

# DIXON POLICE DEPARTMENT



August 8, 2021

The Honorable John B. Ellis, Presiding Judge  
Solano County Superior Court  
Department 23, Room 306  
600 Union Avenue  
Fairfield, CA 94533

**Re:** 2020-2021 Grand Jury Report Entitled: Does Bias Infiltrate Solano County Law Enforcement?

Judge Ellis:

As required by California Penal Code section 933.05, the City of Dixon (the "City") Police Department submits to you the following responses to the findings and recommendations received from the Solano County Civil Grand Jury regarding the above-referenced Civil Grand Jury Report.

## **FINDINGS:**

**FINDING 1** – The Solano County Civil Grand Jury found that local law enforcement agencies comply with the statutory requirements when providing training. However, bias training is only required and conducted every five years. Local law enforcement administrations agreed there is too much time between training sessions.

**Response:** The City agrees employees and believes the organization benefits from frequent and consistent training, including implicit bias and diversity.

**FINDING 2** – Most law enforcement administrations identified lack of adequate funding as an impairment to providing additional and/or more frequent training.

**Response:** The City agrees with the finding training is critical to addressing bias and diversity challenges in law enforcement.

**FINDING 3** - More under-represented people need to be represented in decision-making roles.

**Response:** The City agrees with the notion inclusion and representation are critical to the health and evolution of the organization.

**FINDING 4** – California Penal Code section 13651(a) states: “Every police department, sheriff’s office, or other entity that employs peace officers shall review the job description that is used in the recruitment and hiring of those peace officers and shall make changes that emphasize community-based policing, familiarization between law enforcement and community residents, and collaborative problem solving, while de-emphasizing the paramilitary aspects of the job.” All administrators mentioned the general population’s lack of trust of law enforcement officers.

**Response:** The City agrees with the challenging national climate referenced in the finding.

**FINDING 5** – For some law enforcement agencies employee turnover is an issue.

**Response:** The City agrees with the finding generally; however, the Dixon Police Department has achieved a period of relative stability over the last several years.

**FINDING 6** – There are reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation that extremist groups are infiltrating law enforcement agencies. While local law enforcement agencies investigate applicants as part of the vetting process, they rely on employee and citizen complaints to identify current staff social media postings for extremist ideology.

**Response:** The City agrees with the underlying challenge in identifying and removing extremist ideology from law enforcement ranks.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**RECOMMENDATION 1** – County law enforcement agencies adopt a more frequent schedule of diversity and bias training over and above the current five-year requirement.

**Response:** The City offers training in excess of and more frequently than statutory requirements; the City plans to continue to provide implicit bias and diversity training as often as practical. All members of the Police Department have completed diversity or implicit bias training in the last 18 months.

**Recommendation 2a:** Law enforcement administrations seek increased funding for diversity and bias training.

**Recommendation 2b:** Collaborate with other local law enforcement agencies in providing diversity and bias training.

**Response:** The City does not believe funding is an issue in providing this training and regularly provides it in excess of the statutory requirements; the City is always expanding collaborative training opportunities with allied agencies.

**Recommendation 3:** More under-presented people need to be represented in decision making roles.

**Response:** To the extent possible, the City has created pathways for employees to develop themselves for advancement. Our vision is to provide meaningful opportunities for promotion to staff by offering formal internal development programs and access to external training and mentors, among others.

**Recommendation 4a:** Ensure that training de-emphasizes a paramilitary approach to policing.

**Recommendation 4b:** Use a collaborative approach with community organizations to problem solve.

**Response:** The City has consistently adopted progressive policies and strategies which emphasize building trust with the community to address crime and quality of life issues. These included changes to the uniform policy to remove military-looking items and expanded outreach programs with dedicated staff assigned to community engagement.

**Recommendation 5b:** Law enforcement agencies fund ways to achieve pay equity in the county to limit turnover in smaller communities.

**Response:** Through aggressive contracts with enhancement to pay and benefits, the City has reduced turnover dramatically and is near full-staffing. Pay is one (albeit an important one) element to reducing turnover. Access to different assignments, feeling valued and respected are other significant factors in retaining employees.

**RECOMMENDATION 6a—**Solano County law enforcement agencies monitor social media postings by current staff for extremist content.

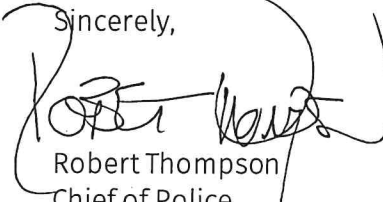
**RECOMMENDATION 6b—** Law enforcement agency administrations keep up with the technology that their employees are using.

**RECOMMENDATION 6c—** Law enforcement agency administrations research and implement technology that assists in monitoring social media without violating first amendment rights.

**Response:** There are many legal and practical challenges smaller agencies face in regularly monitoring the social media posts of employees. Chief among them is the need for dedicated

staff to try and locate, identify, and monitor activity among police personnel while at the same time be sensitive to First Amendment rights. Also, a significant challenge is the sheer number of social media platforms that need to be monitored, coupled with the ability for staff to access and use multiple platforms simultaneously. As noted, First Amendment issues also cloud the City's ability to police online conduct outside what is already Police Department policy regarding the use of social media.

Sincerely,



Robert Thompson  
Chief of Police