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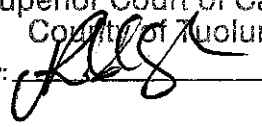
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August 18, 2015

FILED

SEP 08 2015

Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne

By:  Clerk

The Honorable Donald Segerstrom
Tuolumne County Superior Court
60 North Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report – Permit Fees

Dear Judge Segerstrom:

The following is offered in response to the 2014-2015 Grand Jury Report as it pertains to the Permit Fees.

Grand Jury Findings

- F2.** The Grand Jury finds in Chapter 3.40 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, Fees (Section W, Pages 18-20), a disparity in price valuations for fee scheduling in contrast to what Building Safety currently provides in similar valuations.

Response: Agree

- F3.** The Grand Jury finds the term “Community Development Department” listed in the County Ordinance Code as obsolete.

Response: Agree

- F4.** The Grand Jury would like to commend and thank the County administration for a detailed explanation for User Fees versus the Consumer Price Index.

Response: Agree

Grand Jury Recommendations

- R2.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors and CRA shall adopt a policy and procedure prior to end of year 2015 showing that the County Code reflects current and same fees valuations when the Fee Schedule for Building and Safety Services is made public.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will the next time a comprehensive update of the County's user fees is directed by the Board of Supervisors. Until the next comprehensive update is completed, some form of explanation of this "disparity" will be included in all postings of current user fees.

Background and explanation:

- The fees in the County Ordinance Code reflect the amounts that existed at the time they were adopted or specifically amended by ordinance by the Board of Supervisors. Pursuant to Section 3.40.020(A) of the County Ordinance Code, "Unless prohibited by statute, the fees established in Section 3.40.010 shall be increased or decreased on the subsequent July 1st by the same percentage increase or decrease granted to county employees represented by recognized employee organizations during the prior fiscal year." Implementation of this provision results in annual adjustments to the fees. The fee schedule provided by the Building and Safety Division reflects the current fee amounts based on this annual adjustment thereby creating the disparity with the original fee amounts in the Ordinance Code.
- The recommendation to change the County Ordinance Code to reflect the current fee amounts would require adopting an ordinance each year that updates all of the hundreds of fees listed in Section 3.40.010 of the Ordinance Code (Pages 3-30 through 3-54). This would create a burden on many County departments, the County Administrator's Office, and County Counsel to implement a procedure that is not legally required and rarely raised as an issue by anyone.
- Staff will be instructed to update the entire Master Fee Ordinance, Section 3.40.010 in the manner suggested the next time a comprehensive update of the County's user fees is directed by the Board of Supervisors.

- R3.** The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors change this Ordinance Code term and be re-titled with the proper term "Community Resources Agency" by end of year 2015.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will the next time a comprehensive update of the County's user fees is directed by the Board of Supervisors.

Background and explanation:

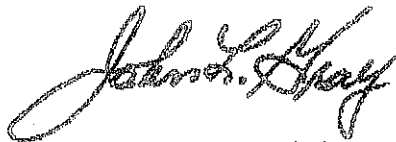
- The Grand Jury's observation relative to the Master Fee Ordinance is correct; however, similar to Recommendation #2 above, it would not change anything of substance as each division (i.e. environmental health, planning, engineering and surveying, fire prevention, building and safety and housing) regardless of its current parent agency/department are clearly delineated. Changing the ordinance to make this technical change would create an unnecessary burden on the CRA, County Administrator's Office and County Counsel when this matter is rarely raised by anyone.
- Staff will be instructed to make the changes in the Master Fee Ordinance, Section 3.40.010 in the manner suggested the next time a comprehensive update of the County's user fees is directed by the Board of Supervisors.

R4. The Grand Jury recommends County Administration makes useful and liberal sharing of this knowledge.

Response: While no response was required by the Grand Jury, it should be noted that most persons who ask how the County adjusts its user fees are pleased that this is done for most fees based on changes in County government labor costs versus the Consumer Price Index (CPI). CPI's are influenced by several factors that bear little relation to the County's actual cost of providing services to the public in Tuolumne County.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above findings and recommendations. Please feel free to contact the County Administrator Craig Pedro should you have any questions regarding same.

Sincerely,



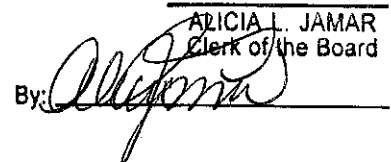
JOHN L. GRAY, Chair
Board of Supervisors



CRAIG L. PEDRO
County Administrator

C: Beverly Shane, CRA Director
Sarah Carrillo, County Counsel
Daniel Richardson, Deputy County Administrator

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

By:  ALICIA L. JAMAR
Clerk of the Board