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VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Donald D. Coleman
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
County of Ventura
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Re: Detention Facilities and Related Law Enforcement Issues

Dear Judge Coleman:

The City of Ventura received the 2014-2015 Grand Jury report, "Detention Facilities and Related Law Enforcement Issues". In accordance with Penal Code section 933.05, we submit this response to the Grand Jury findings and recommendations.

The City Council appreciates and welcomes the efforts of the Grand Jury in annually inspecting facilities of incarceration in the County.

The Grand Jury requires a response to findings FI-07, FI-10, recommendations R-02, and R-12.

Findings

FI-07: *Proposition 47's consequences, both intended and unintended, are only beginning to be evaluated. Early indications are that it may be successful in reducing the State prisoner population, but the effects on local law enforcement agencies and communities are yet to be understood.*

Response to FI-07: The City agrees with the findings. The Ventura Police Department is currently evaluating, and will continue to evaluate the effects that Proposition 47 is having on the Part I Crime Rate and on recidivism in the City of Ventura.

FI-10: *The City of Ventura Police Department is operating with staffing and infrastructure constraints, which may be contributory factors in dealing with that city's crime rate.*

Response to FI-10: The City agrees with the findings. The Ventura Police Department is currently staffed with similar personnel numbers as it was 20 years ago despite population increases. Ventura Police reached its peak personnel levels in 2008-2009. The Great Recession

contributed to budget reductions and a loss of positions within the City and Police Department. Within available funding levels, positions are now being considered to be added back as the City and economy recover and City revenues increase. This will allow the Police Department to staff positions that can more appropriately address the offenders responsible for the larger proportion of the crime as well as to improve public outreach and education through various programs.

Recommendations

R-02: *The Grand Jury recommends that the Sheriff's Office, Probation, and City councils closely track and evaluate the impact of Proposition 47 on local law enforcement agencies and communities and report findings to the board of supervisors.*

Response to R-02: This recommendation has already been implemented. Ventura Police has been and continues to collect data on the effects of Proposition 47 and crime in the City of Ventura. The City of Ventura works closely with the other city and county agencies in this effort.

R-12: *The Grand Jury recommends that the Ventura City Council improve the Police Department information systems infrastructure and increase staffing levels consistent with that city's needs.*

Response to R-12: This recommendation has already been implemented. Ventura Police Department utilizes computers in the detention facility to access Ventura County Integrated Justice System to pre-book arrestees before being transferred to the main jail. The City is in the process of replacing and updating all computers and operating systems citywide. As the economy recovers and the City's budget is strengthened, the City will consider new positions for the Police Department.

On July 27, 2015 the Ventura City Council approved this Grand Jury report response and authorized the Mayor to make this reply. We appreciate the Grand Jury's efforts in looking into this important matter.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Heitmann
Mayor