

## OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET ANALYST REPORT

**Date Issued:** September 12, 2007

**IBA Report Number:** 07-86

**Docket Date:** September 18, 2007

**Item Number:** 331

**Subject:** Establishment of Past Grand Jurors Association Implementation Review Board

### OVERVIEW

At the November 22, 2006 meeting of the Committee on Rules, Open Government and Intergovernmental Relations, a proposal was presented by the City Attorney's Office to establish a Past Grand Jurors Association Implementation Review Board for the City of San Diego. As described in City Attorney Report to the City Council dated May 30, 2007, the board is modeled after a similar committee established at the County of San Diego that has proven valuable and is intended to provide assistance in implementing Grand Jury Recommendations that have been accepted by the City. The proposal was recommended for approval by the Rules Committee with slight modifications that are included in the ordinance submitted to the City Council.

In addition to this recommendation by the Committee, the IBA was asked to review current City operations to evaluate whether or not this function is already provided in-house or if value would be added by establishing this committee. This report provides the IBA's findings with respect to the capacity of the City organization to successfully implement Grand Jury Recommendations that have been accepted.

### FISCAL/POLICY DISCUSSION

At the center of the City's handling of Grand Jury reports is an Administrative Regulation (A.R.) that provides detailed guidelines on how to process, respond to, and follow-up on

One of the four purposes of a proposed new City Administrative Regulation is "To track and complete all activities the City agrees to implement based on San Diego County Grand Jury Reports."

these reports. The A.R. (Attachment I) is currently in draft form subject to final review and approval by the Mayor, which is anticipated by month-end. A.R.s provide guidance on day-to-day operations for the Executive Branch and are therefore not subject to City Council approval. The process described in the A.R. was utilized in responding to the recent Grand

Jury Reports on Real Estate Assets, Qualcomm, Water, Streets and the Library. It has also been refined through feedback from affected City staff, and the IBA and Council President's Office have been given the opportunity to provide suggestions as well, to ensure the process accommodates City Council participation as required.

With respect to the implementation of recommendations that the City has accepted, the A.R. provides that the Business Operations/Administration Office will submit these items for follow-up to the applicable City department via the Completegov electronic tracking system. The system will track "specific timelines for follow-up reports and completion dates." (Section 5.17) The responsible department will be required to submit monthly status updates on each item to their Deputy Chief, as well as the Business Operations/Administration Office, which essentially serves as the central clearinghouse for all Grand Jury items. Through the Completegov system, alerts can be sent out, status updates produced and deadlines tracked, ensuring that items will not be lost in instances of staff turnover or busy periods. The Completegov system is managed by Customer Services to track a variety of requests and deadlines. No additional staff or funding is required to implement this process; it is accommodated within existing staff and resources.

While this A.R. has only recently been developed and is just being put into practice this year, the IBA finds that the process is thorough, utilizes appropriate resources and assigns accountability. The IBA has made one additional suggestion to the Mayor's Office, which is to incorporate an annual status update that would be submitted to the Mayor, the City Council and the IBA on all outstanding and completed items, to ensure transparency and communication. If used as described, we expect that this process could sufficiently ensure that accepted Grand Jury recommendations are implemented. We further encourage the Mayor's Office to contribute their judgment to this discussion as to whether the process is adequate or if additional oversight via the Implementation Review Board is necessary.

We also wish to reiterate a point raised in our IBA Report 06-50 (Attachment II), our original report on this item to the Rules Committee. The IBA notes that the current proposal still requires each member of the planned board to also be a member of the Past Grand Juror's Association of San Diego County. Should the City Council wish to approve the proposal, we suggest that any person who has served on the San Diego County Civil Grand Jury should be eligible.

## **CONCLUSION**

The IBA believes that the Mayor's Office has established a process that, upon implementation as described, is sufficient to ensure that Grand Jury recommendations accepted by the City are implemented as agreed. We suggest the Mayor's Office provide their judgment on this point as well for the benefit of this discussion, and further request

that they consider the IBA's suggestion to incorporate an annual status update to the Mayor, City Council and IBA into their A.R.

Should the City Council approve the proposal to establish a review board, we do suggest that it be modified to allow any person to serve on the board that has served on the San Diego County Civil Grand Jury.

**[SIGNED]**

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Penni Takade  
Deputy Director

**[SIGNED]**

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APPROVED: Andrea Tevlin  
Independent Budget Analyst

Attachment I: Draft A.R. on Responding to San Diego County Grand Jury Reports  
Attachment II: IBA Report 06-50: Creation of a Grand Jury Implementation Committee