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September 11, 2012

To: The Honorable Paul L. Beeman  
Presiding Judge

From: Supervisor Linda J. Seifert  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Re: Responses to FY2011/2012 Solano County Grand Jury Report titled, "Inspection of Solano County Probation Department Juvenile Detention Facility Complex"

The Honorable Judge Beeman:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(c) and 933.05, the Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) responds to the findings and recommendations contained in the 2011/12 Grand Jury Report released on June 6, 2012 concerning the Probation Department.

## Finding 1

*Wards are transported from the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex to the Vallejo and Fairfield Courts utilizing a minimum of two JDF escorts. This process is time consuming, costly, and a safety concern to the community.*

### **Response to Finding 1**

**Probation:** The Probation Department agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury.

## Recommendation 1

*Solano County Probation Department should explore an alternative to transporting juveniles to court in Fairfield and Vallejo.*

### **Response Recommendation 1**

**Probation:** This recommendation will be implemented. Probation will work with the Courts in exploring alternatives to transporting juveniles to court in Fairfield and Vallejo. Unfortunately, the only remedy to this issue appears to be the construction of a courtroom at the JDF. Without funding from the state court or extensive County resources, which are not available at this time, this remedy appears unlikely in the foreseeable future.

**Board of Supervisors:** This recommendation will be implemented as set forth in the response by Probation, and the Board reiterates the fact that any remedy at this time is highly unlikely. It is important to note that a dedicated court facility is more than just a hearing room. The facility

infrastructure to support a juvenile court includes many rooms, including, but not limited to, a judge's chambers, attorney-client conference rooms, and office areas for staff support and assumes that the staffing of such a facility is likely in the near term. Neither the County of Solano nor the Courts have the resources at this time to construct a court facility at the Juvenile Detention Facility nor the ability to immediately staff additional court facility at a third county location. The staffing of a separate facility, at this time or in the near term, by the local court is less likely given the State's requirement for budget reductions in all local court operating budgets throughout the state, which locally has resulted in a number of operational and staffing changes in the Solano Court operations designed to achieve the required savings, including reinstating court furlough days in FY2012/13. The location, design, construction and staffing of a third location for court operations would require further analysis to determine if it were more cost effective, when all costs are calculated and compared to the current County expenditure for the transfer of juveniles for juvenile court proceedings, which would continue whether the juveniles are escorted across the juvenile center complex or transported to one of the two existing court facilities.

### **Finding 2**

*Juvenile Detention Facility complex does not have perimeter fence-line security surveillance cameras.*

#### **Response to Finding 2**

**Probation:** The Probation Department partially agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury. Some sections of the perimeter fence do not have cameras facing out toward the security fence. However, the closed circuit television system (CCTV) was designed to capture views of the exterior sides, doors and grounds of the facility. This security system design continues to meet the existing security needs of the facility.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board accepts this finding and agrees with Probation's response to Finding 2.

### **Recommendation 2**

*Solano County Probation Department should install security surveillance cameras to observe the perimeter fence line.*

#### **Response to Recommendation 2**

**Probation:** This recommendation will not be implemented at this time. The Probation Department is currently evaluating its current security system, including the existing CCTV system, as part of the regular Capital Facilities Improvement Plan. The evaluation will include the need to upgrade the existing CCTV system, relocation of existing cameras, and the placement of additional cameras. The Grand Jury recommendation will be considered as part of the comprehensive evaluation of the security systems.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board agrees with Probation's response to Recommendation 2.

### **Finding 3**

*The produce grown in the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex garden is not used for the benefit of the wards.*

#### **Response to Finding 3**

**Probation:** The Probation Department partially disagrees with the finding of the Grand Jury. The produce grown is part of a pilot project launched in 2011 to foster life skills and pride in workmanship among youth in New Foundations. The harvest from this small garden is shared with all minors at New Foundations. The excess harvest is donated to local food banks. As part of this project, staff and minors have prepared the produce grown in the garden in a variety of ways (the most popular being zucchini bread). Last year's harvest culminated in a barbeque hosted by the Master Gardeners featuring all of the produce grown in the New Foundations' garden. New Foundations' staff and minors feel they are reaping the benefits of the garden.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board partially disagrees with this finding and agrees with Probation's detailed response.

**Recommendation 3**

*Solano County Probation Department will explore expanding the gardening program for the benefit of the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex and the wards.*

**Response Recommendation 3**

**Probation:** This recommendation has already been implemented as described in the response to Finding 3.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board agrees with Probation's response to Recommendation 3.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda J. Seifert, Chair  
Solano County Board of Supervisors

cc: Jay Speck, Solano County Superintendent of Schools