



CITY OF PALM DESERT

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 7, 2009

Hon. Tom Cahraman, Presiding Judge
Riverside County Superior Court
4050 Main Street
Riverside, California 92501

Riverside County Grand Jury
Post Office Box 829
Riverside, California 92502

Dear Judge Cahraman and Grand Jury Members:

***Re: Response to Grand Jury Report concerning the Coachella Valley
Mosquito and Vector Control District***

On April 14, 2009, the Grand Jury forwarded a copy of its report regarding the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (the "District") to the City of Palm Desert.

Please be advised that the City of Palm Desert has no direct control over the activities of the District. However, in June 2008, the City reappointed Mr. Douglas Walker as its representative on the District Board of Trustees, a position he has held since January 2007. Mr. Walker is an exceptional Trustee whose distinguished background demonstrates his qualifications for this appointment. Trustee Walker has a Master of Science Degree in Entomology, holds an Entomology teaching credential, and has thirty-four years experience as a college professor. More importantly, Trustee Walker does an outstanding job in keeping the City of Palm Desert fully apprised of the District's activities.

The City has absolute confidence that Trustee Walker will assist the District in addressing all the findings and recommendations set forth in the Grand Jury Report in the appropriate and legally required manner. Recent Board actions, including but not limited to the selection of a new General Manager will surely address many of the issues raised in the Report. Such action also ensures the District fulfills its mission of effective and

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environmentally sound vector control and disease prevention programs through research, development, and public awareness.

The City noted that Recommendation #8 stated in part: ***“(A)ppointing authorities (Riverside County and the nine cities) should develop criteria for trustee qualification and apply more intense vetting of potential trustees prior to appointment, thereby improving the quality of appointments to the District Board of Trustees.”***

The City agrees with these finding and this recommendation has been implemented as the City already follows an extensive vetting process. When appointing an individual as a District Trustee, the City requires the submittal of a Committee/Commission Application. This application requires pertinent information enabling the City to make the best qualified appointment, including educational background, job experience, references, and a personal statement of qualifications. The applicant is then required to obtain formal City Council action approving the appointment at a public meeting. This public selection process enables the City to ensure quality representation on the District Board.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact City Manager John Wohlmuth at (760) 346-0611. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury's recommendation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Spiegel, Mayor
City of Palm Desert

cc: Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (CVMVCD)
Board of Trustees
Brenda B. Lathrop, Ph.D., CVMVCD General Manager
Douglas Walker, CVMVCD Trustee
Palm Desert City Council
John M. Wohlmuth, City Manager
David Erwin, City Attorney

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