Town of Yountville

"The Heart of the Napa Valley"

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Clerk of the Napa Superior Court

By: C. Brennan
Deputy

June 28, 2010

The Honorable Stephen T. Kroyer
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of the State of California
County of Napa
825 Brown Street
Napa, CA 94559

Subject: Grand Jury Final Report on Water: Our Precious, Critical Resource

Dear Judge Kroyer:

The Town of Yountville has received and reviewed the subject report. Pursuant to the provisions of the California Penal Code, this letter is to respond to Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 9 and 14.

Recommendation 1:

"Municipalities within the County develop, expand, and formalize agreements to provide water allocations to address a catastrophic loss of water".

Response:

Disagree partially with the finding. The recommendation requires further analysis by December 1, 2010. The Town purchases water from the California Department of Veterans Affairs, which operates Rector Reservoir and Water Treatment Plan. The Town also has an emergency well and an agreement with the City of Napa to purchase water from a connection to the Conn Dam Transmission Line, which runs from Lake Hennessey to the City of Napa. The Town has established a $2 million drought reserve fund to purchase water when necessary. The Town has adequate groundwater and backup water supply, but the Public Works Director will work with other municipalities in the County to formalize an agreement to provide water allocations and improve water supply reliability to address a catastrophic loss of water.

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Recommendation 2:

"All County municipalities evaluate means to increase the capacity, and enhance the survivability, of municipal reservoirs and water storage facilities".

Response:

Disagree partially with the finding. The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The Town purchases water from the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA), which operates Rector Reservoir and Water Treatment Plan. The Town also has an emergency well and an agreement with the City of Napa to purchase water from a connection to the Conn Dam Transmission Line, which runs from Lake Hennessey to the City of Napa. In February, the CDVA began using a one million gallon storage tank at the Veterans Home, which is supplemental to the one million gallon storage tank at the Water Treatment Plant and doubled the storage capacity of the water system. With adequate groundwater and backup water supply, the cost of purchasing land and constructing more storage is not fiscally justifiable to rate payers.

Recommendation 4:

"Each County municipality prepare a plan to ensure rapid repair of the water delivery system and include procedures for emergency water delivery to facilities responsible for providing immediate health and safety aid to the communities' population, especially local hospitals, shelters, and emergency centers".

Response:

Disagree partially with the finding. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The Town has less than 800 service connections to a population of approximately 2,200 people using approximately 510 acre feet of water per year. The Town is not required to prepare an Emergency Response Plan, but is prepared to respond to an emergency. The Town staff can purchase water at stores or transport water from the emergency well in a trailer mounted tank. Based on Chapter 2.52 of the Yountville Municipal Code, the Director of Emergency Service and Town Council can declare a local emergency and request mutual aid during an emergency. Town staff will execute "on-call" agreements with contractors to make emergency repairs and prepare procedures for emergency water delivery to the Community Center by December 1, 2010.

Recommendation 9:

"The County and all municipalities continue development and expansion of recycled water projects to alleviate future water shortages".

Response:

Disagree partially with the finding. The recommendation has been implemented. The Town has a recycled water distribution system and recycled 85% of effluent from the Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (JWWTP) in 2009, which is one of the highest rates in California. The Town is completing a $1.2 million JWWTP Upgrade Project to provide recycled water to meet California Department of Health Services (DHS) regulations for Title 22 (tertiary) treatment, while most agencies only provide secondary level treatment. The cost is one-third of the Town's average annual spending on capital improvement projects and will allow more of the effluent discharged from the plant to be reused on the golf course, vineyards, and in Town parks. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for the Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant requires the Town to upsize components of the recycled water system by December 1, 2013. The upsizing is included in the Capital Improvement Program and will allow the Town to recycle more water when storage capacity is available at the customers' facilities. By May 2011, Town staff will study the cost effectiveness of providing recycled water to Veteran's Memorial Park while meeting recycled water customers demand.

Recommendation 14:

"That within six months American Canyon, Calistoga, St. Helena, and Yountville prepare capital cost proposals for fluoridation of their water supplies".

Response:

Disagree wholly with the finding. The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not required of small water systems and is not within the control of the Town. The Town purchases water from the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA), which operates Rector Reservoir and Water Treatment Plan. The "2009 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report" by the Veteran's Home of California stated that laboratory testing found 0.12 parts per million (ppm) of fluoride detected and a goal of 1 ppm "Public Health Goal", so there is some fluoride in the water supply. Fluoridation is most beneficial to children, most toothpastes have fluoride, and fluoride supplements can be purchased for children. There is little benefit of fluoridation to the veterans and the agreement between the Town and CDVA does not allow the Town to set fluoride levels. If the Town Council insisted on fluoridation, then there are up front capital costs to add fluoride to the water

treatment process and ongoing chemical purchase costs that would probably entirely paid by the Town. The Town Council is evaluating the need to increase water rates, which is not what rate payers want during these difficult economic times. Since fluoridation would increase the rates higher, the benefits do not justify the costs spread to all rate payers.

Thank you for your efforts in assuring that all branches of county government are being administered honestly, effectively, and in the best interest of Napa County Citizens. If you have any questions regarding these responses, please contact me at your convenience at 707-948-2628.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Saucerman,
Mayor

Steve Rogers,
Town Manager

Graham Wadsworth, P.E.
Public Works Director / Town Engineer

Cc: Napa County Board of Supervisors
Marcella McCormack, Veterans Home
Michelle Dahme, Town Clerk
Barney La Rue, Public Works Supervisor
Don Moore, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor