



# CITY OF SAUSALITO

420 Litho Street Sausalito, CA 94965  
Telephone: (415) 289-4100  
www.ci.sausalito.ca.us

October 11, 2017

Ron Brown, Foreperson  
Marin County Grand Jury  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room #275  
San Rafael, CA 94903

RE: Response to 2016-17 Civil Grand Jury Report – *Public Engagement in Marin: A Pathway to Inclusive Governance*

Dear Mr. Brown:

At their meeting of October 10, 2017, the Sausalito City Council reviewed and approved the response to the Grand Jury Report *Public Engagement in Marin: A Pathway to Inclusive Governance*.

Enclosed you will find the City's response. By copy of this letter, Judge Simmons will also receive one copy of the report.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Lilly Whalen  
City Clerk/Assistant City Manager

cc: Judge Kelly Simmons

FAX NUMBERS:

Administration: (415) 289-4167  
Recreation: (415) 289-4189

Community Development: (415) 339-2256

Library: (415) 331-7943  
Public Works: (415) 289-4138



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**October 10, 2017**

The Honorable Kelly V. Simmons  
Judge of the Marin County Superior Court  
Post Office Box 4988  
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Ron Brown, Foreperson Marin County Grand Jury  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 275  
San Rafael, CA 94903

**SUBJECT: Response to 2016-17 Civil Grand Jury Report –  
Public Engagement in Marin: A Pathway to Inclusive Governance**

Dear Judge Simmons:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933, et seq., please accept the responses of the City Council to the Grand Jury Report submitted by the 2016-17 Marin County Grand Jury to the City of Sausalito, entitled "Public Engagement in Marin: A Pathway to Inclusive Governance." The City Council approved these responses on October 10, 2017. 2017-18 Grand Jury Foreperson Ron Brown granted the City of Sausalito a one-month extension in filing this response, which was originally due by September 26, 2017.

## Grand Jury Recommendations, and the City's Response

**R1. Each agency without a formal PE Plan should develop either a PE Plan or PE Guidelines tailored to the needs of their public and publish the results.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. The City of Sausalito is committed to being open, inclusive and transparent. We recognize the value that community engagement brings to civic discourse and understand that involving the public in decision-making always results in better outcomes.

The City of Sausalito does not currently have a formal Public Engagement (PE) Plan. In the initial response to the Grand Jury survey, City staff indicated that it planned to craft a PE Plan for formal approval by the City Council. However, based on the Grand Jury report, the City Council feels that it would be more beneficial to follow the guidance from the Grand Jury to develop PE Guidelines rather than a formal plan.

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In the report, the Grand Jury writes, "Instead [of adopting a formal PE Plan], an agency can gather their existing engagement strategies in a simple document (which we refer to as PE Guidelines), which can evolve over time with community input. The process of creating the Guidelines does not need to be expensive nor take a lot of resources. These Guidelines can also avoid the need to reinvent the wheel each time a public engagement issue arises, and provide flexibility in the event of employee retirement or turnover." The City Council believes that the PE Guidelines approach is advantageous for a community of Sausalito's size, and will direct staff to develop such guidelines.

**R2. Each agency should obtain input from the public in the planning and design or update of its plan/guidelines.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. As the City's PE Guidelines are being formulated, feedback will be solicited via the City website, email newsletter, and social media platforms. A draft of the guidelines will also be presented at a public meeting of the City's Outreach, MLK Property, IT, Transportation (OMIT) Committee for feedback. The City of Sausalito plans to adopt PE Guidelines by April 1, 2018.

**R3. Agency managers should regularly share their PE Plans and "lessons learned" with their counterparts in other Marin agencies.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. An informal group of communications staff at Marin public agencies was recently created, which should provide an excellent forum for sharing this sort of information. The County Administrator's Office Communications Division and the City of Novato created the group so that members can trade best practices and discuss the hot topics and communications issues faced by local agencies.

**R4. Each agency should provide early and ample opportunity for PE in the form of proactive engagement in order to ensure that the public is aware of all their PE opportunities.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. At present, the City of Sausalito uses the tools listed below to advise the community of PE opportunities:

- Weekly email newsletter (2,728 subscribers as of 10/2/17)
- City website and community calendar
- Postcards and notices mailed to affected neighborhoods
- Email notices to groups of interested community members
- Announcements at public meetings
- Social media, including Nextdoor
- Posted flyers and on-site signage
- Notification of relevant community-based organizations
- Local press (Marin Scope, Marin IJ)

On an ongoing basis, and as part of the process of creating and updating City of Sausalito PE Guidelines, City staff will endeavor to improve existing tools and develop new tools and methods to bolster the City's PE efforts.

**R5. Post-engagement, each agency should follow up with the public, informing them of the results of projects and issues.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. At present, the City of Sausalito uses the following tools to inform the public of the results of projects and issues:

- The City of Sausalito weekly email newsletter, which includes a summary of City Council actions with links to documents and meeting video
- The City website, which provides updated news items every week, along with video of Council meetings, Planning Commission meetings, and the meetings of various other City of Sausalito committees
- Notices mailed to affected neighborhoods
- Social media, including Nextdoor
- The local press (Marin Scope, Marin IJ)

On an ongoing basis, and as part of the process of creating and updating City of Sausalito PE Guidelines, City staff will endeavor to improve existing tools and develop new tools and methods to bolster the City's efforts to inform the public of the results of projects and issues.

**R6. Each agency should create an easy-to-find area on their website dedicated to describing current community issues and explaining how the public can get involved.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. The City of Sausalito maintains a "Hot Topics" section on its website, with news stories and meeting information for important issues in the community.

**R7. Each agency should make PE a required responsibility of at least one staff-person and publicize that responsibility.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. Public Engagement is primarily the responsibility of the Director of Communications and the City Clerk/Assistant City Manager. Staff members within the City's various departments are responsible for specific elements of public engagement when acting as the lead on City projects.

**R8. Each agency should offer regular PE professional development to its staff.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. Staff pursues engagement opportunities as they arise. As an example, the City's website team recently received training on writing effectively for the web.

**R9. Each agency should develop meaningful and ongoing partnerships with their local community-based organizations.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation. Sausalito has developed and will continue to develop strong relationships with community organizations. Examples of existing relationships include Sausalito Village, the Sausalito Historical Society, the Sausalito Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, the Sausalito Woman's Club, Sausalito Sister Cities, Sausalito Beautiful, Age Friendly Sausalito, the Sausalito Foundation, and the Sausalito Art Festival Foundation.

**R10. Each agency should include on all written communications the social media platforms they use.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees partially with this recommendation. Social media is one of many communications tools we regularly use to allow two-way communication between the public and City staff, and we agree that identifying the platforms that we utilize in our communications is important. City staff has found Facebook and Twitter to be only marginally effective in increasing Public Engagement. Nextdoor has been somewhat more effective. Therefore, adding our social media platforms to "all written communications" from the City may be inappropriate in some cases. The City Council's recommendation to staff is to selectively include information on the City's social media platforms in written communications.

**R11. Each agency should communicate and emphasize to the public the importance of participation in PE.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation.

**R12. Each agency should publish an annual report describing the effectiveness of their PE efforts.**

**Response:** The City Council agrees with this recommendation and will instruct the Director of Communications to submit an annual report to the City Council at the end of each fiscal year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Withy', written over a horizontal line.

Ray Withy  
Mayor, City of Sausalito

## RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: **Public Engagement in Marin: A Pathway to Inclusive Governance**

Report Date: **June 26, 2017**

Response Date: **September 26, 2017**

Agency Name: City of Sausalito Agenda Date: 10/10/17

Response by: Abbot Chambers Title: Director of Communications

### FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: R1 - R9, R11 - 12
- I (we) disagree *partially* with the findings numbered: R10
- I (we) disagree *wholly* with the findings numbered: —

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R3 - R11 have been implemented.  
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered R1, R2, R12 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.  
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ require further analysis.  
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 10/2/17 Signed: 

Number of pages attached 4