

August 8, 2006

Honorable Judge Rodney Melville  
Presiding Judge  
Superior Court  
312-M East Cook Street  
Santa Maria, California 93455-5165

**Board of Supervisors' Response to the 2005-06 Civil Grand Jury Report on:  
"Water and Cemetery Districts"**

Dear Judge Melville:

During its regular meeting of Tuesday, August 8, 2006, the Board of Supervisors adopted the following responses as its responses to the 2005-06 Grand Jury's report on "Water and Cemetery Districts".

The Board of Supervisors thanks the Grand Jury for its findings and recommendations on this important matter.

---

***Finding 4***

*The Board of Supervisors does not supervise cemetery district board members or timely exercise its power to remove problematic district board members; these results in open-ended terms for cemetery board members, an insular culture, and decision-making based on whim.*

**Response:** The Board agrees in part and disagrees in part.

As cemetery districts are considered independent special districts with their own authorities and responsibilities, the Board does not supervise cemetery district board members. However, individual members of the Board of Supervisors do respond timely to proven allegations of misconduct by appointed cemetery district

board members, as illustrated by the timely response from Second District Supervisor Rose in requesting the appointment of three new members to the governing board of the Goleta Cemetery District after allegations of misconduct had surfaced and were proven true. Moreover, the Board of Supervisors has recently proactively reappointed or appointed Board members for all seven cemetery districts.

**Recommendation 3**

*County Supervisors in whose territory a special district lies should either attend a minimum of two meetings per year of those special districts or send a designee and have the designee brief the Supervisors in writing on the special district meetings.*

**Response:** This recommendation will be implemented at the discretion of each member of the Board of Supervisors.

**Recommendation 11**

*County Supervisors should have a written policy on what constitutes misconduct in, and triggers removal of, board members of independent special districts with appointed boards.*

**Response:** The recommendation will be implemented in the following manner: During calendar year 2006, the Board of Supervisors will consider adopting the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Code of Ethics for County Officials (copy attached) or a similar code of ethics as determined by the Board.

In addition, to the extent allowed by law, the Board will consider applying whatever code of ethics it may adopt to the boards, commissions, committees and special districts whose members are appointed by the Board.

Sincerely,

Joni Gray  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Ted Sten, Foreperson Civil Grand Jury 2005-06