



County of Santa Cruz

Grand Jury

701 Ocean Street, Room 318-1
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2099

April 16, 2015

To the citizens and employees of Santa Cruz County,

The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury here presents its Final Reports. Each subject we have reported was extensively investigated and carefully reviewed. These Final Reports provide you with facts which have been verified from more than one source, along with an assessment of the impacts or problems these facts reveal, called Findings, followed by our Recommendations to fix or improve any revealed issues. Our governing bodies will then respond to these reports in the manner prescribed by law, and their Responses will subsequently also be made public.

These reports are effective only when they are both read and acted upon. Their recommendations give the citizens and employees of Santa Cruz County an opportunity to improve governance for our all of us in this county. We sincerely hope that they will.

The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury are your fellow citizens. Each year, jurors are selected through a qualified, primarily random process. We serve for one year, and may continue for a second year. Jurors come from a variety backgrounds and interests and this is reflected in our choice of investigations. We are an independent body with powers and responsibilities outlined in the State Constitution and Penal Codes; we strive to impartially investigate and report on important issues in Santa Cruz County that pertain to local government. Our service requires training, considerable hours of effort and continual focus on performing our task responsibly. We have worked this year to present to you information we hope benefits both the governing bodies in our County and all interested citizens.

I would like to thank all of the jurors with whom I served for their earnest, thoughtful, persistence and diligence. I have been impressed by the skills and dedication they brought to the task. Each juror contributed in his or her unique way - some excelled in research and interviews, others in thoughtful analysis and insight, or the ability to view a problem from a different perspective. Our reports benefited from those who provided balanced data presentation as well as forceful, persuasive writing, editing, and review. Jurors handled the technical issues, grand jury procedures and meeting protocols needed for the task. I am grateful to all my fellow jurors for their many hours of effort performed on behalf of the people of Santa Cruz County.

Our deliberations and investigations have required considerable effort on the part of many in government as well. We were aided in our task throughout the year and I thank those who have responded so positively and been helpful at nearly every turn. We could not have worked effectively without the assistance of staff members, even those who were working in areas under scrutiny. I believe anyone who serves as a grand juror cannot help but be impressed by so many people who serve skillfully in our County, City and other local governing bodies and departments.

I would like to thank specifically our Supervising Judge Rebecca Connolly, Deputy County Counsel Jason Heath, and County Auditor-Controller Mary Jo Walker. Many others have helped with practicalities, especially Peter Detlefs and Beau Hawksford in the County Administrator's Office, and Shauna Soldate of the General Services Department. The Sheriff's Office staff has generously worked to support us in fulfilling our legal requirement to review and inspect the physical jail facilities they supervise.

Though our deliberations must always remain confidential, and these Reports are our only product, I can heartily recommend service on the Grand Jury. Our service has been a source of lessons in understanding the scope and responsibilities of governance and has deepened our awareness of issues we explored within our community.

My sincere thanks to so many,

Sara Cordell, Foreperson
Santa Cruz County Grand Jury 2014-2015