



CITY OF PINOLE

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July 21, 2020

Honorable Anita Santos
Judge of the Superior Court
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 2004 "Police Department Staffing"

Dear Judge Santos:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05, this letter responds to Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 2004 "Police Department Staffing." This response was reviewed and authorized by the City Council at a duly noticed City Council meeting on July 21, 2020.

Grand Jury Findings

Finding #1: Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions present challenges in maintaining police services.

Response: Pinole agrees with finding #1. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions present challenges to maintaining police services.

Finding #2: Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions have resulted in reducing or eliminating staffing of traffic units, school resource officers, community outreach, or other police services.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #2. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions have resulted in reducing or eliminating staffing of traffic units, school resource officers, community outreach, and other police services.

Finding #3: Officers are often required to put in mandatory overtime to cover critical services due to low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #3. Officers are often required to work mandatory overtime due to low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions.

Finding #4: Mandatory overtime can lead to officer stress, which creates retention challenges.



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Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #4. Mandatory overtime can lead to stress on officers, which creates retention challenges.

Finding #5: Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions may contribute to increased average response times for Priority 1 (emergency) calls.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #5. Low officer staffing ratios and/or unfilled officer positions may contribute to increased average response times for Priority 1 (emergency) calls.

Finding #6: Recruiting officers is challenging due to fewer applicants who meet the required hiring standards and complete the rigorous testing process.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #6. Fewer applicants who meet the required hiring standards and complete the rigorous testing process create challenges to recruiting officers.

Finding #7: Negative perceptions of policing and the availability of less dangerous job opportunities contribute to fewer applicants for law enforcement positions.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #7. Negative perceptions of policing and the availability of less dangerous job opportunities contribute to fewer applicants for law enforcement positions.

Finding #8: Each Contra Costa police agency (except those that contract with the Sheriff's Office) conducts its own recruiting program to attract potential applicants.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #8. Contra Costa police agencies that do not contract with the Sheriff's Office conduct their own recruiting program to attract potential applicants.

Finding #9: The process of hiring and training new officers takes an extensive amount of time and resources to complete.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #9. It takes an extensive amount of time and resources to complete the process of hiring and training new officers.

Finding #10: Each Contra Costa police agency (except those that contract with the Sheriff's Office) manages its own screening process for police officer positions, resulting in a replication of efforts across the County.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #10. Contra Costa police agencies that do not contract with the Sheriff's Office manage their own screening process for police officer positions, resulting in a replication of efforts across the County.

Finding #11: Contra Costa cities that contract with the Sheriff for police services are generally able to fill vacancies faster than non-contract cities.



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Response: Pinole partially disagrees with Finding #11. Pinole does not have any data as to how fast Contra Costa cities that contract with the Sheriff are able to fill vacancies compared non-contract cities.

Finding #12: Recruits and young officers have different expectations than in the past regarding work/life balance.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #12. Recruits and young officers have different expectations regarding work-life balance compared to the past.

Finding #13: Recruits and young officers' expectations about work/life balance contribute to the challenges of officer recruiting and retention.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #13. Recruits and young officers' expectations about work-life balance contribute to the challenges of officer recruitment and retention.

Finding #14: Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs offered by Contra Costa police agencies aid retention of police officers.

Response: Pinole agrees with Findings #14. Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs offered by Contra Costa police agencies aid in the retention of police officers.

Grand Jury Recommendations

Recommendation #2: The City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, El Cerrito, Hercules, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds to study the cost/benefit of a countywide screening process for police officer positions, to avoid replication of these steps while allowing each city police department to select and evaluate candidates, by June 30, 2021.

Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, by June 30, 2021.

Recommendation #3: The Sheriff, and the City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider directing their police departments to apply annually, or when offered in 2021, to the Department of Justice COPS Hiring Program, which provides funding for hiring additional officers, by June 30, 2021.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. The scope and parameters of the analysis will include a review of the details in the COPS Hiring Program, and the grant application and submittal process, which will be completed by November 20, 2020.



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Recommendation #4: The City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds to increase the number of authorized sworn officers to fill understaffed units, such as traffic patrol and school resource officers, by June 30, 2021.

Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, by June 30, 2021.

Recommendation #5: The City/Town Councils of Antioch, Brentwood, Clayton, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek should consider identifying funds that would permit their police departments to over-hire officer positions as a strategy for keeping departments fully staffed, by June 30, 2021.

Response: This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, by June 30, 2021.

The City appreciates the time and effort spent by Her Honor and the Grand Jury in consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,

CITY OF PINOLE

Roy Swearingen
Mayor