



CITY OF SUISUN
POLICE DEPARTMENT

701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, CA 94585

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police



July 15, 2024

2023 – 2024 Solano County Grand Jury

Wayne B. Goodman, Foreperson
Solano County Grand Jury
California Superior Court
Office: 707-435-2575
Fax: 707-435-2566

RE: Written Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Mr. Goodman:

I am in receipt of the Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2023
2024 titled: Solano County Canine Officer Training Handling & End of Career Policies

I have attached a written response to this report as required.

If you need anything further from me, please call me at (707)421-7383 or email me at
aroth@suisun.com.

Sincerely,

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police

DIVISIONS: AREA CODE (707)

DISPATCH / RECORDS 421-7373 ■ ADMINISTRATION 421-7350 ■ CODE ENFORCEMENT 421-3223

FAX 422-8074

Regarding Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2023-2024 titled:
Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies
June 21, 2024

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
by Suisun City Police Chief Aaron Roth:

FINDING 1 – *On-going in-service training with canines and canine handlers is currently taking place, but not consistent across all agencies throughout the County. Canine pre-deployment training has generally been through a third party outside of the law enforcement agency. In the past, pre-deployment training practices had been a harsh environment for the canine. Occasionally severe discipline was used to train the canine causing the canine a high level of stress during and after the training period.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – *Use an outside agency for pre-deployment training only if the training facility and trainers are adhering to Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) training.*

Recommendation would appear to be a best practice followed if Suisun City were to employ canine teams.

FINDING 2 – *While there is a retirement plan for the Patrol Officers, there is no standard Canine Officers retirement plan available. This leaves the canine handler to cover all medical costs which may include injuries that occurred while in service.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – *Provide all retired Canine Officers with medical insurance coverage at time of retirement, similar to that of the Patrol Officers. Medical coverage must cover both the scheduled routine medical issues and emergency medical services if ever needed. A meal allowance must also be in place for all retired Canine Officers. Create a standardized procedure in place for handling of retired Canine Officers until end of life. In the placement of a retiring Canine Officer the current handler should be given first choice. In the event that they cannot take on that role, there needs to be a process in place for continued care.*

Recommendation would appear to be both an MOU and city policy issue to be reviewed by all stakeholders.

FINDING 3 – *Not all law enforcement agencies within the county have Canine Officers. The law enforcement agencies that do see multiple benefits of having the Canine Officers on staff. In some cases, an increase in non-confrontational apprehensions is as much as ten times over those of a non-Canine Team.*

Respondent agrees with the finding that not all agencies have canine officers, as Suisun City PD does not have any. Respondent would also agree that there are studies showing apprehensions of violent individuals by canine officers to be less confrontational overall than apprehensions without canine officers.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – *Increase Canine Officer staffing throughout the County. All law enforcement agencies should have at least one Canine Officer per shift. For the larger agencies, more Canine Officers may be needed to cover all needed situations and areas. Canine Officer/population ratio should be at least one Canine Officer per 15,000 population.*

Respondent has not been able to implement a canine officer program due to both staffing and budgetary constraints and is currently unable to follow recommendation.

FINDING 4 – *There are only a few Peer Support Canines available to assist in emotional and behavioral support within a few agencies. Peer Support Canines play an important role in monitoring and recognizing the emotional and behavioral needs within high stress events and are able to soothe and support through their calming and caring personalities.*

Respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – *Increase Peer Support Canine staffing. All law enforcement agencies need to have at least one Peer Support Canine per shift.*

Respondent is not able to implement peer support canine staffing due to both staffing and budgetary constraints.

FINDING 5 – *Canine activity and incident tracking throughout the county differs between agencies. Although being tracked, the agencies have adopted their own manner of tracking and documenting. This allows the media to exploit only the rare aggressive activities with little exposure to the positive side of the Canine Officer's contribution.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – *Activity and incident tracking within the county for Canine Teams need to be consistent. Have Canine Team activity reports readily available to the public.*

Respondent believes consistency in activity reports would be helpful if the cities all trained together. As with many types of documents, canine team activity reports would appear to be a document readily available to the public to increase transparency.

FINDING 6 – *Canine Officers no longer engage in crowd control, as having canines in large crowds over stressed the Canine Officer, causing confusion.*

Respondent has no Solano County canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – *Continue using the Canine Officers only in patrol, detection and search and rescue.*

Respondent believes this would be a best practice with regard to canine officer deployment.

