



Turlock Rural Fire Department

690 West Canal Drive

Turlock, California 95380

Telephone 632-3953

September 17, 2010

The Honorable Jack M. Jacobson, Presiding Judge
Stanislaus County Superior Court
Post Office 3488
Modesto, CA 95353

Re: Response to Civil Grand Jury Case Number 10-11C

Your Honor,

The Turlock Rural Fire Protection District Board Members have reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Stanislaus Civil Grand Jury relative to case number 10-11C. The Board Members appreciate the opportunity to review the investigation and make the necessary adjustments for the purpose of improving administrative policies and operational practices.

The following actions have been taken in response to or prior to the findings and recommendations of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury.

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 1

- *F1 – There is no correlation between the 16.51% administrative fee retained by the Chief and the amount of time he spends on Strike Team administration.*
- *R1 – Make a formal accounting of the actual hours expended by the Chief while performing strike team administration duties and clearly state the rate at which his compensation will be calculated. All money in excess of this amount should remain with the district.*

- **TRFD Response – At the September 14, 2010, regular meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board took action directing that half of the administrative fee will be paid to the individual(s) responsible for the administrative duties associated with the strike team. The other half of the administrative fee will remain with the District. A log will be kept by the individual(s) responsible for the administrative duties recording all the hours committed by that person(s) relative to the strike team.**

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 2

- *F2 – Funds that are intended for the District and for firefighter reimbursement are received and deposited into the Association account where they are comingled with Association dues and fund-raising monies prior to being disbursed.*
- *R2 – Establish a separate Turlock Rural Fire District account to be used for depositing and distributing department funds and firefighter reimbursement. Discontinue the practice of comingling official department funds and the Association dues and monies.*
- **TRFD Response – At the August 10, 2010, regular meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board took action directing the department staff to use a bank separate from the Association’s bank account for depositing and distributing department funds. All disbursements to members of the Department will be drawn on the account separate from the Association account which will discontinue the practice of comingling Department funds and Association dues and monies.**

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 3

- *F3 – There is no external oversight of the primary account (Association account) used for disbursing the wages and earning of all District personnel.*
- *R3 – The account used for disbursing wages should be subject to oversight and auditing by an entity external to the TRFD*

- **TRFD Response** – The action taken by the Board for finding and recommendation number 2 will ensure that the account used for disbursing wages will be subject to oversight and auditing by an entity external to the TRFD

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 4

- *F4 – The firefighters are in positions that serve “at will” of the Chief and have no process available to them for reporting concerns or issues except to report them directly to the Chief.*
- *R4 – Implement a process that allows members of the department to express concerns and issues or make recommendations without fear of retribution. A three person committee elected by the firefighters that meets with the Chief or a form that can be submitted to the Board could be used for this purpose.*
- **TRFD Response** – At the September 14, 2010, regular meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board accepted a recommendation from staff to add language to the personnel policy which formalizes the process by which members may bring issues of concern to the attention of the Board of Directors.

Article 2, Section 1, Subsection “J” has been added to read:

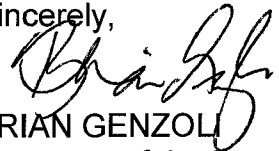
- (J) Any member may bring an issue of concern to the attention of the Board of Directors without fear of retribution under the following conditions:*
- (1) Following the established chain of command, the member must discuss the issue of concern with each officer in the member’s chain of command including the Fire Chief.*
 - (2) The member must complete and submit a request in writing on the appropriate form to the Secretary of the Board of Directors.*
 - (3) The member must be willing to discuss the issue of concern with the Board of Directors.*

Please see attachment “A” for the form that will be used in conjunction with this addition to the personnel policy.

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 5

- *F5 – Some Board members have exceeded the maximum three year term with two term limit that is allowed for serving on the TRFD Board of Directors as specified on the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors website.*
- *R5 – The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors should enforce the term limit or change the requirement.*
- **TRFD Response – None (differ to the County Board of Supervisors)**

Sincerely,



BRIAN GENZOLI
Chairman of the Board
Turlock Rural Fire Protection District

Attachment: Agenda Item Request Form

TURLOCK RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Agenda Item Request Form

The Turlock Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors serves as the appointed governing board for the Turlock Rural Fire Protection District. Regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors occur on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings of the Board of Directors are conducted in compliance of the Brown Act. As such, the Board of Directors is prohibited from taking action on items unless the item is placed on the agenda with appropriate public notice provided.

If you would like to discuss an item of concern with the Board of Directors, please complete the information below and submit it to the Secretary of the Board of Directors no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Name of Requestor _____

Title of Agenda Item _____

Summary of issue to be discussed

I have personally discussed this issue with the Fire Chief Yes No

Signature of Petitioner

Date submitted to Secretary

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OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Received by

Date Received

Anticipated Agenda Date _____