



San Mateo County Harbor District

Board of Harbor Commissioners

Pietro Parravano, President
James Tucker, Vice President
William Holsinger, Treasurer & Secretary
Sabrina Brennan, Commissioner
Robert Bernardo, Commissioner

Peter Grenell, General Manager

August 11, 2014

Honorable Lisa A. Novak
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Response to the 2013-2014 Civil Grand Jury Report Titled: "Partly Cloudy with a Chance of Information: Investigating the Transparency of Independent Special Districts' Websites."

Dear Honorable Ms. Novak:

At the Public meeting held on August 6, 2014, the San Mateo County Harbor District approved this response on behalf of the San Mateo County Harbor District Commissioners; I have been directed to submit the following District response to the Civil Grand Jury findings and recommendations pertaining to the above-referenced report:

Response to Findings:

F1. Some districts are misinformed about the relative affordability of professionally created websites.

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. San Mateo County Harbor District has a professional created website.

F2. Special districts lack trained in-house staff to regularly update website information.

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District employs a qualified firm to update information on its website.

F3. Privacy concerns of Boards of Directors or Commissioners result in a lack of readily accessible contact information.

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District does not agree with this



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finding as it applies to the District. The District's website contains contact information for all commissioners.

- F4. Not all special districts recognize the benefits of transparency delivered through district websites.*

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about their districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District is committed to transparency delivered through its website.

- F5. No County independent special district has completed the District of Distinction program offered by Special District Leadership Foundation. (SDLF).*

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District has not completed this program.

- F6. No independent special district in the County has yet earned the SDLF Transparency Certificate of Excellence.*

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District has not earned the SDLF Transparency Certificate of Excellence.

- F7. Only 2 of the 23 independent special districts in the County have achieved SDLF Recognition in Special District Governance.*

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District has not achieved the SDLF Recognition in Special District Governance.

- F8. No general manager or top management official of any County independent special district has received SDLF's Special District Administrator Certification.*

Response: The District does not have sufficient information about other districts to agree or disagree with this finding as stated. The District's General Manager has not achieved the SDLF Recognition in Special District Governance.



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Response to Recommendations:

R1. Each independent special district's website will conform to the accepted criteria listed in the SDLF's transparency checklist on or before May 15, 2015.

The District will implement this recommendation no later than May 15, 2015.

R2. By December 31, 2014, independent special districts will consult with professional website developers if in-house staff is incapable of creating and or managing their website as described above.

The District has implemented this recommendation, as it already employs professional website developers to manage the website.

R3. Each district will take the necessary steps to keep its website current.

The District has implemented this recommendation and will continue to keep its website current on a continuing basis.

R4. Districts will complete the District of Distinction program offered by SDLF by June 30, 2015.

The District will complete the District of Distinction program offered by SDLF by June 30, 2015.

R5. Districts will seek to attain the SDLF Transparency Certificate of Excellence by June 30, 2015.

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but the District is already in the process of gathering the required materials to complete this certificate. The District has completed all of the initial website requirements and the following items:

- Last three years of audits.
- Online/downloadable Public Records Act Form.
- Audio or video recordings of board meetings.
- Map of district boundaries/service area.



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- R6. *Districts currently lacking staff or board members who have achieved the SDLF's Recognition in Special District Governance will seek the training available under this program by June 30, 2015.*

The District's staff and Board Members will complete the Recognition in Special District Governance training program offered by SDLF by June 30, 2015.

- R7. *District administrators will seek the SDLF Special District Administrator Certification.*

District administrators will complete the SDLF Special District Administrator Certification by June 30, 2015.

The San Mateo County Harbor District will continue to strive to meet the needs of our constituents and community in the most transparent and user-friendly way possible. It is an honor to serve our patrons.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Pietro Parravano

Pietro Parravano, President,
Board of Harbor Commissioners
San Mateo County Harbor District

cc: Board of Harbor Commissioners