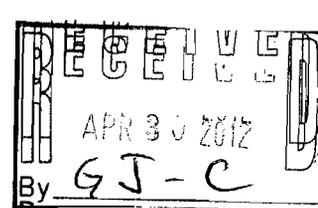




Gary R. Stanton
Sheriff/Coroner

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April 26, 2012

Honorable Paul L. Beeman
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Solano Superior Court
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Re: Sheriff's Response to FY2011/2012 Solano County Grand Jury Inspection of the Sheriff-Coroner's Office; Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1 – *The exterior security of the Coroner's facility is inadequate.*

Response to Finding 1 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 1 – *The Sheriff-Coroner install a state-of-the-art alarm system so that the Sheriff's Office dispatch center is alerted of any intrusion.*

Response to Recommendation 1 – The Sheriff agrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury. Funds will be identified to alarm the exterior access doors and route that alarm to the Dispatch Center.

Finding 2 – *Interior security of the facility is lacking. The evidence room and the property room are secured by a manual door lock.*

Response to Finding 2 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 2 – *The Sheriff-Coroner replace the manual door locks with a card key system, which would add additional security and accountability for access into sensitive areas.*

Response to recommendation 2 – The Sheriff agrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury. The funds necessary to replace the key operated dead bolts with card access readers will be included in the next budget request. If funds become available earlier, the security upgrade will be completed at that time.

Dedicated to Community Service

Finding 3 – *Storage of reports is inadequate.*

Response to finding 3 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 3 – *The Sheriff-Coroner replace the plastic storage system with a system sufficient to protect documents from fire and flood.*

Response to Recommendation 3 – The Sheriff agrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury. The Sheriff Office has previous experience with creating electronic copies and storage of vital records utilizing a system called Documentum and electronic storage media. An electronic copy of Coroner records can be produced cost effectively and stored off site in a secure location as a duplicate of the existing hard copy record. Utilizing the assistance of volunteers and pre-existing hardware and software, this task can be accomplished relatively quickly.

Finding 4 - *The Coroner Procedural Manual was last updated March, 2004. The eight-year-old manual does not contain current operating procedures and job specifications.*

Response to finding 4 – The Sheriff agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

Recommendation 4 - *The Sheriff-Coroner review and update the manual annually.*

Response to recommendation 4 – The Sheriff agrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury. The Sheriff's Office will complete the update of the Coroner Procedural Manual and initiate a process to review the manual annually and complete necessary updates.

Finding 5 - *Coroner's Office staff does not appear to have the correct information concerning obtaining funds on a timely basis for professional consultants.*

Response to finding 5 – The Sheriff disagrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

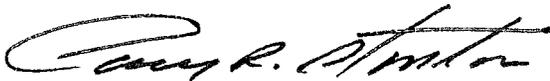
Recommendation 5 - *The Sheriff-Coroner instruct staff on correct procedures for funding consultant services and include clear and precise instructions on funding additional professional consultant services in the Coroner's Procedural Manual.*

Response to recommendation 5 – The Sheriff disagrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury pertaining to the necessity to instruct staff on the procedure for accessing funds for professional consulting. Coroner Staff have been adequately instructed on the correct procedure for accessing funds to hire professional consultation. Historically, all requests for professional consultation have been approved, indicating that staff members have been instructed and are fully aware of this procedure. A budget line item for professional consultation has been established and the fund shows no history of being depleted. Our system of checks and balances pertaining to the use of public funds requires some reasonable justification to access. Funds for professional consultation are made available by request to the Chief Deputy Coroner. Candidly, this process requires a five minute meeting with the Chief Deputy Coroner to gain approval. Apparently not every employee of the Coroner's Office appreciates having to ask for permission to spend public funds.

The Sheriff agrees with the recommendation of the Grand Jury to *“include clear and precise instructions on funding additional professional consultant services in the Coroner Procedural Manual”*. If the Grand Jury finds some value in adding the procedure for accessing funds for professional consultation to the Coroner’s Procedural Manual, we will do so.

I would like to thank the Solano County Grand Jury for their time invested in the review of the Coroner’s Office and their report of findings and recommendations. As always, the findings, recommendations and positive comments of the Solano County Grand Jury are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary R. Stanton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "S".

Gary R. Stanton
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Solano County Grand Jury
County Administrator’s Office