SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

167

FROM: Executive Office

SUBMITTAL DATE: July 12, 2005

SUBJECT: Grand Jury Report: Flood Control and Water Conservation District

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board instruct the Flood Control and Water Conservation District to forward to the Executive Office – within 30 days – a draft of the Board's response to the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury that pertain to the Department's operational areas; and direct the Executive Office to submit draft responses to the Board within 60 days.

BACKGROUND: The attached report has been issued by the Grand Jury.

Section 933 (c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the Board, and that a response be provided to the Presiding Judge of Superior Court within 90 days.

Draft responses received from the affected department will be consolidated and presented for the Board's consideration; the response ultimately approved by the Board will then be forwarded to the Grand Jury as required by statute.

Attachment

Gary M. Christmas
GARY M. CHRISTMAS
Deputy County Executive Officer

H:\DGRANT\GJURY\30dayflood05.doc

Departmental Concurrence

FINANCIAL DATA				
	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	$ N/A	In Current Year Budget:	
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	$	Budget Adjustment:	
	Annual Net County Cost:	$	For Fiscal Year:	

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 ☐

Requires 4/5 Vote ☐

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.

County Executive Office Signature

Dep't Recomm.: ☐ Consent ☐ Policy

Per Exec. Ofc.: ☐ Consent ☒ Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: | **District:** | **Agenda Number:** 3.8

RIVERSIDE COUNTY GRAND JURY

(909) 955-8990 OFFICE • (909) 955-8989 FAX

June 28, 2005

Warren D. Williams, General Manager
Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
1995 Market Street
Riverside, Ca 92501

Subject: 2004-05 Grand Jury Report:
Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Dear Mr. Williams:

Please note that Penal Code Section 933 et seq., specifies that you respond within ninety days. Further, it specifies that this report be kept **confidential for a minimum of two working days** prior to public release. The contents of this report will be made public after the close of business **June 30, 2005.**

Sincerely,

Nikki Harris

Nikki Harris, Foreperson
2004-05 Riverside County Grand Jury

NH:gs
Attach.

2004-2005 GRAND JURY REPORT
Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Background

The Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District was created on July 7, 1945 by an act of the California State Legislature (Assembly Bill 8). The District covers 2,700 square miles, located in the western portion of Riverside County and extends easterly to the Palm Springs and Desert Hot Springs area. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors serves as the governing body for the District. The District was formed, per the mission statement, "to protect people and property from flooding through responsible and effective storm water management."

The District's 2004-2005 revenue budget is $62,446,495. The District's primary source of general-purpose revenue is 1% of the property tax. The balance of the revenue comes from Government and Proprietary funds. Undesignated/unreserved funds of $1,565,874 are projected at the end of 2004/2005. According to the Director, "These balances are more than adequate to offset the gap between revenue and appropriations expected to occur in some funds."

The district is divided into seven geographic zones. Property taxes and other revenue generated from each zone must be spent for projects within or proportionally beneficial to that zone.

At the beginning of the FY 2004-2005 there were eighty-four (84) capital infrastructure appropriated projects on the Flood Control books. Forty-one (41) of these are completely funded. The remaining forty-three (43) projects are funded solely for design or administrative purposes to cover the final costs of previously completed projects.

With sixty (60) years of flood control and drainage infrastructure being built, the needs, while not complete, are diminishing. Urbanization of the county is increasing demands on water conservation. Optimization of existing water resources through new conservation and reuse will be necessary to sustain the county's growing population. The current population in Riverside County is estimated to be 1,846,095 as of July 1, 2004.

The Flood Control Director's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report stated: "Traditionally, the planning, design and construction of public works infrastructure involved two principles: engineering soundness and economic feasibility. However, over the past decade, two additional tenets have been brought into the mix: environmental impacts and regulatory compliance. This is especially true with regard to flood control and drainage infrastructure projects. Today, a typical flood control project may require compliance with no less than eleven local, State and Federal statutes."

Findings

1. The District's principal source of general-purpose revenue is from a 1% assessed value property tax. Revenue history over the past ten (10) years shows an increase of 64.6%, ($17,385,000 in 1995 to a projected $27,762,500 in 2004/2005). This projected increase is due to the population explosion in the county over the past ten years.

2. The 1945 California statute establishing the Riverside Flood Control and Water Conservation District states that the monies collected by said taxes shall be used in the zones from which they are collected. Per the Director, the Flood Control and Water Conservation District currently operates on the basis that money may be loaned from one zone to another zone if repaid within the current fiscal year. However, the statute does not prohibit the Board of Supervisors from extending a loan for up to five (5) years. San Bernardino County currently uses a three-year policy for repayment to the loaning zone(s).

3. The flood control districts in San Bernardino, San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern and Inyo Counties report through the public works departments. The Flood Control District and Transportation & Land Management Agency (TLMA) (Riverside County's Public Works Department), perform similar functions, i.e. land management, design and construction, surveying and mapping services. Duplication often occurs in the use of equipment, personnel and facilities. As the county population grows and possible satellite facilities are added, this duplication will be magnified.

4. When the Flood Control and Water Conservation District was created in 1945, the primary emphasis was on flood control, the building of dams, storm channels, drains, etc. According to the Director of Flood Control, "...the major drainage infrastructure needs of the County and its cities have not been completely met, they are beginning to diminish..." The Director also stated, "The District's future efforts in water conservation should be greatly enhanced." However, as of June 1, 2005 the Director has not published a timeline for shifting the emphasis to water conservation.

Recommendations

Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

1. The Board of Supervisors should reduce the 1% tax that was initiated in 1945, to mirror the increase in population and the near completion of a major portion of the flood control infrastructure.

2. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors consider changing its policy whereby the seven (7) zones can loan monies from one zone to another for more than the current year, i.e. up to five (5) years, to make available funds more flexible.

3. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors implement a task force to study the merits of merging TLMA and Flood Control facilities, equipment, and personnel as demonstrated in surrounding counties.

4. Flood Control direct hiring to include specialists in water conservation, i.e. chemical, environmental engineering, etc.