

For Immediate Release

Date: 29 June 2015
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
Contact: Sandi Miller, Foreman
(805) 568-2291

**Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury
Completes its Year's Work**

The 2014-2015 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury is just completing its year of service to the citizens of Santa Barbara County and has released a consolidated Final Report on its investigations.

The Final Report contains eight reports that range from a critique of the governance of the City of Guadalupe, to a summary of the conditions of all jail facilities, including an extensive examination of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau, to an in-depth look at errors in the City of Santa Barbara's Zoning Information Reports. These reports can be found in their entirety at the Jury's website www.sbcgj.org. Responses to the reports can also be found at the website, including that of the City of Guadalupe.

"We encourage residents who are concerned about County functions, to submit a complaint via our website," said Foreperson Sandi Miller. The result could be a report that outlines the problem, describes the investigation process, determines Findings based on the facts established and provides Recommendations to the appropriate agency on how to improve the situation. Once reviewed by the Presiding Judge, the report is distributed to the agency which must respond within a specified number of days. They must respond to Findings that they agree or disagree. Responses to Recommendations must say whether or not they will implement, and if not, why not. These responses, as well as the reports, are posted on the Jury website.

Nineteen jurors make up each year's Grand Jury, a number set by the California Penal Code, depending on county population. Members must apply (recruitment takes place in

late spring). Applicants are interviewed by a panel that includes the Presiding Judge. In mid-June, 19 individuals are chosen which constitutes the Grand Jury. The 2015-2016 Jury has been chosen and will be sworn in for service starting in July.

This year's outgoing Jury was particularly diverse. More than half were women, and over half the Jurors were from the North County. Five members had been held over by the Presiding Judge from the previous Jury. Five additional members had served on previous Juries and nine served for the first time.

The Jury's main chambers are located at the Historic Santa Barbara County Courthouse. This year the Jury met once a month in the Courthouse in Solvang. The Jury traveled to each of the eight cities in our County where they met with each city's administrator to hear the challenges and successes in his or her city.

“Service on the Grand Jury is intense, but it's very rewarding,” Miller stated. “It's very satisfying to feel you made a difference.”

Applications for the following year's Jury as well as citizen complaint/request for investigation forms can be found on the Jury website www.sbcgj.org .

The Santa Barbara County Grand Jury is a basic part of California government within the judicial branch. The Grand Jury is charged with keeping watch over county government as well as cities and districts operating within the county.

#####