

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: SOUTHERN MARIN SEWERS – So Many Districts, So Few Users

Report Date: April 27, 2004

Response by: Jeff Nelson,

Title: Interim General Manager

FINDINGS

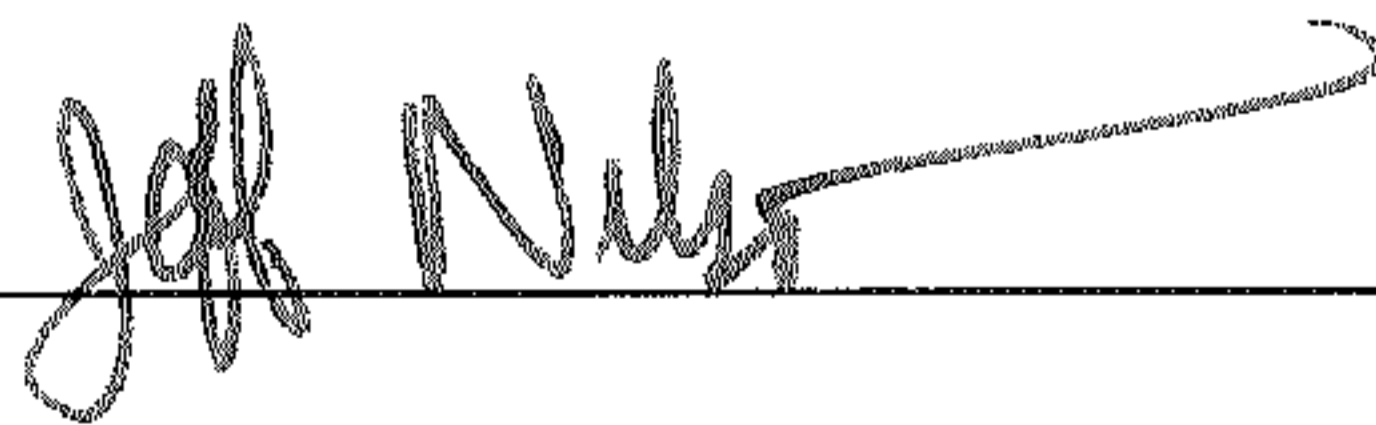
- I/we agree with the findings numbered: F4 and F6.
- I/we disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F5.
 - ❖ Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R1 and R3 have been implemented
 - ❖ Attach a summary describing the implemented actions
- Recommendation numbered R2 requires 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

Date: July 16, 2004

Signed: _____



Interim General Manager

Number of pages attached 2

Responses to Findings and Recommendations as requested by Marin County Grand Jury

FINDINGS

F4. Belvedere residents and some Tamalpais residents have no elected representatives on sanitary district boards that impose charges on them.

Agree – The Tamalpais Community Services District (TCSD) currently sends between 85% and 90% of its sewerage flow to the Sausalito Marin City Sanitation District (SMCSD) and the remainder (between 10% and 15%) to the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin (SASM). The TCSD has a seat on the SASM Board of Directors, but does not currently have a seat on the SMCSD Board of Directors. SMCSD has recently expressed a willingness to discuss a seat for a TCSD representative on its Board.

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

Partially Disagree – Although having all of the southern Marin sewerage collection and treatment agencies combined under one operating unit may result in a more unified, system-wide approach to sanitary sewer issues, there currently is significant inter-agency cooperation on a number of issues. For example, the TCSD routinely sends representatives to neighboring District's Board meetings to keep abreast of other District activities and to provide TCSD's perspective. In addition, the TCSD has created an *ad hoc* committee consisting of two Board members and the General Manager to meet with similar committees representing SMCSD and SASM. The purpose of these committees is to discuss the pros and cons of TCSD rerouting all of its sewerage flow from SMCSD to SASM. District staff and Board members frequently have discussions with staff and Board Members of other Districts on such matters as common inter-District issues, potentially collaborative activities to increase efficiencies and reduce costs, responding to proposed changes in regulatory policies, and sharing information on new technologies and lessons learned.

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

Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

This recommendation has been implemented – at the time of the writing of this response, the group known as the Marin Association of Sewerage Supervisors (which

included manager of waste water treatment plants) has recently taken the initiative to expand this group to include all waste water/sanitary districts. The TCSD has participated in the initial group meeting and plans to continue to participate in this forum.

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 are set.

This recommendation requires further analysis – as stated above, a forum has recently been established for sanitary sewer entities in southern Marin County. The TCSD would like to further explore the effectiveness of this forum as is, before an impartial facilitator is engaged. The TCSD would suggest that if a facilitator is engaged, the objectives of the facilitator be clearly defined and agreed upon the participating agencies/Districts.

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

This recommendation has been implemented. – LAFCO issued an RFP for an independent consultant to conduct an alternatives study for the different Southern Marin Sewerage Agencies.