

# Response to Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Ventura County Library

Report Date: June 7, 2013 Responding Agency/Dept. Board of Supervisors

Response Prepared by: Kaye Mand Title: CEO Analyst

## FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: \_\_\_\_\_
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefore.)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R-01, R-02, R-03, R-04 have been implemented.  
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.  
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ require further analysis.  
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: October 1, 2013

Signed:   
Peter C. Foy, Chair, Board of Supervisors

Number of pages attached: 2



## **Recommendations**

**R-01 The Grand Jury recommends that a strategy to expand the most successful summer reading library program be established.**

This recommendation has been implemented.

The Ventura County Library System (VCLS) has already begun the process of expanding outreach to increase student and volunteer participation in the Summer Reading Program (SRP). VCLS staff reached out to schools not only through informational flyers but also through class visits and presentations. To further highlight the SRP, presentations were made at various Boys and Girls Clubs and VCLS participated in the daylong Summerfest event in Ventura that reached over 7,000 children. In addition, the summer reading log is being made available not only at libraries, but also at the VCLS website and at various businesses. The Board of Supervisors supports this effort.

Also, to enhance access to library resources and to offer services in areas where a library is not conveniently located, a bookmobile is under construction.

**R-02 The Grand Jury recommends that a means to reach out to potential volunteers be initiated. There are a number of programs that could be staffed with volunteers. Also, the VCLS may find that the community will help support the development of new programs, such as:**

- **Used book sales**
- **Tutoring for remedial reading, English and mathematics, to relieve the VCCCD and enhance the services provided by the VCLS**
- **Enhanced study programs**
- **Research assistance and guidance**
- **Encourage more help from the list of organizations, identified as "Friends of the Library" and the local public**
- **Provide programs that showcase the library and expand public awareness, such as professional workshops and entertainment**
- **Pursue electronic and Internet programs that offer the library participants volumes of information and references that could not be housed within a small library**
- **Investigate the potential of linking the libraries within the VCLS, whereby every library within the system has total access to the collective information sources of the system libraries**
- **Pursue and encourage book clubs, business groups and organized educational entities to use the facilities in their local libraries.**

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This recommendation is partially implemented as a number of programs currently use volunteers. The Adult Literacy program which provides remedial reading instruction is one example. In addition, many of the programs listed above are currently offered by VCLS and utilize volunteers. While the Board acknowledges the VCLS recently implemented changes to move towards having professional librarians lead and supervise programs at all branches, the VCLS continues to seek and encourage volunteers to assist with programs and services.

The Board of Supervisors supports VCLS efforts to increase and enhance educational services and programs offered to the public through increased volunteer participation.

**R-03 The Grand Jury recommends that the library system be viewed on the basis of what it can provide to the community rather than from a monetary position. This may provide the incentive to find a means to allow libraries to meet or exceed the claims of independent systems and to become a credit to the County.**

The Board of Supervisors believes this recommendation has been implemented and is occurring and growing on an ongoing basis. The outreach noted in response to recommendation R-04 below is an example. Additionally, in response to the change in library use by the public, VCLS is also working towards a new model of library service that more closely aligns with how people use libraries. Examples include the increased availability and use of library services via the internet. (VCLS has added to its e-books and downloadable audio books collection) and the increased outreach to publicize the Summer Reading Program to address the loss of student reading skills. The Board of Supervisors supports the recommendation to view VCLS from the basis of what can be provided to the community; however this must be done in a sustainable and fiscally sound manner. We believe the Board has provided VCLS with flexibility in their FY 2013-14 budget to support this recommendation and implement the ongoing changes associated with its changing service model.

**R-04 The Grand Jury recommends that the VCLS administration invite city managers to discuss ways and means to assist in the improvement of libraries within their cities. This may initiate more involvement, enlightenment as to the potential of libraries, new ideas and possible additional funds and resources.**

This recommendation is currently standard practice. VCLS Staff meets with City Managers, City Staff, Library Advisory Commissions and City Councils to provide information about library services. These meetings are on-going and continue to provide a forum for discussion with City Staff on the best and most cost effective ways to provide library services to the public.