

### Finding #2:

As the report indicates, the Benicia Library is funded and operated by the City of Benicia; as such, it is incumbent upon the library to meet the needs and requests of Benicia's residents. To accomplish this, the Library Director and staff listen and respond to citizen input, and work with the Board of Library Trustees to create policies that reflect the diverse needs and requirements of the Benicia community. The library's Internet and Electronic Information Use Policy, which defines behaviors that are appropriate for library use, was prepared on a City level and therefore reflects the values of our local residents.

In the Internet and Electronic Information Use Policy, adopted in 1996 by the Benicia Library Board of Trustees, the Library Board intentionally chose not to use filters. To access the Internet, library patrons must agree to abide by this Internet Use Policy, which appears on the screen each time they log onto a computer. The Policy is very clear that inappropriate use is not tolerated, and gives very specific examples of what constitutes inappropriate use.

### Recommendation #2:

Instead of using mechanical filters, Benicia Library staff stay aware of the Internet use of patrons, which is a much more nuanced method of control. If inappropriate computer use of any type is observed by staff or reported by a patron, staff members approach the patron who is in violation of the Internet Policy. If staff determines that the violation was intentional, the patron is logged off of the Internet and is banned from the library for 30 days. If the violation is repeated after the ban is lifted, the punishment is doubled.

An effective procedure to enforce the Internet Use Policy is in place. Between June 1, 2005 and May 31, 2006, although some patrons were suspended from Internet and/or Library use for other infractions, no patrons were suspended for viewing material that violated the Internet Use Policy. This means that the current procedure is effective. If suspensions due to Internet Use Policy violations occur in the future, letters will be delivered to offenders and documented by library staff.

The findings in the Grand Jury report do not offer a reason for their recommendation. There appears to be insufficient evidence that Benicia residents desire to have Internet access filtered. To the contrary, following the Solano Board of Supervisors' direction of November 5, 2005 to install filters on Solano County libraries, a number of Benicia residents expressed appreciation and support for Internet access remaining unfiltered at the Benicia Public Library.

If there are any further questions regarding this issue, please have your staff contact me at (707) 746-4343 or via email at [dsmikahl@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:dsmikahl@ci.benicia.ca.us).