

**A REPORT BY
THE 2011-2012 CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GRAND JURY**

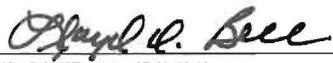
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Report 1206

**ROLLINGWOOD-WILART PARK
RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
Who's Minding the Store?**

APPROVED BY THE GRAND JURY:

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JOHN T. LAETTNER
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report 1206

**ROLLINGWOOD-WILART PARK RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
Who's Minding the Store?**

**TO: *ROLLINGWOOD-WILART PARK RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT BOARD
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION (LAFCO)***

SUMMARY

Rollingwood-Wilart Park Recreation and Park District (District) is a small, independent special district with a service area of 109 acres. It was created in 1956 to manage a community facility and provide activities. In April 2010, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) issued a Municipal Service Review (MSR) in which serious management problems were identified. The District was given 12 months to significantly reduce the deficiencies. In November 2011, LAFCO revisited the issue, found the deficiencies continued and gave the District another 12 months to make corrections.

The Grand Jury confirmed the LAFCO findings and found the District has failed to perform basic management activities, generate facility rentals, or fill Board vacancies.

The Grand Jury recommends that the District be dissolved.

BACKGROUND

Rollingwood-Wilart Park Recreation and Park District (District) is a small, independent special district with a service area of 109 acres, created in 1956 to manage a community facility and provide recreation services to the residents of the District. It is a fully-developed, unincorporated area located between the cities of Richmond and San Pablo, and serves a community of approximately 2,400 persons.

The District operates and maintains a community facility for recreation programs and events. The District receives property tax money (averaging \$27,000 per year) and can charge rental fees for the facility.

The District has been operating with a three-member board since 1999 due to lack of public interest in serving on the Board; however, the District is required to have at least a five-member board.

It is a "working board" (members of the Board provide maintenance and minor repairs to the building). One member of the Board functions as the General Manager. The General Manager is in charge of building management, finances, arranging and conducting operations-related meetings, record keeping, compliance with state and local regulations, and responding to requests for rental information.

The Board pays the General Manager and a custodian \$300 a month each. There are no signed contracts for these positions. Board members get a \$50 per month stipend for Board meetings.

No agendas or minutes of any meetings of the Board as required by the Brown Act, or financial records of any kind (rentals, payments, budget, etc.), could be located, reportedly due to vandalism and accidental destruction of all records in the past few years. Financial audits have not been performed for over 10 years. The District's only computer is not working and no website has been created to provide information about facility rentals or activities offered by the District.

Decisions regarding the use of District revenues for the maintenance of the community facility have been, and continue to be, a cause for concern. In some cases, the justification for the scope and magnitude of expenditures cannot be confirmed. For example, to prevent the loss of insurance for the facility, a \$30,000 commercial range hood was installed. Without records, it is impossible to determine if such an oversized range hood was needed for a rarely used kitchen, or if a less costly model could have served as well.

Due to a lack of effective advertising, there has been little interest in either the District or neighboring communities to rent the facility for parties, celebrations or other activities. However, a community church is permitted to use the District's facility and equipment at no charge. The facility is also available at no charge for funerals of residents of the District. Policies for waiving required rental fees could not be found.

Due to governance issues raised in the MSR, LAFCO staff was directed, at the April 21, 2010 LAFCO meeting, to work with the County to either dissolve the District or consolidate it with another agency, and report back to LAFCO within 12 months.

At the November 9, 2011 LAFCO meeting, LAFCO Commissioners voted to extend the update for an additional 12 months.

FINDINGS

1. The District has not been able to generate community interest in filling Board vacancies.
2. The District has not been able to generate facility rentals.
3. The District has failed to adequately perform basic management activities, including safekeeping of records, such as Board agenda, Board minutes, and financial documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LAFCO should initiate proceedings to dissolve Rollingwood-Wilart Park Recreation and Park District.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Findings

Rollingwood-Wilart Park Recreation and Park District Board
Local Agency Formation Commission

Recommendations

Local Agency Formation Commission