

## DIRECTORS

GLEN A. GRANT  
PRESIDENT - DIV#3

JOHN D. KLUGE  
VICE PRESIDENT - DIV #1

GUIDO E. COLLA  
DIV #4

BOB BISHOP  
DIV #2

MIKE GERMAN  
DIV #5



## OFFICERS

CARY KEATEN  
GENERAL MANAGER

JAMES S. DANIELS, P.E.  
DISTRICT ENGINEER

MINASIAN, SPRUANCE,  
MEITH, SOARES & SEXTON  
ATTORNEYS

October 7, 2014

Solano County Grand Jury  
Solano County Superior Court  
600 Union Avenue  
Fairfield, CA 94533

**Re: Response of Solano Irrigation District  
2012-2014 Solano County Grand Jury Report  
Geographic Information System (GIS)  
Response of Solano Irrigation District to  
Findings 2, 3 and 4 of the Grand Jury Report**

Solano County Grand Jury:

The Board of Directors of the Solano Irrigation District hereby make the following responses to Findings 2, 3 and 4 as requested by the email sent by Morland McManigal, Foreman.

**Finding 2: "Some upper levels of public agency management are not actively supporting and participating in the implementation of ReGIS."**

**Response:** Solano Irrigation District does not believe that the finding relates to Solano Irrigation District. Our upper management and planning and engineering personnel have been supportive of GIS even though the District at this time does not have a GIS. The Board of Directors have prioritized GIS in our annual Capital Improvement Program and provided funding in the current year. Planning of the program to acquire and implement a GIS is in progress with presentation to the District Board for approval to proceed being planned for this fall. There has been, however, at least one timing problem regarding a funding commitment to performing the Pictometry aerial imagery as requested by the Solano County Department of Information Technology. While the Pictometry project had been proposed to the District as early as April 2013, the District was not in a position to make use of the imagery and could not make the business case to participate in the project. Things changed when the District's 2014 Capital Improvement Program included the project to implement a GIS and discussions with Solano County DoIT and Pictometry revealed a real advantage to the District to participate in the project and use the resulting imagery in its own GIS applications. In the case mentioned, the request for commitment of funding that was presented to the Solano Irrigation District General Manager included a

deadline that was not possible to meet because the amount of funding requested required Board of Directors' approval. Subsequently, the funding was approved by the Board of Directors and the Multi-Agency Funding Agreement was executed and forwarded to the Solano County Department of Information Technology.

The District will attempt to coordinate its activities with that of the Solano County Administration in charge of this program. Dealing with a large group of public agencies who have financing constraints and also have constraints in regard to the meetings of their governing Board is difficult, and we will attempt to work with Solano County on those difficulties resulting in delays.

**Finding 3: "Management attendance at ReGIS meetings has been poor."**

**Response:** Solano Irrigation District personnel have obviously been involved in a number of pressing matters in the last few years relating to the drought and needs to reduce District expenses because of substantial changes in the District operations. District management has been directed to review its participation in implementation of the ReGIS and would encourage measures to make this participation more efficient, such as providing plenty of notice of meetings or discussions, allowing participation by telephone conference calls, and providing documents well in advance of meetings or the need for determination. These comments should not be deemed to be a criticism or suggestion that there have been past deficiencies. Public agencies in Solano County have been particularly stressed by economic conditions, urban impacts upon agriculture, and plans of the State of California and others for water resources affecting Solano County, including the Delta. In our observation, there is a high level of cooperation among public agencies in Solano County who generally operate in an efficient fashion, but we seem to be constantly barraged by State and Federal government with new requirements, demands and concerns.

**Finding 4: "Representation of agencies at ReGIS meetings has been mostly by non-management employees who have limited or no commitment authority."**

**Response:** The Solano Irrigation District Board of Directors generally meets once monthly. Unless we are aware of a particular action item requiring a yes or no vote, the staff of Solano Irrigation District cannot present the matter to the District Board for action at the final moment because of notice requirements for meetings of the Board. We do not know what is referred to in the comment, but we can imagine that there is a high level of frustration in the time it takes for individuals who may attend meetings regarding the GIS system either by telephone or in person to express their consensus and agreement, and then note that they will go back to their Board or City Council for approval. Occasionally an item does not get addressed at a Board meeting or meeting of the City Council and there is a postponement or further delay. Describing the mechanism that may be referred to does not offer a solution. One possibility that we are informed may improve conditions is for the staff of the Solano County Department of Information Technology to put forward the arguments in favor and against as they conceive of them in an agenda item well in advance, say 60 days prior to a proposed meeting, send it directly to the public agencies for the governing board's consideration and convening a meeting perhaps 35 days before the proposed final date for approval for representatives of the City and Districts, and providing for

return of proxies or directions from each of the member units directly, not depending upon representatives who have authority being physically present at the meeting.

We will be happy to cooperate with you to work on this problem. To a great degree, the monetary contributions here require almost unanimity to perform the work. Perhaps changes in the memorandum for governance and contributions to this program should be considered to provide one vote per dollar of assessment proposed, and provide that the assessment will be binding if it is approved by say 80% of the Dollars involved in that particular expenditure. In that way, non-attendees or persons not responding promptly do not prevent the work being performed and the value of the GIS expenditure being received by everyone. In that circumstance, Solano County would have an action to collect against the non-responding or non-attending parties, but hopefully it would not come to that end.

We would be happy to discuss these matters and appreciate the Grand Jury's interest in the subject.

Sincerely,



Acting GM for C.K.

Cary Keaten, General Manager  
Solano Irrigation District