

S A S M
SEWERAGE AGENCY OF
SOUTHERN MARIN

A Joint Powers Agency

- Almonte S.D.
- Alto S.D.
- City of Mill Valley
- Homestead Valley S.D.
- Richardson Bay S.D.
- Tamalpais C.S.D.

July 30, 2004

Betty J. Mattea, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 303
San Rafael, CA 94903

Peter Banning, Executive Director
Marin Local Agency Formation Commission
165 N. Redwood Drive, Suite 160
San Rafael, CA 94903

Subject: Southern Marin sewer service providers – the collaboration meetings

The Grand Jury issued a report titled “Southern Marin sewers – so many districts, so few users” on April 27, 2004. The report contained the following recommendations:

Recommendation R2: *An impartial facilitator should be engaged to conduct a meeting of agency representatives at which opportunities for consolidation, collaboration, and cooperation are explored and short-term objectives set.*

Recommendation R3: *After a facilitated meeting is held, based upon consensus regarding consolidation established by the agencies, LAFCO should proceed with a study of alternatives.*

The Board of Directors of the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin considered these recommendations on June 3, 2004 and took the following action:

Action: *M/S Femenia/Cobey and approved on a vote of 5 to 1 (Commissioner Sotelo voting no) to approve an expenditure of \$3,600 or less to hire a facilitator to lead meetings involving elected officials and senior staff members of the 11 Southern Marin sewer service providers to explore opportunities for consolidation, collaboration, and cooperation. The goals of the meetings would be to develop objectives for consideration in the LAFCO sewer service alternative study and to develop other goals that might be pursued jointly by affected agencies.*

Betty J. Mattea, Peter Banning
July 30, 2004

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Two meetings of the eleven sewer service providers in Southern Marin were convened on July 14th and 22nd. Mr. Harry Seraydarian (resume attached) was engaged to facilitate the meetings. The meeting summary is attached for the information and use of the Grand Jury and LAFCO.

Very Truly Yours,



David A. Coe
General Manager
Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin

enclosures

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: SOUTHERN MARIN SEWERS – So Many Districts, So Few Users
Report Date: April 27, 2004

Response by: **David Coe**

Title: **Sewerage Agency of Southern
Marin, General Manager**

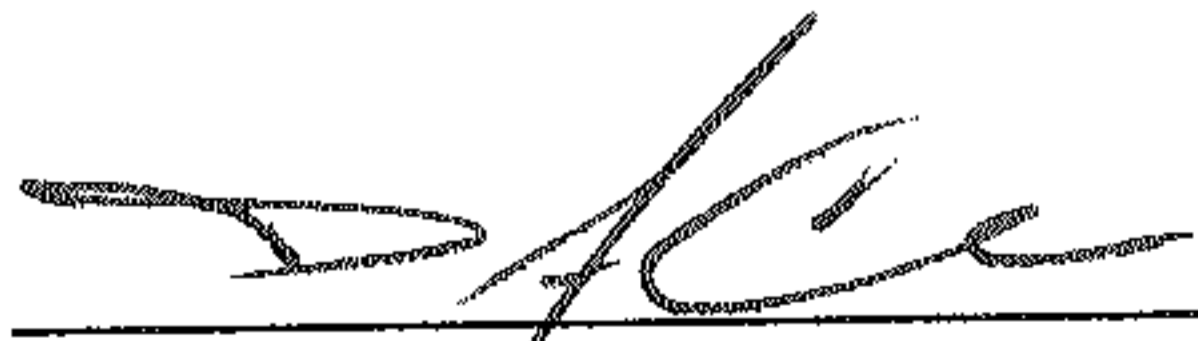
FINDINGS

- I/we agree with the findings numbered: **F6**
- I/we disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F5**
 - ❖ Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor. **Statement attached.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation number **R1** has been implemented
 - ❖ Attach a summary describing the implemented actions. **Attached.**
- Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future
 - ❖ Attach a timeframe for the implementation
- Recommendations numbered **R2 and R3** require further analysis
 - ❖ Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report. **Explanations attached.**
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable
 - ❖ Attach an explanation

Date: 5/21/04

Signed: 
David A. Coe, General Manager

Number of pages attached: 5

Finding F5: Having the responsibility for sewage collection and treatment spread between so many agencies inhibits the investigation of issues that cross agency boundaries.

Recommended response: Disagree.

“Investigation of issues that cross agency boundaries” has occurred with regularity due to the good communication between the eleven agencies.

Several recent examples include:

Sewer System Management Plans

The Regional Water Quality Control Board is currently developing detailed requirements that will require all eleven agencies to implement SSMP's. These agencies recognize a common interest in these requirements and have therefore met as a group to discuss development and implementation of SSMP elements. In addition, the three wastewater treatment plants included in this group have direct e-mail access to developing regulations and have been sure to share this information with the collection agencies.

Regionalization of laboratory analyses

The three wastewater treatment plants have handled bioassay testing requirements on a shared regional basis for many years.

Management meetings

The managers of the three wastewater plants have met monthly with other Marin County managers for several years to discuss issues of common interests. This group (known as the Marin Association of Sewerage Supervisors) recently agreed to host meetings of all wastewater agencies in Marin County (which will include all collection agencies) on a semiannual basis. The attached e-mail documents this plan.

Potential rerouting of sewage flow

For the past two years, the Tamalpais Community Services District, the Sausalito/Marin City Sanitary District, and the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin have joined in detailed discussions at the staff level and at the Board level to review the impacts of routing additional TCSD wastewater flow from SMCSO to SASM.

Potential annexation

The City of Belvedere and Sanitary District No. 5 have engaged in joint studies and detailed discussions regarding the possibility of annexing Belvedere to SD5 for sewer service purposes.

Finding F6: One agency is occasionally pitted against another as it seeks the lowest cost service for its constituency.

Recommended response: Agree.

Recommendation R1: A forum should be established, and meet regularly, as a way for staff and elected officials from all eleven sewage agencies to exchange ideas and experiences.

Recommended response: This recommendation has been implemented. As noted above, the Marin Association of Sewerage Supervisors has initiated semiannual meetings that will include all eleven sewer service providers in Southern Marin. The City of Mill Valley will participate in these meetings.

Recommendation R2: An impartial facilitator should be engaged to conduct a meeting of agency representatives at which opportunities for consolidation, collaboration, and cooperation are explored and short-term objectives set.

Recommended response: The recommendation requires further analysis. The City of Mill Valley considers this to be a good recommendation and is willing to assist in procuring a facilitator and in participating in facilitated meetings. The City requests copies of responses in this regard which the City will then use to gauge the viability of proceeding with this recommendation on a regional basis. If agreement can be secured from the affected eleven agencies to participate in this process, it is estimated that this process will take six months to complete.

Recommendation R3: After a facilitated meeting is held, based upon consensus regarding consolidation established by the agencies, LAFCO should proceed with a study of alternatives.

Recommended response: This recommendation requires further analysis. LAFCO has issued a Request For Proposals to conduct an independent consultant study of consolidation alternatives. Implementation and time line for this recommendation is therefore controlled by LAFCO. The City of Mill Valley encourages implementation of this recommendation in a timely fashion and is prepared to assist in the implementation of this recommendation.

David Coe

From: David Coe
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2004 3:32 PM
To: James Beverly (E-mail); Petrie Al (E-mail); Dow Jason (E-mail); Causey, Paul (E-mail); Simmons, Bob (E-mail); Preston Andy (E-mail); Hogue Barry (E-mail); Johnson Debra (E-mail); Dittle Frank (E-mail); Nelson Jeff (E-mail); Sweeney Gordon (E-mail); Wayne Bush; Bonner Beuhler
Subject: Marin County sewer service providers - proposed meetings

Plant Managers and Superintendents from Marin's five largest wastewater treatment plants have been meeting monthly for several years to assist each other in dealing with the ever changing face of wastewater treatment. We call ourselves MASS (Marin Association of Sewerage Supervisors). At our last meeting, we kicked around the idea of meeting with Marin County collection system operators on an occasional basis. There are many issues of common concern that we might discuss. A starter list of topics is included at the end of this memo.

The suggestion is to meet together once every six months. The first such meeting is planned for:

Wednesday, June 23rd

Noon (lunch will be provided) until about 2:00 p.m.

Novato Sanitary District, 500 Davidson Street, Novato (call 892-1694 for directions)

Please let me know if you will be attending. The list of invited agencies is attached. Managers and superintendents are welcome.

Thanks,
David Coe, General Manager
Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin

by fax to Tom Roberts

Tentative agenda topics include:

1. Sewer System Management Plans. The Regional Water Quality Control Board in cooperation with the BACWA permits group is actively developing SSMP requirements that will directly impact every wastewater collection agency in Marin County. Appropriate representatives of the Regional Board and BACWA will be invited.
2. Rates. Sewer service charges are changing significantly at many wastewater agencies throughout the County. Discussion of the underlying reasons. Learn from the

experiences of those that have been through it. Discuss successful strategies for raising rates.

3. Rate analysis. True comparison of rates including property tax revenue. Comparison of formulas for determining commercial EDU's. Experience of the group in trying more aggressive formulas.

4. Property taxes/ERAF. Most wastewater agencies in Marin County collect a substantial portion of revenue from property taxes. Perhaps resident expert Paul Causey could help us to better understand the impact of State decisions and agreements.

5. Partnerships. Are there more opportunities for sharing the load (SSMPs, sewer cleaning, purchasing, laboratory, etc.).

6. Consolidation/reorganization. There's a lot happening in Southern and Central Marin on this topic. LAFCO's Sewer Service Review is underway in Southern Marin and the Grand Jury has published a report titled "Southern Marin Sewers - So many Districts, so few users". Central Marin is next.

7. GASB 34/asset management. Is everybody in compliance? Does anybody need any help or ideas?

8. Safety JPA. Six wastewater agencies in Marin County have operated a very successful safety JPA for several years. Possible expansion to include more collection agencies?

9. California Sanitation Risk Management Authority. I believe that 12 of the 18 wastewater agencies in Marin County are insured through CSRMA. Perhaps there are common issues of concern to be discussed.

david a. coe dcoe@cityofmillvalley.org
tel: 415-388-2402 x17 fax:415-381-8128



Marin Sewerage
Authorities.xls...

Marin County Sewerage Authorities	
May, 2004	
Agency	Contact
Almonte Sanitary District	Bonner Beuhler
Alto Sanitary District	Tom Roberts
Belvedere, City of	Art Gibney
Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Jason Dow
Homestead Valley Sanitary District	Tom Roberts
Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Al Petrie
Mill Valley, City of	Wayne Bush
Novato Sanitary District	Bev James
Richardson Bay Sanitary District	Frank Dittle
San Rafael Sanitation District	Andy Preston
Sanitary District No. 1 of Marin County	Barry Hogue
Sanitary District No. 2 of Marin County	Dave Bracken
Sanitary District No. 5 of Marin County	Paul Causey
Sausalito, City of	Gordon Sweeney
Sausalito/Marin City Sanitary District	Bob Simmons
Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin	David Coe
Tamalpais Community Services District	Jeff Nelson

Southern Marin Sewer Service Providers
The Collaboration meetings
July 14th and July 22nd, 2004

Representatives of the eleven sewer authorities in Southern Marin County met on July 14th from 0900 to 1300 and on July 22nd from 1800 to 2120 to discuss opportunities for cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation between the agencies. The meetings were facilitated by Mr. Harry Seraydarian.

1. Attendees

- Almonte SD: Loretta Figueroa (Director), Bonner Beuhler (Manager)
Alto SD: Stan Bransgrove* (Director), Pedro Femenia** (Director), Tom Roberts (Manager)
City of Belvedere: Bruce Sams** (Council member), Ed San Diego (Manager), Art Gibney (PW Superintendent)
City of Mill Valley: Dennis Fisco (Council member), Wayne Bush (PW Director)
City of Sausalito: Dana Whitson (Manager), Gordon Sweeney (City Engineer)
Homestead Valley SD: Einar Asbo (Director), Tom Roberts (Manager)
Marin Co. SD No. 5: Peter Hoyt Berg (Director), Henrik Olsgaard* (Superintendent), Paul Causey** (District Manager)
Richardson Bay SD: Forrest Morphew* (Director), Roy Benvenuti** (Director), Frank Dittle (Manager)
Sausalito/Marin City SD: Bill Berkman (Director), Bob Simmons (Manager)
Sewerage Agency of So. Marin: Larry Glazier (Director), David Coe (Manager)
Tamalpais CSD: Linda Johnson (Director), Bob Bunce (Superintendent)
Facilitator: Harry Seraydarian
* July 14th only.
** July 22nd only.

2. Common interests

The group agreed unanimously to the following common interests.

- Efficient use of resources.
- Protect the environment.
- Cost effective solutions.
- Compliance with laws and regulations.
- Access to resources.
- Protect ratepayers interests.
- Provide best service we can to our constituents.

3. Criteria to evaluate cooperation/collaboration/consolidation options

The group agreed unanimously to the following evaluation criteria.

- Do we save money?

- What are the risks?
- Do ratepayers benefit?
- What are the transition costs?
- Is it practical?
- What are the secondary consequences?
- Will it work?
- Will it improve service?
- Are there impediments?
- Is it politically feasible?
- Is it legal?
- Is it equitable?
- How hard will it be to implement?
- Is it cost-effective over time?
- Is it acceptable to the community?
- Start everyone of these criteria with “How can we ...

4. Functional cooperation/collaboration/consolidation options

The group unanimously agreed that the following functional cooperation/collaboration/consolidation options warrant further investigation.

- 1.) Sewer maintenance.
- 2.) Technical services (engineering).
- 3.) Laboratory.
- 5.) Sewer System Management Plans (Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance)
- 6.) Mechanical maintenance.
- 7.) Joint purchasing.
- 8.) Worker pool.
- 9.) Equipment pool.
- 10.) Inspections – grease control.
- 11.) Electrical/instrumentation maintenance.
- 12.) Administrative services.
- 13.) Emergency response.
- 14.) Spill response/cleanup.
- 15.) Public outreach.

LAFCO has issued an RFP for a consultant to conduct a review of Southern Marin sewer service alternatives which requires the consultant to conduct detailed assessments of two functional consolidation alternatives.

The group unanimously agreed to recommend the following functional consolidation option to LAFCO for detailed review:

Sewer maintenance - including cleaning, televising, monitoring and reporting (CMOM).

5. Political consolidation options

The group identified the following categories for political consolidation options.

- 1.) Possible recommendations for LAFCO.
- 2.) Underway.
- 3.) Not worth evaluating at this time.
- 4.) Infeasible.
- 5.) Under consideration.
- 6.) Special circumstances – related study underway.

The group identified and categorized the following possible political consolidation options.

- 1.) Annex Belvedere to SD5 for sewer service. (2)
- 2.) Merge all SASM agencies into one agency including treatment. (1)
- 3.) Merge several SASM agencies into one agency including treatment. (1)
- 4.) Sausalito assume maintenance of SMSCD sewers. (5)
- 5.) Annex TCSD to SMSCD for sewer service. (6)
- 6.) Merge SD5 and SASM. (1)
- 7.) Merge Alto SD with RBSD. (not LAFCO)
- 8.) Merge part of Alto SD with the City of Mill Valley. (3)
- 9.) Merge Homestead Valley SD and Almonte SD into TCSD. (1)
- 10.) Merge Homestead and Almonte into the City of Mill Valley. (3)
- 11.) Merge Homestead, Almonte, Alto and RBSD. (3)
- 12.) Consolidate collection on the East side of Hwy 101 (RBSD, SD5 collection, Belvedere, part of Alto). (1)
- 13.) Consolidate collection on the west side of Hwy 101 (Mill Valley, Homestead, Almonte, TCSD, part of Alto). (1)

The LAFCO consultant RFP also requires the consultant to conduct detailed assessments of three political consolidation alternatives.

The group unanimously agreed to recommend the following political consolidation options to LAFCO for detailed review:

- 1.) Consolidate all SASM agencies or several SASM agencies into one agency which would include the treatment plant (Kay Park area only of TCSD).***
- 2.) Consolidate collection systems on the East side of Hwy 101 into one collection agency and consolidate collection systems on the West side of Hwy 101 into one collection agency.***
- 3.) Consolidate Homestead and Almonte with TCSD.***

6. Action items

The group agreed unanimously to the following action items:

6.1. Functional consolidation options – periodic meetings.

Frank Dittle will take the lead in convening periodic meetings of agency managers to review functional collaboration opportunities. A JPA may be considered to facilitate collaboration.

6.2. Top level management efficiencies.

David Coe will take the lead in convening meetings of management representatives from Belvedere, Mill Valley, Alto, Homestead, Almonte, SMCSO and SD5 to identify opportunities for improving efficiencies in top level management. Milestones include establishing a timeline for completing this assessment and completing a draft report for participating Agency Boards.

6.3. Treatment Plant collaboration.

Once the matter of possible annexation of Belvedere to SD5 for sewer service is settled, Paul Causey will take the lead in convening a meeting of treatment plant managers to evaluate collaboration opportunities among treatment plants. A JPA may be considered to facilitate collaboration.

6.4. Alto/RBSD consolidation..

Once the LAFCO service review is complete, Tom Roberts will set up a meeting between Alto and RBSD to discuss merger of the two agencies.

7. Summary report

The group unanimously agreed to have David Coe document and forward the following agreements from the collaboration meetings to LAFCO and the Grand Jury:

- Common interests.
- Evaluation criteria.
- Functional cooperation/collaboration/consolidation options.
- Recommendation for LAFCO detailed assessment of functional consolidation options.
- Political consolidation options.
- Recommendations for LAFCO detailed assessment of political consolidation options.
- Action items.

Harry Seraydarian

263 Greene Street

Mill Valley, CA 94941

(415) 389-8237

harryser@pacbell.net

Education

M. P. A. from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government 1987, Cambridge, Massachusetts

M. S. in Environmental Engineering 1973, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

M. S. in Mechanical Engineering 1970, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Pennsylvania

B.S. in Mechanical Engineering 1969, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Environmental Facilitation/ Mediation Expertise

Harry recently retired from the Federal Government after 33 years, 29 of which were with EPA. In the last 5 years at EPA he focused principally on environmental conflict resolution as an in house "neutral". He also worked part time for the Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution located in Tucson, Arizona in 2000-2001. Harry facilitated or mediated a number of environmental conflicts including: air quality management and planning; air toxics programs; air stationary source permitting; waste recycling; Superfund enforcement; watershed management; dredging management; stormwater permitting; and wetlands enforcement.

Harry uses "Interest based problem solving" as a framework for resolving environmental disputes: emphasizing "common interests" over positions; framing issues in a neutral and objective fashion; helping parties develop options and criteria leading to creative solutions; and consensus agreements. He uses "facilitative mediation" and supports constructive group dynamics, using caucuses only when necessary. His years of experience in managing environmental programs allow him to understand the perspectives of all the parties involved in environmental disputes (especially the views and options available to federal and state regulatory and resource agencies). His technical background and experience also allow him to understand complex technical issues and present them in simple terms.

Professional Experience

- 1995- 2002 Associate Regional Administrator, Region 9, EPA
- functioned as in house "neutral" for facilitation/ mediation on both organization development issues and external environmental conflicts.
- 1998- 2002 Trainer for EPA Region 9 in Team Effectiveness and Leadership for Results
- 1987-95 Director, Water Management Div. Region 9, EPA
- 1981-1987 Director, Toxics & Waste Mgmt. Div. Region 9, EPA,
- 1981 Deputy Director, Toxics & Waste Mgmt. Division, Region 9, EPA.
- 1980-1981 Regional Administrator, Hazardous Materials, DOHS, IPA to State of California
- 1976-1979 Environmental Protection Specialist, EPA, Region 9, San Francisco, CA
- 1973-76 Environmental Protection Specialist, EPA, Region 3, Philadelphia

Affiliations

California Center for Public Dispute Resolution, Sacramento, California

U. S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Tucson, Arizona