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**RECEIVED**  
VENTURA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

**FEB 11 2014**

**OFFICE OF THE  
PRESIDING JUDGE**

February 7, 2014

The Honorable Brian J. Back  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
County of Ventura  
800 S. Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT – VENTURA COUNTY LIBRARY

Dear Judge Back:

The Ventura County Grand Jury issued a report entitled “Final Report – Ventura County Library” on May 9, 2013. The report addresses the administration of the Ventura County Library System (the “VCLS”). At the conclusion of the Report, the Grand Jury requested a response from the City to Finding FI-01, FI-02, FI-05 and FI-07 and Recommendations R-01, R-02, R-03 and R-04. We provide the following responses to these Findings and Recommendations to Penal Code 933.05.

**Finding**

*FI-01 The Grand Jury found that the VCLA is not conducting adequate outreach into the community to gain volunteers. It also limits their ability to meet with school administration in order to demonstrate their available services, and to obtain the assistance of the community to provide specific programming, all due to limited staff.*

The City agrees with this finding. Minimal community outreach efforts were noted, and it appeared to be due to the lack of staff and financial resources.

*FI-02 Used book sales provide extra income. However, not all the libraries in the VCLS take part in this venture. Ojai appears to be the most successful due to its volunteer base.*

The City agrees with this finding.

*FI-05 The summer reading program is very successful. It deserves an opportunity to expand through greater networking. The program would also be enhanced by asking for more volunteer assistance.*

The City agrees with this finding.

*FI-07 Based on interviews, observations, and analysis of information, the Grand Jury determined that a well functioning and community supported library system can potentially provide invaluable service to the community.*

The City agrees with this finding.

### **Recommendations**

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

The Summer Reading Program that the Ventura County Library System has previously used is part of a nationwide curriculum for the Summer Reading program. Expansion of the program could be a positive for the Library System.

*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 staff 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 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 in the system has total access to the collective information sources of the system of libraries; and pursue and encourage book clubs, business groups and organized educational entities to use the facilities in their local libraries.*

The City is supportive of the County of Ventura's effort to expand the use of volunteers in the County Libraries and expand its programs and services to enhance the use of the County Library System.

*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.*

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Libraries are vital meeting places within the community that provide a wealth of information, activities and services to citizens of all ages, incomes and ethnic backgrounds.

*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 possibly additional funds and resources.*

The City of Fillmore would be more than willing to participate in discussions relative to the provision of library services.

We appreciate the efforts of the Grand Jury in reviewing this matter and providing the City an opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Minjares', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Manuel Minjares  
Mayor