

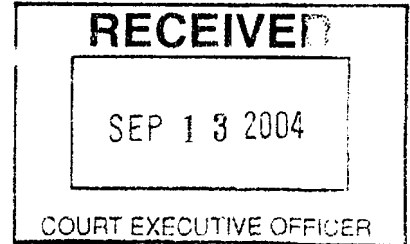


CITY of NAPA

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September 9, 2004

The Honorable Scott Snowden
Presiding Judge
Napa County Superior Court
825 Brown Street
Napa, CA 94559



RE: Response to 2003-2004 Grand Jury Report as Requested of the City Council, City Manager and Community Development Director

Dear Judge Snowden and Members of the Grand Jury:

This letter is in response to the 2003-2004 Grand Jury Report. The City would like to commend the Grand Jury Committee in their willingness to take on the monumental task of reviewing the many complex and diverse issues in Napa County. This response letter is prepared by the City Manager on behalf of her office, the Community Development Director, and the City Council who reviewed and approved the responses as written.

The 2003-2004 Grand Jury Report suggested the following:

Finding #1:

Although the early signs are positive, it is not yet clear whether the reorganization that created the Community Development Division has successfully resolved all of the issues raised by the Maximus Study.

Recommendation #1:

Within six months, the Community Development Division should conduct a survey to evaluate the results of the recent reorganization. The survey should seek input from Division personnel, building contractors, homeowners and other clientele served by the new Division.

Response:

The City Council, City Manager and Community Development Director concur that ongoing feedback needs to be solicited for the next year, if not longer, with respect to the ongoing implementation of the recommendations in the Maximus Study. The recommendation of a survey of clients is one method to obtain feedback on the quality of service provided by the department. We have an ongoing Customer Service Survey Program which requests feedback from all clients. The staff provides the survey form at each counter in the Community Development Department. The results are provided to the City Manager of distribution. Additionally, the management staff has initiated monthly meetings with builders, contractors, engineers, planners and lawyers to obtain feedback on the practices and procedures of the department. These meetings were initiated to provide more consistent and timely feedback. The type of customer satisfaction surveys that the Grand Jury Report recommends has been initiated.

The Honorable Scott Snowden
September 9, 2004
Page Two

With respect to the Napa Sanitation District, the Grand Jury examined a number of issues, including personnel, administration, regulations, standards, and pollution prevention.

Finding #2:

Napa Sanitation District may be in violation of regulations that require that all ratepayers pay the same fee for equivalent service.

Recommendation #2:

Management and the Board of Directors should determine the extent to which Napa Sanitation District violates regulations and then take appropriate action.

Response:

The Napa City Council concurs and will ask its two representatives to invite the Napa Sanitation Manager to appear before the Council, or to write a letter setting forth how connection fees are charged and whether they meet the test of the California Health and Safety Code for user fees and connection charges. The City representatives will request that the Sanitation Manager provide a verbal or written communication as to the compliance with regulations no later than December 23, 2004.

Finding #3:

It was inappropriate for a member of the Board of Directors to leak charges against an employee to local newspapers before an investigation determined the validity of those charges.

Recommendation #3:

District Counsel should brief the Board of Directors regarding their responsibilities to keep personnel matters confidential. Violations of this policy should result in censure and/or dismissal.

Response:

The Napa City Council concurs that the District Counsel should brief the Board Members of their responsibilities in confidential personnel matters. It is further recommended that District Counsel forward to the City, a copy of any legal opinions or policies with respect to this subject, and notify the City Council of any violations which its members commit in a timely manner so that the City may take appropriate action to consider whether censure or removal is warranted.

Finding #6:

The City and County of Napa do not have a recycling program for household grease and oil.

Recommendation #6:

The City and County of Napa should expand their recycling programs to include household grease and oil.


The Honorable Scott Snowden
September 9, 2004
Page Three

Response

The City of Napa concurs with the recommendation related to motor oil and has utilized a drop-off location for used motor oil at several locations around the City for some time. Public information is routinely disseminated to advise of such locations. In October 2005, the City expects to have a curbside pickup program for used motor oil. With respect to kitchen grease, the City disagrees that it is their responsibility to implement this program at the present time. The City has not been informed of the current impact on the sanitation system or the technological advances that may be available to help households comply. The City feels this is a program within the scope and responsibility of the Sanitation District to develop and implement, but would entertain a cooperative effort to help them implement such programs. The Council will request that its representatives on the District Board invite the Sanitation District Manager to advise the City on appropriate and reasonable programs for collecting and disposing of kitchen grease, and also advise as to funds that the District may have to help implement these mitigations, along with a public information program.

The City respectfully submits these responses for your review and acceptance. Please contact this office at 257-9501 if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Patricia S. Thompson
City Manager

PST:clr

cc: Napa Sanitation District Manager
Pam Means, City Clerk