

NAPA COUNTY
RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT ON
“NAPA COUNTY’S COMMUNICATION WITH ITS CITIZENS”

AUGUST 20, 2024

FINDINGS

Finding 1. Since the 2016 Napa County Grand Jury report on county websites, the county has increased its senior communication staff, appointed a webmaster, and implemented improved methods of communicating with citizens for routine, non-emergency notifications.

The County Executive Officer (CEO) and Board of Supervisors agree with the finding.

The County has taken substantial steps towards enhancing its capabilities and expanding its outreach efforts. The County has implemented several improved methods for routine, non-emergency communications with its residents. The website has been redesigned to be more user-friendly and informative, making it easier for residents to find the information they need. Staff regularly issue news releases to keep the public informed about county activities and initiatives. The social media presence has been significantly expanded, allowing the County to engage with the community in real-time and provide timely updates. Additionally, video storytelling has been embraced to convey important messages and showcase county projects and events in a more dynamic and engaging manner. In addition to producing unique video features highlighting the county, a new monthly countywide newscast was launched in April 2024. This newscast aggregates important county news, programs and services, and engagement opportunities in a format that is digestible, educational, and engaging to the public. These efforts are part of the County’s commitment to ensuring transparent, effective, and accessible communication with all Napa County residents.

Finding 2. Napa County has made some improvements to provide timely and accurate information to citizens through enhanced website design and performance.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors agree with the finding.

The ongoing process of digitizing services, evaluating content, and arranging graphics is a continuous endeavor. In addition to standard website maintenance and updates, the County has undertaken several initiatives to improve user experience and access to important information.

Key changes include:

- Updates to the website’s terminology to make it more intuitive for users to navigate.
- Streamlined top-level navigation and the addition of a “How do I?” section.
- An expanded Newsroom to share timely, relevant information with residents.
- Reorganized content into thematic “buckets” to streamline access to related services.
- The launch of the ‘Open Napa County’ page under the ‘Government’ section, providing a centralized location for related public search services and enhancing public and staff user experience.

Additionally, various services previously only available in paper format have now been digitized. This includes the development and implementation of digital PDF applications in several departments, with more to come. The County launched the airport runway webcam, providing real-time updates to the public, and refreshed the web presence for Health & Human Services (HHSA) behavioral health, the Planning Department, and County Fire, ensuring accurate and up-to-date information.

Staff conducted an extensive review to identify outdated COVID-19 documents and incorporated initiatives such as the Affordable Accessory Dwelling Unit and Child Care Facility Forgivable Loan Programs. A version update to the County's software platform was also completed, ensuring smooth operations and effective communication.

Efforts to enhance the County's program in search engine optimization (SEO) and analytics are ongoing. These efforts aim to expand from countyofnapa.org to include other domains and functions such as readynapacounty.org, napalibrary.org, and livehealthynapacounty.org, as well as social media and other applications. This initiative will develop a program framework and foundation configured to support scalability and county-wide accessible data, ultimately supporting a holistic strategy and user experience.

Later this year, Napa County will embark on a comprehensive website redesign, incorporating further design and structural enhancements.

Finding 3. A sizable portion of Napa County website traffic is via mobile devices. Some website content is not optimized for smaller screened mobile devices.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors agree with the finding.

More than 50% of the County's web visitation is via mobile devices. Responsive design has evolved from solely responding to the change in device size to now encompassing a multitude of available data elements that reflect the user's experience. The evolution of responsive web design in 2024 heralds a new era of adaptability and innovation in web development. Beyond simply fitting content to different screens, responsiveness now includes a holistic approach to design that considers device types, emerging interfaces, user preferences, and accessibility standards. By embracing this evolution, the County can craft digital experiences that transcend boundaries and empower users in an increasingly interconnected world.

While most of the county's website content is optimized for smaller screened mobile devices, some third-party applications are not. The County will coordinate solutions with vendors to ensure that digital services are accessible and user-friendly across all devices.

Finding 4. The county has not published to citizens a county strategic plan which outlines how to facilitate the distribution, efficiency, and quality of public information.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors disagree partially with the finding.

The Communications team has written a strategic communications plan; however, while it is a public document, it has not been shared with residents as it is an internal working document intended to guide efforts in informing, educating, and engaging citizens in Napa County.

The primary purpose of the communications plan is to foster effective communication among the Napa County Board of Supervisors, the residents of Napa County, and the departments and staff of Napa County government. Public access to government and the free flow of information are essential pillars of the democratic process. Therefore, this plan is intended to streamline access and enhance transparency within Napa County Government.

In today's service delivery landscape, effective communication plays a vital role in disseminating information, raising awareness about government services and policies, advocating for change, and supporting decision-making processes. Public communication is of utmost importance in empowering the residents of Napa County with knowledge about their expectations from county government. By engaging in dialogue and encouraging meaningful participation, the community can actively contribute to the development and progress of the county.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Establish a cohesive and effective communication framework for Napa County that fosters collaboration, empowers employees, and ensures consistent messaging and branding.
2. Enhance Napa County's communication efforts to expand its reach, engage the community, and promote transparency through proactive and creative storytelling across various platforms.
3. Establish transparent and open channels of communication with the community of Napa County, fostering engagement, collaboration, and understanding.
4. Enhance internal communications within Napa County by fostering a sense of community, sharing information effectively, and facilitating engagement among employees.
5. Enhance Napa County's emergency response communication by developing comprehensive strategies that facilitate effective information dissemination, preparation, and collaboration during critical situations.
6. Align legislative goals with effective communication strategies to facilitate the development, understanding, and engagement of Napa County's legislative platforms and processes.

Residents can see the results of the strategic communications plan through the numerous initiatives and improvements the County has implemented, ensuring transparent, effective, and accessible communication with all Napa County residents.

Finding 5. Napa County's overall communication efforts, while focused on "telling Napa County's story," is not engaging the community in a two-way conversation which could facilitate citizen engagement.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors disagree partially with the finding.

The County's social media strategy is intended to actively engage the community, share updates, and encourage dialogue. Staff monitor and respond to comments, messages, and mentions on social media platforms in a timely and professional manner.

From strategizing and developing communications to disseminating content, staff seek opportunities to extend the conversation beyond a specific communication. This is achieved by consistently ending messages with a call to action, which may include directing the audience to learn more on a specific platform or website, taking a survey, or providing a number or email to continue the conversation.

Additionally, individual board members and staff regularly participate in and host events that promote face-to-face interactions among residents, enabling dialogue and a sense of belonging. The County organizes public forums, town hall meetings, and online feedback platforms to gather community input and address concerns promptly and transparently.

The County has actively engaged in and hosted town halls and community events focused on various subjects, including fire/emergency preparedness, Mt. Veeder storm damage and roads updates, PG&E underground electric power lines, road pavement projects, and transportation. Each of these events provides an opportunity for two-way conversation.

Staff worked closely with CAL Fire/Napa County Fire and AP Triton, the consultants developing the Fire Master Plan, to engage the community through various communication channels, including hosting a Fire Master Plan Virtual Town Hall.

Engaging the community in a two-way conversation is a collaborative effort involving all departments and elected officials, not solely the responsibility of the Communications Department. Staff are committed to fostering an environment where community input is solicited, ensuring a more connected and engaged Napa County.

Finding 6. Napa County lacks a formally articulated plan to continuously re-evaluate and update its communication strategies adapting to changing digital messaging technologies in order to assure that messaging remains timely, effective, and relevant.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors agree with the finding.

The communications team pairs the county-wide communication plan with project and departmental plans to re-evaluate and update its communication strategies. This undertaking is completed in tandem with departmental subject matter experts to align with services, staff capacity, and public expectations.

For example, Napa County has launched a public website chat feature and a live streaming translation tool for Board of Supervisors meetings. The team continues to meet with vendors, participate in forums, and assess current solutions to propose to departments. Each department's specific communication tools fall under its jurisdiction due to unique compliance requirements, staff participation, and business practices.

The communication's team's strategy involves regular re-evaluation and updates with Napa County IT to stay current with technological advancements and continue to meet the community's needs effectively.

Finding 7. The switch from Nixle to Everbridge did not go through an RFP or similar evaluation process which has led to disruptions in citizen alert contacts that have not been satisfactorily resolved.

The CEO, Board of Supervisors, and Sheriff agree with the finding.

Napa County contracted with Nixle in 2014. In 2015, Everbridge acquired Nixle and, along with it, Napa County's contract. Napa County extended, renewed, and/or amended this contract for several years. Although acquired by Everbridge, the emergency alert platform continued to be named "Nixle." On October 4, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved a three-year renewal of the County's contract with Everbridge; at that time the Board was also informed that subscribers to the Nixle platform would be

moved to the Everbridge platform. Because the contract was with Everbridge and that contract was renewed, the change from the Nixle to the Everbridge platform did not require a separate RFP process.

At the time of the platform change, Everbridge verbally represented to Napa County that all the subscribers to Napa County messaging in Nixle would seamlessly be moved over to their Everbridge platform without the necessity to re-subscribe. Based on these representations and to maintain the large subscriber base in Nixle (approx. 186,000 subscribers), the County chose to continue the Everbridge contract and not seek other proposals via the traditional RFP process.

Problems and inconsistencies related to delivery of messages to original Nixle subscribers after the transition to Everbridge were noticed early on. At the time of the initial transition from Nixle to Everbridge, the County Office of Emergency Services (OES) was housed solely in the CEO's office. On July 1, 2023, the interim CEO, in his role as Director of Emergency Services, appointed the Sheriff as the Assistant Director of Emergency Services, pursuant to Napa County Ordinance 2.80.060. The OES staff physically moved offices from the downtown Napa administration building to the Napa Sheriff's Office in south Napa. The OES budget was transitioned into the Sheriff's Office overall budget, and day-to-day OES oversight and operations were put under the direction of the Sheriff's Office.

In the first meeting between OES and the administration team at the Sheriff's Office in July of 2023, the Sheriff's Office prioritized diagnosing the issue with the transition from the Nixle to the Everbridge platform. A County Information Technology (IT) expert was assigned to work closely with OES to identify the issue and work towards a solution. The Sheriff also briefed the CEO, Board of Supervisors, and County Counsel. County Counsel sent a demand letter to Everbridge as part of the plan to address the issue, which helped spur a meeting to resolve the problems. Within two weeks of the meeting between Everbridge representatives, IT, and OES staff, the Sheriff's Office learned that the Nixle platform subscribers were never moved into the Everbridge platform. Instead, Everbridge built a software solution to act as a "bridge" by which messaging in Everbridge would be sent over to the Nixle program and the original Nixle subscribers would then receive the message. The crux of the problem referred to in the Jury's finding is that the software bridge was not reliable.

In August, approximately one month after the issue was identified, Everbridge agreed to do and did a large data migration, moving the subscribers out of Nixle and into Everbridge so that the system would no longer rely on the software "bridge." OES conducted a test messaging campaign in August of 2023, which included 184,328 subscribers that were part of the large data migration. As part of the test, subscribers were asked to confirm receipt of the message.¹ 70,417 subscribers confirmed receipt, which is 38.2% of the contacts that the message went out to, representing a relatively large number of responses. Of note, in marketing, the average open rate is somewhere between 15% and 25% and asking someone to take action (i.e. text back to confirm receipt) results in responses ranging from 1.5% to 3%. For SMS campaigns, the open rate is around 65% with a click-through rate of about 20%. The takeaway from the August 2023 test was that more than 10 times what is typically expected of an email marketing campaign and nearly twice of what is expected of a SMS campaign was accomplished after Everbridge completed the data migration. This large response rate gives the County confidence that the data migration was successful.

¹ One key difference between the two systems is that messaging that solicits a response can be sent in Everbridge while Nixle does not have that capability.

While the August 2023 test campaign was successful and resolved the initial platform transition difficulties, the OES team and Everbridge continue to have regular meetings to improve the system's capabilities.

Finding 8. County emergency notifications using the alert technology Everbridge are not reliably reaching all enrolled citizens, and it is unknown exactly how many residents are receiving messages.

The Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff agree with the finding.

However, the County is interested in understanding the evidence the Jury used to support this finding that not all enrolled citizens are receiving messages after the August 2023 data migration. While there are known examples of this issue from before the large data migration in August of 2023, evidence that the problem continued afterward have not been found. The Nixle system did not have a "confirm receipt" feature similar to Everbridge, making it impossible to conduct a comparable test with Nixle. The Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff agree that the Everbridge notification system was not reliable at reaching all enrolled citizens prior to the data migration.

It is important to note that no system can guarantee an exact number of subscribers reached for any given communication. Factors such as cell phone coverage, mobile device settings, and whether mobile devices are on or off, without power, etc., can impact message delivery. Due to these factors, Napa County OES, the CEO's Office, and the Sheriff's Office have established redundancy systems. These include partnerships with local radio stations, community outreach for emergency broadcast information, Genasys software for evacuations, Hi-Lo Sirens during evacuations, door-to-door notifications in evacuated areas, traditional media outlets, and social media accounts managed by Napa County, Napa Sheriff's Office, County fire, and municipal partners.

While Everbridge certainly damaged trust during the initial transition from the Nixle platform, the current reach and data from both test alerts and real-world alerts indicate that the technology is now working at the same level of reliability as the previous opt-in service.

Finding 9. The Everbridge emergency notification mobile app for phones and other mobile digital devices is not performing reliably for citizens.

The Sheriff, OES, Board of Supervisors, and CEO disagree wholly with the finding.

During the investigation to identify why some previous Nixle subscribers were not reliably receiving alerts, the team discovered that the issue was related to the software "bridge" rather than a full data migration solution (as mentioned in the response to Finding 8). The team also learned that there were no reports of failures from users who downloaded and used the Everbridge mobile application.

The County does not agree that the system is currently not performing reliably and would be interested in any evidence or examples of subscribers who signed up through Everbridge, or whose subscriber information was part of the large data migration in 2023, not reliably receiving messages at this time. Upon obtaining such information, the County and Everbridge can investigate and correct any ongoing issue.

Finding 10. The enrollment process for Everbridge is cumbersome and not well understood by the citizenry.

The Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff agree with the finding.

The enrollment process prior to January 2024 was more cumbersome. However, as part of the continuing efforts between OES and Everbridge to improve the system's capabilities, beginning in January 2024, residents can now subscribe by simply texting their zip code to 888-777, which enrolls them into the Nixle platform. Everbridge now automatically ports over (data migration, not a software bridge) Nixle subscriber data into the Everbridge system on an hourly basis.

Before this new solution, residents using this simple subscriber method would only be added to Nixle, and the system would rely on the problematic software "bridge" mentioned in Response to Finding 7 or have their contact number or email manually entered into Everbridge by OES staff as they periodically checked the Nixle system for any new subscribers.

The Board and Sheriff are pleased that this enrollment issue has been resolved, and new subscribers should find the process efficient and effective.

Finding 11. Everbridge has not fulfilled all of its contractual obligations with Napa County.

The Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff disagree wholly with the finding.

The contract executed between Napa County and Everbridge has been reviewed by the County, with assistance from County Counsel, and no breach of contract has been identified at this time. As indicated in Response to Finding 7, the issues caused by the initial transition from the Nixle platform to the Everbridge platform were problematic, but the parties were able to promptly resolve those issues.

Should OES be made aware of any concerns or evidence supporting the Jury's concerns that issues are continuing, OES will promptly work with Everbridge to resolve them. Since July of 2023, the staff at Everbridge has been responsive to the County's concerns and have worked diligently on addressing the challenges identified by the OES team. We are confident that any ongoing issues will be similarly corrected by Everbridge.

Finding 12. Napa County's staff have improved measures to facilitate communication with citizen's diverse languages and for those having disabilities or special needs.

The CEO and Board of Supervisors agree with the finding.

Recognizing the diverse community the County serves, staff remain dedicated to ensuring effective communication for all residents. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) continues to prepare a bi-weekly translation schedule for emergency communications, guaranteeing that critical information reaches non-English speaking populations promptly. Additionally, staff have initiated work on creating a comprehensive language access plan. This endeavor involves close collaboration with members of the Board of Supervisors and department heads, with a goal of establishing guidelines and resources that promote inclusivity and accessibility in all county communications. By prioritizing language access, staff strive to enhance engagement and participation among diverse communities throughout Napa County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. By December 31, 2024, the Board of Supervisors direct county communications staff to annually implement and publish to county residents an updated strategic communication plan

that results in timely and efficient two-way messaging with the public through digital, print, and broadcast media.

Response, County Executive Officer: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

The County Communications team already operates with a comprehensive communication plan that serves as a roadmap for our efforts. This plan is a fluid document, allowing us to tailor our strategies based on the specific message and target audience, new communication technologies, and evolving appetite of how people consume information. Our primary focus is on delivering tangible results that meet the community's needs, rather than detailing the process.

Our approach is dynamic and adaptable, ensuring that we can effectively communicate across various platforms including digital, print, and broadcast media. While we continually refine our strategies to enhance engagement and transparency, we believe that the community is more interested in the outcomes of our communication efforts rather than the intricacies of the plan itself. Our commitment remains to ensure timely, efficient, and effective two-way communication with the public, and we invite residents to experience the results of these efforts through our various communication channels.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 2. By September 30, 2024, the Board of Supervisors direct county senior communications staff to meet with all county department heads to assess their communication needs so that they can message effectively and consistently with their target audiences.

Response of the County Executive officer: The recommendation has been implemented.

The Deputy CEO - Communications regularly attends department head meetings to stay informed about departmental communication needs. All departments with staff serving in a PIO role are invited to participate in the County Communications Collaborative. For departments without a dedicated PIO, regular outreach is conducted through check-in emails and meetings to identify and support their communication needs.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 3. By September 30, 2024, the Board of Supervisors direct county department communications staff to create a monthly review of county social media accounts, websites, and other digital communication channels to assure that information stays current.

Response, County Executive Officer: The recommendation has been implemented.

County communications staff regularly reviews and maintains the accuracy of information across social media accounts, websites, and other digital communication channels. We have implemented a process for individual departments to review and provide feedback on a monthly basis, ensuring that all digital communications remain current and effective.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 4. By September 30, 2024, the Napa County Sheriff direct their communication staff to create a monthly review of their social media accounts, websites, and other digital communication channels to assure that information stays current.

Response, Sheriff: The recommendation has not yet been implemented.

The Sheriff will implement this recommendation within the timeframe identified by the Jury.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff.

Recommendation 5. By December 31, 2024, the Board of Supervisors require all county and department websites to offer a live chat feature on each county department website to help citizens get quick answers to their questions and facilitate timely assistance.

Response, County Executive Officer: The recommendation has been implemented.

Napa County has implemented a website chat feature on countyofnapa.org, staffed by the Napa County Library reference team. This chat tool supports both the public and county staff in locating services and answering questions.

Key features of the website chat tool include:

- Staffed by library staff who assist the public similarly to how they handle library reference questions, aiming to connect users to the necessary resources.
- Available on every page of the website.
- Supports three languages: English, Spanish, and Tagalog.
- Accessible seven days a week.
- When the chat tool is not actively staffed, users can leave a message that will be responded to during business hours.
- Compatible with both mobile devices and desktops.

This initiative ensures that citizens receive timely assistance and quick answers to their questions, enhancing the overall accessibility and responsiveness of county services.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 6. By December 31, 2024, the Board of Supervisors direct county communications staff to develop and make public the metrics and analytics which monitor county efforts to evaluate effective two-way communication strategies with citizens.

Response, County Executive Officer: The recommendation has been implemented.

The Communications team reviews metrics on a daily basis and provides an internal report on a monthly basis. Measuring communication success is essential to fine-tune strategies, engage audiences effectively, and drive results. Data-driven decision-making is a continuous process, utilizing multiple metrics and analytics tools to track and measure progress.

As we prepare for a redesign of the County's website, we are enhancing our program in search engine optimization (SEO), Google Analytics, and browser ads. This effort will expand from countyofnapa.org to

include other domains/functions such as readynapacounty.org, napalibrary.org, livehealthynapacounty.org, and potentially social media and other applications where we drive web traffic within our digital communications. The goal is to develop a program framework that supports scalability and provides county-wide accessible data to support a holistic strategy and improved user experience.

Key tools the County employs include:

- **Analytics:** Tracks website traffic and user behavior.
- **Social Media Insights:** Built-in analytics tools on social media platforms that track post-performance, audience demographics, and engagement.

Key metrics for measuring communication success include:

- **Engagement Metrics:** These help us understand how the audience interacts with our messages, such as open rates, click-through rates (CTR), and social media likes, shares, and comments.
- **Reach and Impressions:** These metrics measure how many people see our messages.

By leveraging these tools and metrics, staff aim to continually refine communication strategies to ensure they remain effective and relevant.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 7. By December 31, 2024, the Board of Supervisors have county communications staff ensure that county initiatives and programs are available to all our citizens, including those who speak languages other than English and those with special needs or disabilities.

Response, County Executive Officer: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.

Countywide Communications promotes and encourages accessibility but does not have oversight of all county initiatives and programs. However, we continually seek opportunities to implement more inclusive practices. Some of the areas where we have control and have implemented accessibility measures include:

- **Website Translation:** The County's website incorporates Google Translate to support multiple languages.
- **Social Media:** We translate social media posts to reach a broader audience.
- **Board Meetings:** We have implemented the Wordly AI language translation platform to offer live Spanish translation at all Board of Supervisors meetings.
- **ADA Compliance:** An ADA page on the website provides information and resources for individuals with special needs or disabilities.
- **Partnerships:** We work with the risk team to provide remediation for any person seeking services with special needs or disabilities.
- **Procurement:** Our procurement language includes requirements for ADA compliance and is in the process of adding language suggesting Spanish as a preferred language.

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to making county programs and services accessible to all citizens, regardless of language or special needs.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 8. By December 31, 2024, the Board of Supervisors establish a Napa County Communications Citizen Advisory Board with the goal of providing community input into Napa County communication priorities.

Response of the County Executive Officer: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.

The communications team is staffed with professionals from diverse backgrounds, bringing over 70 years of combined experience. In 2023, we established the County Communications Collaborative to enhance communication strategies and practices within Napa County. This group meets monthly and includes full-time Public Information Officers (PIOs) and individuals with PIO responsibilities, allowing them to exchange insights, best practices, and innovative approaches in their communication efforts.

Additionally, county communications staff participate in the Napa County PIO Network, a collaborative group made up of representatives from various sectors, including:

- The county and each of the five jurisdictions
- Public safety (fire, police, sheriff)
- Education (Napa County Office of Education, Napa Valley Unified School District, Napa Valley College, Pacific Union College)
- Transportation (Napa Valley Transportation Authority, CalTrans, California Highway Patrol)
- Healthcare (Queen of the Valley, Kaiser, St. Helena Adventist)
- Nonprofit organizations (Community Organizations Active in Disaster)
- Other entities such as the Veteran’s Home, Napa State Hospital, and PG&E

This network is committed to working together to elevate our collective impact in communicating with residents. County communications staff also are members of statewide and national associations and attend conferences and training programs to stay abreast of the latest communications tools and strategies, ensuring effective communication with stakeholders. Associations include CAPIO (California Public Information Officials), 3CMA (City-County Communications & Marketing Association), NAGC (National Association of Government Communicators), NACIO (National Association of County Information Officers), PRSA (Public Relations Society of America), and GSM (Government Social Media).

Our existing advisory boards and regular community meetings provide ample opportunities for constituent input. We regularly review questions, concerns, and issues raised by the public through the Board of Supervisors, their aides, and department heads. This feedback loop allows us to remain flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of the community.

We do not take a one-size-fits-all approach to communication. Instead, we remain nimble in our strategies to effectively address the diverse needs of our residents. Through our active participation in training and collaboration with other professionals, we continuously develop our skills and improve our communication practices.

The establishment of a separate Communications Citizen Advisory Board is therefore unnecessary, as our current structures and processes already facilitate robust community engagement and input into Napa County's communication priorities.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the County Executive Officer.

Recommendation 9. By December 31, 2024, the Sheriff's Department OES prepare and execute updated plans to fix deficiencies in alert notification measures ensuring that accurate and timely emergency information is disseminated to the public and media when needed. This may require assessing alternative emergency notification system providers to resolve ongoing Everbridge deficiencies.

Response, Sheriff: This recommendation has been implemented.

Since July 2023, Everbridge has been responsive and continues to be responsive in improving the reliability and effectiveness of their platform. As indicated in Response to Finding 7, the most recent contract with Everbridge was a three-year renewal of the previous contract. Everbridge had acquired Nixle in 2015, and the renewed contract contemplated that, during this period, the County's subscribers would be migrated from the Nixle platform to the Everbridge platform. As the Jury found, however, this transition was not seamless. Beginning in July 2023, the issues were quickly identified and addressed, and now the system appears to be functioning properly.

Beginning in the spring 2025, the Sheriff will recommend to the Board of Supervisors to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for messaging services beyond October 2025 when the Everbridge contract expires. Everbridge can certainly submit a proposal as part of that process, and other providers will also be invited to submit proposals.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff.

Recommendation 10. By September 30, 2024, the Sheriff's Department OES collaborate with Napa County communication staff to address problems with the "Alert Napa County" citizen enrollment process including increased awareness of how to enroll, streamline the enrollment process, and improve citizen's ability to manage their own alert notification preferences.

Response of the Sheriff: This recommendation has been implemented.

As indicated in Response to Finding 10, beginning in January 2024, residents can now subscribe by simply texting their zip code to 888-777. Additionally, logging into their online account allows citizens to opt into the notices that they wish to receive. OES continues to work with Everbridge to ensure the platform functions correctly and is as user-friendly as possible.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with the Sheriff.