

# City of Banning

## Office of the City Manager

September 4, 2019

John W. Vineyard, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of Riverside  
4050 Main Street  
Riverside, CA 92501

### **RE: 2018 – 2019 Grand Jury Report: “City of Banning Council and City Manager Relationship”**

Dear Judge Vineyard:

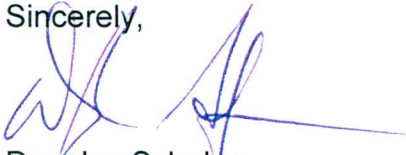
I have received and reviewed the 2018 – 2019 Grand Jury Report, dated June 18, 2019, and submit this response as required by Penal Code 933 et seq. Prior to appointment as City Manager by the Banning City Council, I have enjoyed a very successful career in city management, which included serving five cities in Washington and Minnesota over a period of thirty-one years. My reputation as a highly competent and, more importantly, ethical local government manager was outstanding. My interest in accepting the City Manager position with the City of Banning was to make a real difference in the lives of community members. Prior to Banning, I worked in affluent communities with no diversity and, at the end of my career I want something more personally meaningful.

Upon my arrival in Banning, it became very apparent that a lack of leadership due to frequent turnover of City Managers had taken a toll on the organization. Employee morale was extremely low and hope of improvement was absent. During early discussions with employees, I consistently heard about the number of times a new City Manager came in and had exciting plans, but before changes and improvements could be made, they were being attacked and pushed out. Many asked me what would be different this time around and all I could tell them is that I will do my best and will not be chased away by negative attacks on my character. Unfortunately, the personal attacks on my wife and I have been extremely defamatory. Perhaps not coincidentally, these attacks started shortly after the first time I explained to one member of the City Council that I took direction from the Council majority; not individual members of the City Council.

Fortunately, the current City Council includes four members who are committed to making positive changes, supporting City employees, and creating a strong Council – Manager relationship. I believe the findings in the Grand Jury Report are accurate and I have no reason to question the Grand Jury findings.

The Grand Jury's Recommendations are reasonable and appropriate. I have clearly communicated to the City management team and staff that my expectation is that all contact from members of the City Council is to be communicated to me. I have developed a very strong collaborative and professional relationship with four members of the City Council. Unfortunately, one member of the City Council refuses to speak to me outside of City Council meetings.

Sincerely,



Douglas Schulze  
City Manager

Cc: Mayor and City Council  
Riverside County Grand Jury  
Riverside County Clerk-Recorder