



Town of Mammoth Lakes

Office of the Mayor

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September 3, 2015

Honorable Stan Eller
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
Mono County
PO Box 1037
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

RE: Town of Mammoth Lakes Response to the Final Report of the 2014-2015 Mono Grand Jury - "Case #03"

Judge Eller,

I am pleased to provide responses to the final 2014-2015 Grand Jury report which included Case #03 that related to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Mono County regarding Animal Control Services.

The report included three separate findings with two recommendations. The following responses to both the findings and recommendations were approved by the Town Council on September 2, 2015. I am submitting the responses on behalf of the Town as requested in the Grand Jury report.

Responses to Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1. County Service Level. AC staffing level in the County is about the same as existed in 1984 when the County was also responsible for the TOML. That level is appropriate for the jurisdiction outside of TOML. The County Health Officer provides all required rabies control services. The County budget supports an appropriate level of AC. The Town has no reason to question this finding.

Finding 2. TOML Service Level. Today, Mammoth Lakes has about twice the population it had when incorporated in 1984. From 1984 until 2009 AC service was provided by an ACO with access to a funded shelter. Today, AC service is provided as "other duties" by uniformed police officers from an understaffed TOML Police Department. Complaints are responded to when required. The TOML budget is inadequate for providing the service level required to enforce Title 6 requirements for licensing, vaccinations, interference with street use, barking and nuisance abatement. The Town agrees with the finding in part. The level of service provided by the Town is a matter of Council policy, driven by limited resources and other higher service priorities.

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Finding 3. Record Keeping. Records for complaints, licenses, and vaccinations are maintained as hand written records at both the County and TOML levels. Today, it is difficult to obtain data similar to that cited by County Animal Control Director in 1985. The Town agrees with the finding.

Recommendation 1. County/TOML Service Level. Although the County is not required to provide AC services within the TOML, the Code does not preclude it. The TOML should consider providing an adequate budget for contracting with the County for AC services. The current operations provide a minimal level of animal control services. The level of service has been set based on limited Town resources and setting of priority services. Funding for contractual AC services with the County or expanded Town service is not available. The Town will review Title 6 of the Municipal Code and if changes are needed to reflect the Town's resource limitations changes will be considered. The Town and County continue to look for areas to share and enhance public safety services as both are minimally funded service areas. The County is willing to consider a contract for animal control services within the Town of Mammoth Lakes, should the Town be in a position to fund the contract.

Recommendation 2. AC Record Keeping. The County and TOML should implement common AC software for record keeping. The Town and the County will look at ways to enhance record keeping; however, the purchase of any new software dedicated to the purpose by the Town is not a priority and funds are not recommended to be allocated for this purpose. While comparative data is nice to have, it is not a necessity for Town operations. Calls that come through dispatch or through an officer are tracked in RIMS, but as with other calls the data would need to be specifically pulled and may not include all calls for service, pending the type of call (or in person report) that may come directly into the Police station. As the Town reviews the use of limited funding for the Police Department, actual police officer staffing and operations will be a higher funding priority than animal control services. At this time the Town is not pursuing a new system, but will review any coordination efforts that may be beneficial with the County. It is the Town's understanding that the County is currently not pursuing any new system for record keeping related specifically to Animal Control.

I want to thank the Grand Jury for the work they provide our community. There efforts add to the overall improvement of local government and provide an important oversight function for our residents.

Thank you to the Court for the assistance and guidance that is provided to Grand Jury.

Sincerely,


Michael Raimondo
Mayor

CC: Town Council
Town Clerk
Town Attorney