City of Gridley

685 Kentucky Street

Gridley, CA 95948

FILED Butte County Superior Court SEP 11 2008 Sharol Strickland Clerk By K. Mortensen Deputy FILED

August 18, 2008

The Honorable Steven Howell, Presiding Judge
c/o Court Administration
Superior Court of California, County of Butte
One Court Street
Oroville, CA 95965

Dear Judge Howell,

We appreciate the opportunity to address the findings and recommendations concerning the City of Gridley contained in the 2007-2008 Grand Jury Report. We will address each finding and recommendation in the order in which they appear in the Grand Jury's Report.

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RECOMMENDATION #2

While the increase in the Jail Impact Fees approved by the Butte County BOS on July 10, 2007, is a major step forward, the Grand Jury wishes to take this opportunity to recommend that the incorporated towns and cities contribute to this shared, local need by collecting their own impact fees. These additional fees, collected within the incorporated areas, should insure prompt success in achieving AB900 funding to help alleviate the substandard conditions for women inmates in our county.

RESPONSE:

At this time, the City has not been formally asked by Butte County to collect a jail impact fee and has not been provided a report justifying an amount and "nexus" to make collection of such a fee compliant with State law. The County has historically provided jail services presumably subsidized by funds already collected from those residing or doing business in the incorporated areas.

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FINDING #1:

The Gridley Animal Haven operates a seven day facility with one, five-day-per-week, employee who also answers road calls away from the shelter. No regularly scheduled relief exists.

RESPONSE:

We partially agree with the finding. The City's Animal Control Officer works Monday thru Friday. She also comes in on the weekends to feed and water the animals, as well as clean the shelter. Additionally, the City of Gridley's Police Officers are trained and respond to animal control calls in the absence of the Animal Control Officer. They also feed and care for the animals on the weekend in the absence of the Animal Control Officer.

FINDING #2:

The Gridley Animal haven has no set hours to remain open for adoption of animals.

RESPONSE:

We disagree with this finding. The Gridley Animal Haven is open for animal adoption during its normal business hours. Additionally, appointments can be made during the evening or weekends for adoptions.

FINDING #3:

The Gridley Animal Haven keeps no logs of care and feedings on weekends or holidays.

RESPONSE:

We agree with the finding.

FINDING #4:

The Gridley Animal Haven houses its animals in cages with no outside facilities forcing them to urinate, defecate, eat and sleep in the same cage.

RESPONSE:

We partially agree with the finding. An outside run was just opened for dogs. We also have a volunteer who walks the dogs several times a week.

FINDING #5:

The Gridley Animal Haven operates at a noticeably substandard level compared to all other animal shelters in the county.

RESPONSE:

We disagree with the finding. Although the animal shelter building is older than other shelters in the County, our standard of care is comparable. We provide the animals needed veterinary care, food, shelter and personal care by compassionate staff.

We recently added a new cooling and ventilation system to the shelter to increase the comfort of the animals.

RECOMMENDATION #1

The City of Gridley needs to develop a plan to assure proper care of their animals seven days per week.

RESPONSE:

The animals at the Gridley Animal Haven receive proper care seven days a week. They are fed, watered and their cages are cleaned. In the absence of the Animal Control Officer, a Gridley Police Officer provides the daily care.

RECOMMENDATION #2

The City of Gridley should consider creating a volunteer program to help provide assistance at this shelter as soon as possible.

RESPONSE:

The Gridley Animal Haven has had a volunteer program in the past. However, we have not had any volunteers for approximately 18 months, which included the time during the Grand Jury visit. We now have a volunteer again and are continuing to recruit for more.

RECOMMENDATION #3

The City of Gridley should develop comprehensive procedures covering all aspects of animal care commonly used at other shelters to assure good health and proper care of the animals at its shelter.

RESPONSE:

This recommendation has been, and will continue to be, implemented.

RECOMMENDATION #4

Unless immediate action can be taken on these recommendations, the City of Gridley should consider closing its animal shelter and contracting the care of its animals to nearby shelters.

RESPONSE:

Action has been taken on the recommendations. The Gridley Animal Haven will continue to provide humane and compassionate care to the animals that are in the shelter. The City has no immediate plans to contract for shelter services.

Our Police Chief and we are very proud of the job and dedication our employees and volunteers put forth in achieving the overall mission of the Gridley Animal Haven. We are fortunate that the City's Animal Control services continue to receive tremendous support from our community.

Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to your final report. It was a sincere pleasure for members of staff to work with the Grand Jury during the last year or so as they sought to learn about our organization. We are most proud of our resources and the services we are able to provide.

Sincerely,

Jerry Ann Fichter, Mayor

Jerry Ann Fichter

CC: City Council
City Administrator
Chief of Police