to challenge these funding sources and disrupting fiscal certainty.
- Restricting the ability of local governments to issue fines and penalties to corporations and property owners that violate local environmental, water quality, public health, public safety, fair housing, nuisance, and other laws and ordinances.

The initiative includes provisions that would retroactively void some state and local taxes or fees adopted after January 1, 2022, if they did not align with the provisions of this initiative. This may also affect indexed fees that adjust over time for inflation or other factors. Effectively, it would allow voters throughout California to invalidate the prior actions of local voters, undermining local control and voter-approved decisions about investments needed in their communities.

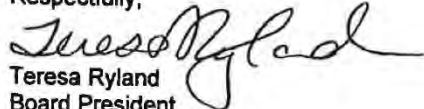
This initiative will go to the Statewide Ballot on November 5, 2024, and poses a substantial threat to the District should it proceed with a Prop 218 Benefit assessment before the outcome of that initiative. If the District assessment passed below the 66.6% supermajority required by this initiative, the District may be required to repeat the process under the new initiative, leaving the District exposed to the increased cost of holding another election (approximately \$75-90k) and the possibility of losing and reimbursing any funds collected. The District is making every effort to be a good financial steward of community resources. It considers the risk too high until the public can vote on this initiative.

R4: A reorganization and/or consolidation, merger, annexation, etc., would require extensive research and analysis to be successful. While the District is open to expanding its service to assist the neighboring communities, the first step is understanding all the issues and performing rigorous analysis to ensure success. The County, through LAFCO, is undergoing a Municipal Service Review (MSR) for fire protection on the West Slope of Placer County. It would be imprudent to proceed under the Grand Jury's December 31, 2023, timeline without first reviewing the MSR and its

recommendations. Once the MSR is approved and available, the Board could consider Grand Jury recommendation R4.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Grand Jury for their service to this community and all of Placer County. Your work is often thankless, demanding, and cloaked in mystery, but know that your service and dedication are appreciated.

Respectfully,



Teresa Ryland
Board President
South Placer Fire District

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SEP 18 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

**PLACER COUNTY
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**

COMMISSIONERS: September 13, 2023

Cindy Gustafson
Chair (County)

Susan Rohan
Vice Chair (Public)

Joshua Alpine
(Special District)

Trinity Burruss
(City)

Shanti Landon
(County)

Tracy Mendonsa
(City)

Rick Stephens
(Special District)

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

**ALTERNATE
COMMISSIONERS:**

Jim Holmes
(County)

William Kahl
(Special District)

Jenny Knisley
(City)

Cherri Spriggs
(Public)

**Re: Placer LAFCO's Response to the Placer County Grand
Jury Final Report – South Placer Fire District, Fiscal
Challenges and Station Closures**

The Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) thanks the Placer County Grand Jury for its careful assessment of the South Placer Fire Protection District's fiscal challenges and station closures. LAFCO shares the Grand Jury's concerns.

LAFCO will consider the Grand Jury's report and recommendations as part of its ongoing service review study and sphere of influence process for fire protection services, emergency medical services (EMS), and dispatch services for the Western Placer County Fire Agencies, as described further below.

COUNSEL:

Michael Walker
General Counsel

STAFF:

Michelle McIntyre
Executive Officer

Amy Engle
Commission Clerk

The South Placer Fire Protection District (SPFPD) conducted a benefit assessment election between April and June 2022. The SPFPD board announced the failed benefit assessment on July 13, 2022. In the following months, September and October 2022, the SPFPD board would go on to discuss and approve the closure of a second station. While unrelated, LAFCO funded and initiated a study that paralleled the benefit assessment election and station closure timeframe.

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<https://www.placer.ca.gov/lafco>

At LAFCO's June 8, 2022, meeting, LAFCO approved a Final Budget and Workplan for the fiscal year 2022-23, which included a Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI)¹ study for fire service providers in western Placer County. Immediately after the approval of its budget, the Commission directed its Executive Officer to issue a request for proposals for the study. At the Commission's September 14, 2022, meeting, LAFCO authorized the execution of a contract with A.P. Triton LLC (AP Triton) to conduct the MSR/SOI study. At that time, the scope of the study was amended to include an evaluation of the dispatch system and related technology. The total contract amount was \$130,360. The following month, on October 12, 2022, LAFCO expanded the contract and scope to assess the feasibility of consolidating the fire and EMS dispatch for the cities of Rocklin, Roseville, and Lincoln.

On February 8, 2023, the Commission again amended the contract with AP Triton for the Western Placer County Fire Agencies studies to include a Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) specific to SPFPD and the 42,000² residents it serves – mostly the town of Loomis, unincorporated Granite Bay, and other surrounding unincorporated communities of Placer County. The CMP will consist of evaluating the community's current risks, risks associated with the anticipated community growth, and the appropriate resources and infrastructure needed for SPFPD to serve existing and future constituents. The Commission instructed the consultant to provide short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations to enhance services and efficiencies.

The CMP addition to the contract added \$39,405, totaling \$172,162. LAFCO's total operating budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 was \$691,019. Thus, the Commission dedicated 25% of its annual operating budget to the fire study. This is to say that Placer County LAFCO has prioritized the review and enhancement of fire protection services in our communities.

However, LAFCO must express its concerns with the Grand Jury's recommendation R4, which states, "South Placer Fire Protection District and the Local Agency Formation Commission reorganize and consolidate administrative and/or operational functions with neighboring districts by December 31, 2023."

First, it is important to note that LAFCO has no direct regulatory authority over special districts. Regardless of how logical a reorganization or consolidation may be, the voters in the communities have the final say on the disposition of their district(s). That said, through the MSR/SOI study determinations, LAFCO can make *recommendations* for boundary and/or governance changes through changes of organizations or

¹ Please note that under California Government Code section 56076, a sphere of influence is defined as "a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by the commission." The Grand Jury Final Report states that a SOI is "a region or concept over which a state or organization has a level of exclusivity." This is incorrect.

² The population estimate is taken from the Grand Jury's report.

reorganizations and may *initiate* governance changes, but the voters have the final say. Likewise, LAFCO can also make operational recommendations to the district board(s) to address governance or financial concerns. Still, LAFCO lacks the authority to ensure the implementation of its recommendations because it has no direct regulatory authority over special districts.

Second, LAFCO must emphasize that reorganizing or consolidating agencies does not necessarily improve services – and, ultimately, LAFCO recommendations are intended to improve service provision. In fact, without new funding sources, consolidating and reorganizing districts can create a district with even greater financial and service liabilities.

Like all special districts, each fire protection district has its own funding approach, provides different service levels, and has different employee compensation levels. Without aligning service levels, fee charges (in the form of special taxes and benefit assessments) and district employee compensation (salaries and benefits) within the “new” district boundary, animosity among the constituents and district employees will exist.

A genuinely consolidated or reorganized district is one in which no arbitrary boundary divides the newly consolidated district. (For example, the consolidation of the Loomis and South Placer Fire Protection Districts in 2017, as noted in the Grand Jury report, created two zones for the district with different service levels and funding mechanisms.) However, equalizing two distinct districts can increase the cost and liability of the new consolidated or reorganized district. As part of LAFCO's service review and sphere of influence study, LAFCO, the district(s), and the community must consider the financial ramifications and determine if the potential savings can offset any increased costs. If the district(s) cannot realize savings, it must increase revenues. Thus, service efficiencies and costs must be analyzed and considered as part of any LAFCO recommendation.

LAFCO's third and final note on recommendation R4 is that the December 31, 2023, deadline for reorganization or consolidation is unreasonable. The Commission anticipates that the draft MSR/SOI study will be available for public and stakeholder input at the beginning of 2024, followed by the final study around May 2024. The Commission would determine after that what if any, further actions should be recommended or taken.

LAFCO supports the Grand Jury's desire to explore and continue efforts to enhance revenue sources for SPFPD and increase community awareness. LAFCO anticipates that the MSR/SOI study with the CMP for SPFPD will provide the information and awareness that LAFCO, the SPFPD, other interested agencies, and the community need to make informed recommendations and decisions. The circulation of the study, in both draft and final form, to members of the public will help promote community

awareness. The Commission thanks the Grand Jury for the opportunity to give feedback on its recommendations.

Sincerely,



Cindy Gustafson, Chair

Presiding Officer, Placer LAFCO

Recommendation number R4:

"South Placer Fire District and the Local Agency Formation Commission reorganize and consolidate administrative and/or operational functions with neighboring districts by December 31, 2023."

Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) response:

For the reasons explained above, the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable. However, LAFCO will continue its ongoing study of fire protection, emergency medical, and dispatch services provided by the Western Placer County Fire Agencies, including the South Placer Fire Protection District.

Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

The 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Placer County Grand Juries published reports on the homeless population in Placer County. On June 14, 2022, the Board of Supervisors published a chart showing Placer County government spending of approximately \$20 million for FY 2021 to 2022. The 2022-2023 grand jury found the total spending by city, town, and county during July 2021 through March 2023 amounted to more than \$80 million.

Findings

The grand jury found:

- F1:** Spending for homelessness in Placer County exceeded \$80 million for the periods covered in this report and is made up of funding by city, town, county, state, federal, and non-profit organizations.
- F2:** The Placer County does not clearly define or report all sources of funding and expenditures on homelessness in the county budget.
- F3:** It appears there is little to no communication or coordination of spending among the incorporated cities and town, and the county.
- F4:** Funding for homelessness services comes from various sources including city, town, county, state and federal governments, and non-profit organizations.
- F5:** The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget line items that define sources of funding and expenditures.

Recommendations

The grand jury recommends that:

- R1:** Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.
- R2:** Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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bos@placer.ca.gov

BONNIE GORE
District 1
SHANTI LANDON
District 2
JIM HOLMES
District 3
SUZANNE JONES
District 4
CINDY GUSTAFSON
District 5



September 26, 2023

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

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OCT 02 2023

PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Re: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County.

Dear Foreperson and Members of the Grand Jury:

After careful review of the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, the Placer County Board of Supervisors ("Board") is pleased to submit the following responses to the *FY 2022-23 Grand Jury Final Report – Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County*.

FINDINGS

The Board agrees with finding F4.

The Board disagrees wholly with the following findings: F1, F2, F3, F5.

Finding No. 1: Spending for homelessness in Placer County exceeded \$80 million for the periods covered in this report and is made up of funding by city, town, county, state, federal, and non-profit organizations.

The Board disagrees wholly with this finding. In the Grand Jury's report, the County encountered challenges in replicating and confirming the total funding figure due to the lack of a detailed spreadsheet and methodology. The key informants involved in this process also were not offered an opportunity to verify the Grand Jury's calculations before the report's publication. Despite these limitations, a review of the funds listed in the report raises concerns about potential duplication, insufficient explanatory background for certain figures, and uncertainty regarding the inclusion of specific fund categories in the analysis.

It appears that some figures in the Grand Jury's report might be duplicated. Specifically, nonprofits serving the homeless population, including the two mentioned, receive a significant portion of their revenues from local and state governments, as well as the local Continuum of Care. The report indicates "County of Placer government spending of approximately \$20 million for FY 2021 to 2022." It is worth noting that a portion of these funds was granted to nonprofits, including The Gathering Inn and AMI Housing, to manage emergency housing, permanent supportive housing, and related supportive services. Other funders, including city jurisdictions, provide funds to these and other homeless-serving nonprofits as well. As such, these revenues may well be reflected in the 990 filings of these organizations, which could potentially duplicate the available funds for addressing homelessness listed in the Grand Jury's analysis.

September 26, 2023
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

Re: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

In the report, there is a figure labeled "State Funding" amounting to \$25.7 million. These funds primarily stem from California's highly competitive Homekey initiative, which aims to expand interim and permanent supportive housing for individuals facing homelessness. This time-limited initiative has led to historic expansions in permanent supportive housing beds in south and east Placer County. However, it is important to note that these funds do not represent a continuous state revenue source for the ongoing development of permanent supportive housing in our community.

Last, it seems that the Grand Jury has included affordable housing program expenditures in its total funding calculations. Affordable housing initiatives represent vital prevention and upstream measures that can mitigate homelessness and serve diverse groups, including working families and low-income populations, and older adults at risk of homelessness, among others. However, it appears that the report overlooked similar prevention investments made by the County of Placer, and potentially other jurisdictions, in its calculations. It is possible that these figures were omitted if the Grand Jury's request was interpreted by recipients as focusing solely on measures to address the needs of individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, rather than a more expansive definition.

Finding No. 2: Placer County does not clearly define or report all sources of funding and expenditures on homelessness in the county budget.

The Board disagrees wholly with this finding. Communities throughout California employ a combination of federal, state, and local funding sources to address homelessness and its impacts. Local sources, such as those derived from city and county General Funds, are easier to track as they typically are used to invest in outreach and engagement activities, and emergency housing, both of which receive little to no state and federal funding support.

On the other hand, interventions like interim or permanent supportive housing, considered best practices, are more likely to be funded by state and federal sources. These interventions come with specific scopes of work and reporting requirements that recipients must adhere to.

Addressing homelessness also involves providing a range of other housing, behavioral health, physical health, and employment support services, which are often funded by state and federal sources, and which are broadly included in the county's budget. However, these funding sources often do not exclusively target the homeless population, making it challenging to ascertain the exact share of funds allocated to homeless-specific populations.

Appendix A of the Grand Jury's report illustrates funding categories specifically directed towards homelessness. However, it is somewhat limited in scope as other service funds may also support vulnerable populations, some of whom may be homeless or at risk of homelessness. Therefore, distinguishing funds exclusively designated for homeless individuals becomes complex.

In summary, the response to homelessness relies on a mix of funding sources, each with its specific focus and inherent challenges in tracking and categorization.

While fragmentation of funding sources and resulting difficulty in comprehensive reporting is not something that can be fully resolved at the local level, the county has signed on to support the AT HOME initiative from

September 25, 2023
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

Re: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

the California State Association of Counties (<https://www.counties.org/home-plan>) which seeks to establish a statewide plan—and associated metrics and reporting—pulling together all levels of government, from local to federal.

Finding No. 3: It appears there is little to no communication or coordination of spending among the incorporated cities and town, and the county.

The Board disagrees wholly with this finding. Placer County has received positive attention from state and federal officials for its collaborative regional efforts to reduce homelessness. With financial support from this

Board, a diverse group of stakeholders including elected officials, government staff, funders, and subject-matter experts have met regularly and frequently over the last two years under a shared goal of maintaining the lowest rate of homelessness in Northern California, while striving to drive rates lower. Indeed the 2023 Point-in-Time Count showed a 5% decrease compared to the previous year, with a homeless rate of 17.3 per 10,000 residents—the lowest in Northern California and one of the lowest statewide.

This progress has occurred against the backdrop of several critical additions to the homeless housing continuum, such as additional shelter beds in the mid Placer region, the largest single expansion of permanent supportive housing in south Placer, increased crisis and behavioral health services, and improved outreach and engagement partnerships with law enforcement and social services. The close collaboration on strategic investments between jurisdictions and their staff has made these enhancements possible.

Moreover, the County's regional response emphasizes coordination while allowing jurisdictions to retain local decision-making authority, a key shared principle, including homelessness. Moving forward, there are plans to align key stakeholders closer together with the Continuum of Care, which serves as the administrative entity managing homeless funding from state and federal sources and provides a forum to coordinate local responses to homelessness. Service providers and jurisdictions, including the County, the City of Roseville, the City of Rocklin, and the City of Lincoln, attend monthly meetings, usually on the second Wednesday of each month starting at 11:45 a.m. All jurisdictions and the public are invited to attend. More information about these meetings can be found here: <https://hrcscoc.org/connect-with-us/>

Finding No. 4: Funding for homeless services comes from various sources including city, town, county, state and federal governments, and non-profit organizations.

The Board agrees with this finding. Funding for homeless services is derived from various sources, such as local, state and federal governments, as well as non-profit organizations, including community benefit and philanthropic organizations. These funds are allocated to the Continuum of Care, county and municipal governments, and nonprofit homeless response programs. Additionally, the private sector and individuals contribute through donations to bolster homeless response services.

Finding No. 5: The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget lines items that define sources of funding and expenditures.

The Board disagrees wholly with this finding. County government and municipalities across California are continuously enhancing their approaches to address homelessness. They are increasingly allocating resources to prevent homelessness and address the challenges presented by people experiencing

September 26, 2023
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

Re: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

unsheltered homelessness within their respective boundaries. In Placer County, jurisdictions have the opportunity to participate in regional discussions, where they can influence local preferences and collaborate on a well-coordinated regional response. It is essential to note that while working together, each jurisdiction retains its authority for local decision-making. The County of Placer is thankful for its strong partnership with the cities and town in addressing homelessness. Together, the County approaches this issue with a combination of compassion and accountability. As shared above, in addition to local collaboration, the county has also voiced its support for statewide efforts (such as the AT HOME initiative) that might bring greater clarity and alignment to funding processes at all levels of government from federal down.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.

Recommendation 1 will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

Fully capturing all county costs, expenses, and funding related to homeless programs presents challenges and is not feasible given fragmentation of current funding streams. Homeless services often intersect with a diverse range of other county programs, projects, and services. For instance, services aimed at individuals with mental illness or substance abuse also benefit many unhoused individuals. However, the funding for these services is not specifically tracked to identify the exact portion benefiting the homeless population. The County has offered an estimate of investments exclusively dedicated to addressing homelessness and can be found as an Appendix in the Grand Jury's report. The County has also publicly supported efforts, such as CSAC's statewide AT HOME initiative, to streamline and build consistency into various homeless funding processes with added accountability measures.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER



Jim Holmes, 2023 Chair
Placer County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Karin Schwab, Placer County Counsel



CITY OF AUBURN

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SEP 18 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Barbara Ferguson, Foreperson
Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

September 11, 2023

RE: Grand Jury Final Report – Spending on Homelessness within Placer County

Dear Judge Pineschi and Foreperson Ferguson,

The City of Auburn has carefully reviewed and considered the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury in its report dated June 26, 2023, entitled: "Spending on Homelessness within Placer County." By letter dated June 21, 2023, the Grand Jury requested the City's response to the report's Recommendation No. R2. The City has provided a response to this request, pursuant to California Penal Code section 933.05, subdivision (b).

RECOMMENDATION:

R2: Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.

CITY RESPONSE:

Recommendation R2 **will not be implemented** by the City of Auburn because it is not reasonable. The City of Auburn does not have singular-focused unit or personnel dedicated specifically to homelessness. This governmental function is spread across several different City departments and, as such, extracting that data would be an unreasonable burden on City resources. Any ongoing budgetary line item would also similarly be unreasonable for the same reasons.

The City welcomes and appreciates the Grand Jury's interest in the City's operations, as well as the opportunity to respond to the recommendation contained in the report.

Sincerely,

Alice Dowdin Calvillo, Mayor
City of Auburn



September 26, 2023

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Placer
PO Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

RE: Grand Jury Final Report – Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

Dear Judge Pineschi:

The City of Lincoln has reviewed the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury Report Section titled “Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County” and hereby submits its response to Finding 5 (F5) and Recommendation 5 (R5) of the Grand Jury as requested.

FINDING

F5: *The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget line items that define sources of funding and expenditures.*

Response to F5: We agree with finding 5 as it relates to the City of Lincoln, with the following caveat, the City of Lincoln does not adopt its budget on a line-item basis as is common with most California Cities, rather it operates on a fund-based budget.

RECOMMENDATION

R2: *Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.*

Response to R2: The City is in partial agreement with this recommendation and will institute a portion of the requirement. The City will agree to form a narrative perspective within its biennium budget document to indicate anticipated funding and expenditures on homelessness in each budget cycle. The City will not provide line-item detail of expenditures within its budget. The City, much like most California Cities, does not have

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Lincoln, CA 95648
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a line-item budget, rather it presents a fund-based budget. Fund-based budgeting is an accepted practice in government agencies at the local, state, and federal level throughout the country. The city will continue with this practice. Additionally, restructuring of the budget is unnecessary as the City can adequately address this matter through the narrative function of the budget. Since the budget document is adopted at an open and public meeting and posting on the City's website, an additional annual report is unnecessary.

The City does not agree with and will not institute a full separate annual report of homelessness funding and budget on a yearly basis as the recommendation is redundant on a number of levels. First, the City of Lincoln discusses homelessness actively and openly at public meetings and receives (and will receive in the future) regular updates on homeless programs and any funding associated with homelessness. Second, the budgetary process provides a similar ongoing opportunity to evaluate homeless fundings through the budgetary narrative. Finally, the City of Lincoln and its residents have access to robust financial transparency tools to review City budgets at any time not just during an annual report.

* * * * *

This concludes the City's response to the Grand Jury's recommendation from its 2022-2023 report regarding "Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County". Please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-434-2490 if you have questions regarding this response.

Regards,



Sean Scully
City Manager

cc: Barbara Ferguson, Foreperson
2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury
Lincoln City Council

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TOWN OF LOOMIS



10/11/2023

Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: Grand Jury Final Report - Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County

Dear Judge Pineschi:

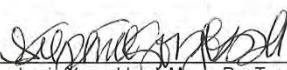
On June 27, 2023, the Town of Loomis ("Town") received a report from the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury ("Grand Jury") entitled *Grand Jury Report – Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County* ("Grand Jury Report"). Pursuant to California Penal code section 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury required that the Loomis Town Council respond to the Grand Jury Report and invited the Town Council to respond.

The attached response is drafted in compliance with Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05 on behalf of the Loomis Town Council.

Sincerely,



Danny Cartwright, Mayor



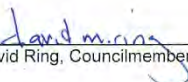
Stephanie Youngblood, Mayor Pro Tem



Amanda Cortez, Councilmember



Jenny Knisley, Councilmember



David Ring, Councilmember

3665 Taylor Road – P.O. Box 1330, Loomis, CA 95650
Phone: 916-652-1840 Fax: 916-652-1847
www.loomis.ca.gov

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS

- F1** *Spending for homelessness in Placer County exceeded \$80 million for the periods covered in this report and is made up of funding by the city, county, state, federal, and non-profit organizations.*

The Town Council **AGREES** with this finding.

- F2** *The County of Placer does not clearly define or report all sources of funding and expenditures on homelessness in the county budget.*

The Town Council **TAKES NO POSITION** as to this finding because the subject matter of this finding is outside of the Town's purview.

- F3** *There appears to be little to no communication or coordination of spending among the incorporated cities and town, and the county.*

The Town Council **DISAGREES PARTIALLY** with this finding as the Town has an appointed representative on the Homelessness Ad Hoc working group to participate in discussions about homelessness issues in the region with other Placer County jurisdictions.

- F4** *Funding for homelessness services comes from various sources including city, town, county, state and federal governments, and non-profit organizations.*

The Town Council **DISAGREES PARTIALLY** with this finding. While it may be true that some cities have funding to provide homeless services, the Town of Loomis does not. Therefore the Town Council disagrees with the general nature of this finding that suggests all cities represent a source of funding to provide homelessness services.

- F5** *The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget line items that define sources of funding and expenditures.*

The Town Council **AGREES** with this finding as to the Town but **TAKES NO POSITION** as to this finding with respect to the other incorporated cities in Placer County because the budgets of the other incorporated cities in Placer County are outside of the Town's purview.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

- R2** *Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.*

This recommendation **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** because it is not reasonable. The Town of Loomis cannot implement this recommendation because the Town does not have sufficient staff or any source of funding to address homelessness. Furthermore, the provision of social services is the responsibility of the County and therefore this recommendation should be implemented by the County.



RECEIVED

SEP 18 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

September 12, 2023

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge
Superior Court County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

The Honorable Suzanne I. Gazzaniga
Advising Grand Jury Judge
Superior Court County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Barbara Ferguson
Foreperson
2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

**RE: Response to 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report, Spending on Homelessness
Within Placer County**

Dear Honorable Judge Pineschi, Honorable Suzanne I. Gazzaniga, and Placer County
Grand Jury:

We would like to thank the Placer County Grand Jury for your dedication to the citizens of
Placer County. We hereby submit our response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report:
Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County.

Report Title: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County
Report Date: Released to the public on June 27, 2023
Response By: Mayor Ken Broadway on behalf of City of Rocklin City Council

FINDINGS

The 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County
contains five (5) findings. Pursuant to Penal Code § 933(c), we provide the following responses
to those findings "pertaining to matters under the control" of the City of Rocklin. For those
findings that are not "pertaining to matters under the control" of the City of Rocklin, the response
will note that.

CITY OF ROCKLIN, CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677

rocklin.ca.us | P. 916.625.5000 | F. 916.625.5095 | TTY. 916.632.4013

We agree with the findings numbered: F1 and F4.

We disagree, in whole or in part, with the findings numbered: F3 and F5.

We cannot provide a response to finding F2 since it is not under the control of the City of Rocklin.

F3: It appears there is little to no communication or coordination of spending among the incorporated cities and town, and the county.

Response to F3: We disagree with this finding insofar as it concludes that the City of Rocklin does not communicate or coordinate spending and resources related to homelessness with the other jurisdictions in Placer County. The City of Rocklin continually coordinates and communicates with the other incorporated cities, town, and Placer County on spending related to homelessness. The City of Rocklin, as with the other incorporated cities, town, and Placer County, actively participate in the Regional Working Group on homelessness. The Regional Working Group consists of representatives from each of these jurisdictions, the local Continuum of Care, and regional partners to address homelessness, including coordination on spending.

The City of Rocklin also has a seat on the local board of the Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras, otherwise known as the Continuum of Care (CoC). Representatives from the other Placer County agencies are also on this board. The CoC meets monthly and discusses various homelessness outreach efforts and programs, including discussions of funding.

Additionally, the City of Roseville Housing Authority has jurisdiction over Roseville and Rocklin (Placer County Housing Authority also has jurisdiction over Rocklin). The City of Roseville Housing Authority administers funding to Rocklin residents (often as a form of homelessness prevention) as part of their operations. This administration of the Housing Choice Voucher program from both Placer County and the City of Roseville requires frequent communication with each entity. Both Placer County and the City of Roseville also report out to the City of Rocklin regularly about the number of housing vouchers provided for Rocklin residents. This voucher program assists low-income individuals with housing and prevents homelessness in the region.

The above examples are meant to be illustrative of the types of coordination and communication that exist amongst the various agencies and is not an exhaustive list.

F5: The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget line items that define sources of funding and expenditures.

Response to F5: The City of Rocklin is unable to provide a response for the other agencies in the findings. However, as to the City of Rocklin only, we partially disagree with this finding insofar as it concludes the City of Rocklin budget does not identify sources of funding and expenditures related to homelessness. We agree that there is not a single "homeless budget" line item, as most of the funding for homelessness (including the sources of funding and expenditures) are included in the individual budget line items for the specific departments, services, or programs where the funding is utilized. All sources of funding and expenditures

related to homelessness are included in the City of Rocklin's budget and budget documents, but we agree it is not delineated in a single "homeless budget" line item.

RECOMMENDATION

R2 – Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.

Response to R2: Recommendation R2 has not yet been implemented, but will be partially implemented as part of the next annual budget. The City of Rocklin uses fund-based budgeting, not project based budgeting. This means that the City budgets based on sources of funding but does not provide a line-item break down of funding per project. This style of budgeting is common for local governments. Fully implementing R2 will not be possible, since it would change the budgeting structure for the entire City which would decrease efficiency and increase costs. Therefore, part of the recommendation is not reasonable. However, the City of Rocklin desires to increase transparency for homelessness spending, and will therefore implement narrative summaries for homelessness spending and projects in future budgets.

CORRECTIONS

The City of Rocklin would like to respectfully submit corrections to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report, Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County.

Correction 1: The table on page 93 states: "\$60,475 for The Gathering Inn (TGI) Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program in the Community Development Block grant (CDBG) Low and Moderate-Income Housing Asset Fund." The CDBG and Low and Moderate-Income Housing Asset Funds are separate sources of funding. The statement should read: "\$60,475 for The Gathering Inn (TGI) Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program in the Low and Moderate-Income Housing Asset Fund"

Correction 2: The table on page 93 states: "\$50,000 for TGI Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing program in the CDBG Coronavirus 2019 CARES Act Funding." The actual amount provided to TGI from the CARES Act Funding for temporary shelter services was \$141,473.

Correction 3: The City of Rocklin's total expenditure listed on the table on page 23 should be \$201,948.

We again would like to thank the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury for its report and service to the City of Rocklin.



City Council
311 Vernon Street
Roseville, California 95678

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AUG 28 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

August 16, 2023

The Honorable Alan V. Pineschi
Presiding Judge
Superior Court County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

The Honorable Suzanne I. Gazzaniga
Advising Grand Jury Judge
Superior Court County of Placer
P.O. Box 619072
Roseville, CA 95661

Barbara Ferguson
Foreperson
2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

**Re: Response to 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report
Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County**

Dear Honorable Judge Pineschi, Honorable Suzanne I. Gazzaniga, and Placer County Grand Jury:

We would like to thank the Placer County Grand Jury for your continued dedication to the citizens of Placer County. We are pleased to submit our response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County.

Report Title: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County
Report Date: Released to the public on June 27, 2023
Response By: Mayor Bruce Houdesheldt on behalf of City of Roseville City Council

FINDINGS

The 2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report: Spending on Homelessness Within Placer County contains five (5) specific findings. Pursuant to Penal Code § 933(c), we provide the following responses to those findings "pertaining to matters under the control" of the City of Roseville. For those findings that are not "pertaining to matters under the control" of the City of Roseville, the response will note that.

We agree with the findings numbered: F1 and F4.

We disagree, in whole or in part, with the findings numbered: F3 and F5.

As to finding numbered F2, we are unable to provide a response because the matter is not under the control of the City of Roseville (per Penal Code § 933(c)) and we lack personal knowledge as to the finding.

F3: It appears there is little to no communication or coordination of spending among the incorporated cities and town, and the county.

Response to F3- We disagree with this finding insofar as it concludes that the City of Roseville does not communicate or coordinate spending and resources related to homelessness with the other jurisdictions in Placer County. The City of Roseville continually coordinates and communicates with the other incorporated cities, town, and Placer County on spending related to homelessness. The City of Roseville, as with the other incorporated cities, town, and Placer County, actively participates in the Regional Working Group on homelessness. The Regional Working Group consists of representatives from each of these jurisdictions, the local Continuum of Care, and regional partners to address homelessness, including coordination on spending.

Moreover, in many cases, funding sources for the City of Roseville flow through Placer County, which necessitates coordination and communication in order for the City of Roseville to receive and allocate those pass-through funds.

Additionally, the City of Roseville Housing Authority has jurisdiction over Roseville and Rocklin (Placer County Housing Authority also has jurisdiction over Rocklin). The City of Roseville Housing Authority administers funding to Rocklin residents (often as a form of homelessness prevention) as part of their operations. This administration over Roseville and Rocklin, requires close coordination and communication between Roseville, Rocklin, and Placer County.

The above examples are meant to be illustrative of the types of coordination and communication that exist amongst the various agencies and is not an exhaustive list.

F5: The five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County do not have homeless budget line items that define sources of funding and expenditures.

Response to F5- The City of Roseville is unable to provide a response as it relates to the other incorporated cities, one incorporated town, and Placer County because the matter is not under the control of the City of Roseville (per Penal Code § 933(c)) and we lack personal knowledge as to the findings.

As to the City of Roseville only, we partially disagree with this finding insofar as it concludes the City of Roseville budget does not identify sources of funding and expenditures related to homelessness. We agree that there is not a single "homeless budget" line item, as most of the funding for homelessness (including the sources of funding and expenditures) are included in the individual budget line items for the specific departments, services, or programs where the funding is utilized. All sources of funding and expenditures related to homelessness are included in the City of Roseville's budget and budget documents, but we agree it is not delineated in a single "homeless budget" line item.

RECOMMENDATION

R2 – Each of the five incorporated cities and one incorporated town in Placer County establish a full accounting of homeless funding and expenditures to its citizens on an annual basis by January 1, 2024, and include in the annual budget going forward.

Response to R2- Recommendation R2, has not yet been implemented, but will be partially implemented as part of the next annual budget. Part of recommendation R2 will not be implemented, to the extent it is requiring a program level budget on homelessness, because it is not

reasonable. To clarify, the City of Roseville's budget is established by fund and department, not by program. Program budgeting is not practical as it would require significant and expensive changes to the City of Roseville's financial systems. Recommendation R2 will be implemented in the form of a summary of the budget for homeless funding and expenditures in the annual budget documents going forward.

We again would like to thank the 2022-2023 Placer County Grand Jury for its report and service to the City of Roseville.

Sincerely,



Bruce Houdesheldt
Mayor, and on Behalf of the Roseville City Council

Cc: Roseville City Council
Roseville City Attorney
Roseville City Clerk
Placer County Board of Supervisors
Placer County Executive Officer
Placer County Health and Human Services Director

A response from the City of Colfax was not received by the statutory deadline of October 1, 2023, as required by California Penal Code § 933.05.



Placer County Jails and Holding Facilities Annual Inspection Report 2022-2023

The Placer County Grand Jury conducted required inspections at Placer County jails and holding facilities located in Roseville, Auburn, and Tahoe City between the months of August 2022 and February 2023. Multiple visits, both announced and unannounced, were made to the facilities. The grand jury found these facilities to be secure and well organized but found that cleanliness at the Placer County Main Jail and the South Placer Adult Correctional Facility was substandard.

Findings

The grand jury found that:

- F1:** Showers, toilets, sinks, and cells are not adequately cleaned in the Placer County Main Jail and South Placer Adult Correctional Facility.
- F2:** The Placer County Sheriff's Office lacks detailed procedures for cleaning of the facilities and staff follow-up.
- F3:** The Placer County Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation is outdated and needs to be replaced.
- F4:** All facilities appeared well organized, safe, and secure.
- F5:** California Assembly Bill 109 continues to have a profound negative impact on the county jail system.

Recommendations

The grand jury recommends that:

- R1:** The Placer County Sheriff develop written policies and procedures for cleaning of the cells, showers, and common areas that meet Board of State and Community Corrections standards for all facilities by September 1, 2023.
- R2:** The Placer County Sheriff develop a method to measure, follow-up, and track the cleaning of holding cells, showers, and common areas for all facilities by September 1, 2023.
- R3:** The Placer County Board of Supervisors provide a public progress report and timeline to the citizens of Placer County on the status of the Placer County Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation's new facility by October 1, 2023.

RESPONSE FROM SHERIFF



PLACER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WAYNE WOO
SHERIFF-CORONER-MARSHAL

SHAYNE WRIGHT
UNDERSHERIFF

August 22, 2023

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Ave.
Auburn, CA 95603

RECEIVED

SEP 06 2023

**PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

Dear Placer County Grand Jury,

After carefully reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, I am pleased to submit the following responses to the Grand Jury Final Report – Placer County Jails and Holding Facilities- Annual Inspection Report 2022-2023

FINDINGS

I (we) agree with the findings numbered F1, F2, F3, F4, and F5.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Placer County Sheriff's Jail Cleaning Policies

R1: The Placer County Sheriff develop written policies and procedures for cleaning of the cells, showers, and common areas that meet Board of State and Community Corrections standards for all facilities by September 1, 2023.

Response: The recommendations numbered R1 have been implemented. The Placer County Sheriff's Office currently has a written policy and procedure for cleaning jail cells, and showers, and was expanded to include booking under the Corrections Manual Booking/ Intake Officer No. 2-11. Additionally, tracking sheets have been implemented to track the cleanliness of our booking areas.

R2: The Placer County Sheriff develop a method to measure, follow-up, and track the cleaning of holding cells, showers, and common areas for all facilities by September 1, 2023.

Response: The Recommendations numbered R2 have been implemented. A tracking sheet has been added to the Placer County Sheriff's Office Corrections Division Policy Manual and will be implemented in daily operations.

HEADQUARTERS
2029 RICHARDSON DRIVE
AUBURN, CA 95603
(530) 889-7800

AUBURN MAIN JAIL
2775 RICHARDSON DRIVE
AUBURN, CA 95603
(530) 744-8500

SOUTH PLACER STATION
5140 HORSESHOE BAR ROAD, SUITE D
LOOMIS, CA 95650
(916) 652-7400

SOUTH PLACER JAIL
11801 GO FOR BROKE ROAD
ROSEVILLE, CA 95678
(916) 499-8107

NORTH LAKE TAHOE STATION
P.O. BOX 1710
TAHOE CITY, CA 96145
(530) 581-6300



PLACER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WAYNE WOO
SHERIFF-CORONER-MARSHAL

SHAYNE WRIGHT
UNDERSHERIFF

Sincerely,

Wayne Woo
Sheriff-Coroner-Marshal

cc: Board of Supervisors

Jane Christenson, Placer County Executive Officer

Julia Reeves, Placer County Counsel

Barbara Ferguson, Foreperson of the Placer County Grand Jury

HEADQUARTERS
2929 RICHARDSON DRIVE
AUBURN, CA 95603
(530) 889-7800

AUBURN MAIN JAIL
2775 RICHARDSON DRIVE
AUBURN, CA 95603
(530) 745-8500

SOUTH PLACER STATION
6140 HORSESHOE BAR ROAD, SUITE D
LOOMIS, CA 95660
(916) 852-2400

SOUTH PLACER JAIL
11801 GO FOR BROKE ROAD
ROSEVILLE, CA 95678
(916) 409-8100

NORTH LAKE TAHOE STATION
P.O. BOX 1710
TAHOE CITY, CA 96145
(530) 581-6300

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

175 Fulweiler Avenue
Auburn, California 95603
(530) 889-4010
bos@placer.ca.gov

BONNIE GORE
District 1
SHANTI LANDON
District 2
JIM HOLMES
District 3
SUZANNE JONES
District 4
CINDY GUSTAFSON
District 5



September 26, 2023

Placer County Grand Jury
11532 B Avenue
Auburn, CA, 95603

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OCT 02 2023

PLACER COUNTY
GRAND JURY

Re: Placer County Jails and Holding Facilities – Annual Inspection Report 2022-2023

Dear Foreperson and Members of the Grand Jury,

After careful review of the findings and recommendations of the Placer County Grand Jury, the Placer County Board of Supervisors ("Board") is pleased to submit the following responses to the *Grand Jury Final Report – Placer County Jails and Holding Facilities – Annual Inspection Report 2022-2023*.

FINDINGS

The Board agrees with the findings F1, F2, F3, F4, F5.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R3. The Placer County Board of Supervisors provide a public progress report and timeline to the citizens of Placer County on the status of the Placer County Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation's new facility by October 1, 2023.

Recommendation 3 is in the process of being implemented.

The Board anticipates receiving a presentation on the history, the current status, and a proposed timeline for the Sheriff's Office Tahoe Substation new facility at the September 26, 2023 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Holmes".

Jim Holmes, 2023 Chair
Placer County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Placer County Board of Supervisors
Karin Schwab, Placer County Counsel