Solano County Department of Information Technology

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July 15, 2014

The Honorable E. Bradley Nelson
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Solano Superior Court
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

RE: Response to the 2013/2014 Grand Jury Report – Geographic Information System

Dear Honorable Presiding Judge Nelson:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(c) and 933.05, I am responding to the findings and recommendations in the FY2013/14 Grand Jury Report received on June 11, 2014 on the Geographic Information System that pertain to matters under my control as the Chief Information Officer and Registrar of Voters.

Finding 1
The Memorandum of Understanding has not been completed by all agencies which has delayed the scheduling of Pictometry's flyover.

Response to Finding 1
The Department of Information Technology agrees with this finding. The approval of the MOU by the participating agencies delayed the signing of the Pictometry contract and, in conjunction with the early spring-like weather, caused the deferment of the flyover until late 2014 or early 2015.

Recommendation 1
Memorandum of Understanding approvals be completed in a timely manner to ensure the flyover in 2014 takes place.

Response to Recommendation 1
This recommendation has been implemented and the MOU has been approved. The flyover will take place late 2014 or early 2015 depending upon weather and consensus of the participating agencies. Given the size and scope of the project, funding and

approvals must be obtained from the individual governing boards and councils of each of the participating agencies. The Department of Information Technology has little influence on the timing of individual agency approval processes. While the County worked with individual agencies and their approval workflow process, there were several issues inherit in the MOU process that caused delays.

- Budgets needed to align with timing of the flights.
- Agency attorney review, comments, and clarification requests on the terms of the MOU required rewriting and redistribution of the MOU.
- Significant amounts of time were required for agencies to prepare materials and scheduled Board or Council meetings.

The County started discussing the project the previous year to ensure that agencies allocated sufficient funding in their budgets as well as circulating the MOU seven months prior to the anticipated start date, but apparently this did not provide for sufficient time. So as to provide sufficient time for approval of the next MOU, the County will work with participating agencies one year prior to the expiration of the current MOU.

Finding 5
There is no user group available to share information on data, methods, procedures and training.

Response to Finding 5
Department of Information Technology agrees with this finding. Currently, there is no user group available to share information on data, methods, procedures and training. Outside of the ReGIS steering committee, previous efforts in the formation of user groups (both internal and external) has had mixed success. Attendance typically diminishes over a short period of time, reducing the value of the planning and coordinating effort.

Recommendation 5
User group be formed to share data, methods, procedures, and training.

Response to Recommendation 5
This recommendation requires further analysis. Department of Information Technology agrees with this recommendation on principle but the establishment of an effective user group will require additional staff resources to adequately facilitate and coordinate. Currently, the GIS staff is evaluating alternate methodologies for the delivery of training and working group sessions through the use of technology.

Finding 6
Awareness of Geographic Information Systems and its attendant benefits is limited.

Response to Finding 6
Department of Information Technology agrees with this finding. Awareness of Geographic Information Systems and its attendant benefits is limited. The predominance of Internet-based mapping services such as Google further confuses the issue due to the similarity of the presentation. Missing from the public eye is the Meta

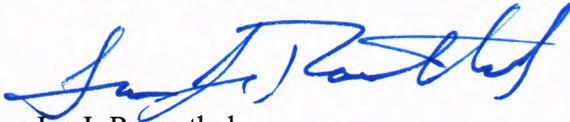data behind the County's GIS which gives GIS the analytical power to accomplish valuable spatial analysis.

Recommendation 6
Department of Information Technology schedule and promote public forums to increase awareness to support the Geographic Information System use in Solano County.

Response to Recommendation 6
This recommendation requires further analysis. The Department of Information Technology has conducted workshops focused on local agencies, but there has been little done specifically geared to the public. The GIS Staff is evaluating how the public might be involved in a half day forum that would allow regional agencies the opportunity to showcase some of their use of the technology and the benefits of multi-agency collaboration. The Department feels that the most relevant GIS projects of interest to the public would likely be the individual agency applications, so their participation is critical to a successful event.

Respectfully submitted,

Ira J. Rosenthal
Chief Information Officer / Registrar of Voters

cc: Grand Jury
        Board of Supervisors
        Birgitta Corsello, County Administrator
        Dennis Bunting, County Counsel