

# San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury



## **The Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin *Progressing from Caretaker to Developer* 2016-2017 Case No. 0216**

### **(AMENDED REPORT)**

#### **Summary**

The San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) has investigated the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin (Housing Authority) through initial and follow-up investigations nine of the past 16 years. A complaint brought the Grand Jury to once again investigate the Housing Authority. The Grand Jury reviewed events occurring from 2009, to the present. The Executive Director, hired in 2009, made positive changes to the struggling organization. New challenges began a few years after the change of leadership. In 2015, another change in leadership occurred with the hiring of the current Executive Director (ED).

Effective leadership, starting with the Board of Commissioners, is critical for the success of the Housing Authority. These volunteers, selected by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors (BOS), set the policies which guide the organization. Equally important, they select the executive director to lead the Housing Authority.

The Grand Jury found there is no written procedure or succession policy for the replacement of executive positions at the Housing Authority. There have been periods of time when this has caused disruption.

Among the findings:

- Communication between the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and the current Executive Director has improved, resulting in less confusion between leadership and staff;

- An aggressive approach by the agency has resulted in the submission of a grant application to begin the process of Sierra Vista Homes redevelopment; and
- The process for selecting commissioners may be improved if the full San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors interviewed the candidates for commission vacancies.

A better understanding of the duties and expectations serving as a commissioner along with a thorough vetting of candidates will benefit the agency.

## **Glossary**

<b>Asset Manager</b>	Serves as property manager of public housing projects in Stockton and Tracy.
<b>Conway Homes</b>	Subsidized public housing located in south Stockton.
<b>HCVP</b>	The Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly Section 8) provides rental assistance and homeownership subsidy assistance to extremely low, very low and low income households.
<b>HUD</b>	The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is a Cabinet Department in the Executive Branch of the United States Federal government. HUD provides funds and oversees local housing authorities.
<b>LIHTC</b>	The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is the federal government's primary program for encouraging the investment of private equity in the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households.
<b>OIG</b>	The HUD Office of Inspector General is established to detect and prevent fraud, waste and abuse and to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of government operations throughout the U.S.
<b>Sierra Vista Homes</b>	Subsidized public housing located in southeast Stockton.
<b>STAND</b>	A non-profit community organization that buys single-family, blighted houses, fully rehabilitates them and sells them to low and moderately-low income families.
<b>Unlawful Detainer</b>	A court proceeding used to evict someone from the place where they live.
<b>VASH</b>	Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing is a program designed to address the needs of homeless veterans by providing a rental subsidy.

## Background

The Housing Authority (HA) was established by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors in 1942, and provides housing assistance for more than 19,000 low-income residents per year.

The Housing Authority's Mission Statement reads:

*“The Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin is dedicated to providing and advocating for affordable and attractive living environments for those of modest means and to give individuals and families opportunity to continuously improve themselves and achieve self-sufficiency.”*

The Housing Authority's annual budget is almost \$50 million, 90 percent of which is received from Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department programs. This funding enables the Housing Authority to distribute approximately 5,000 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) and manage 1,139 public housing units in various communities in the county. The Housing Authority manages other programs, including 31 subsidized units for migrant workers and 201 vouchers for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH). The Housing Authority also owns and manages numerous properties in San Joaquin County.



*Claremont Manor Apartments has 52 units, and is owned by the Housing Authority. Located in central Stockton, it is occupied by senior citizens.*

The governing Board of Commissioners (Board) consists of seven members appointed by the BOS. Five of the Housing Authority's Board Members serve a four-year term and two tenant commissioners are appointed to a two-year term. One of the tenant positions has been vacant since February 2015. The Housing Authority employs approximately 90 personnel. The Executive Director and the General Counsel (GC) are hired by and report to the Board. Other administrative staff includes five directors who oversee the departments of Rental Assistance, Finance, Information Technology, Business and Capital Development.

Over the last 16 years the Housing Authority has had its share of controversy. There have been nine investigations by the San Joaquin County Grand Jury, uncovering a variety of issues.

The previous ED had resigned in 2008. Since the Deputy Director position had been eliminated, there was no immediate replacement for the ED. As a result, there was a lack of leadership which led to poor morale and confusion. The ED hired in 2009, came with 30 years of

experience and encountered numerous challenges at the agency. Subsequently, many necessary changes including the reinstatement of a Deputy Director, were made. Morale and operational efficacy improved.

When the former ED arrived at the Housing Authority in 2009:

- The physical appearance of the administration property was atrocious. Graffiti had to be removed. A homeless population sleeping in the parking lot created garbage and unsanitary conditions. The homeless population was relocated and the parking lot was cleaned.
- The Capital Fund, which is used for capital improvements and maintenance, had been placed in “high-risk” status by HUD who also advised that if it wasn’t remedied, the fund would be designated “troubled status.” Many millions of dollars were stagnant within the Capital Fund. The Capital Fund was placed in “high-risk” status, because monies were not being spent in a timely manner and were at risk of being taken back by HUD.
- The relationship with HUD was adversarial. The former ED worked with HUD to receive a waiver, saving \$9 million which was then set aside for the renovation of the Sierra Vista Homes. Over time the relationship with HUD improved, and the Capital Fund was re-designated “low-risk” status.
- The agency was the subject of two Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits, one from 2004, and one from 2008. In the spring of 2009, the Housing Authority, led by the former ED, resolved the OIG findings and implemented the recommendations within the required deadlines.
- Morale was described by many as “horrible.” This was partly due to the effects of the recession, especially in the area of housing. The Housing Authority was able to move through this difficult period without laying off employees. By not filling vacant positions, employee workload increased. Other problems, including a lapse in leadership as described in the 2008-2009, Grand Jury Final Report, and the lack of union contracts contributed to the Housing Authority’s malaise. Ultimately, a four-year labor contract was successfully negotiated, though the workload remained high. Morale improved due to the changes made by the former Executive Director.

The former Executive Director was hired at the time the Board of Commissioners was in the process of changing the relationship with the attorney. Previously, an attorney from a local Stockton law firm provided contracted legal services to the Housing Authority. As of February 2009, the Board changed the attorney’s role to General Counsel (GC), reporting directly to the board. The Board hired the GC as a contracted, salaried employee.

As time went on, the positive relationship between the GC and the former ED deteriorated and serious conflict ensued. Misunderstandings increased and effective communication became almost impossible. The turmoil spilled over into the Board of Commissioners where discord

affected the interaction between members of that body. These conflicts were serious and detrimental to the Housing Authority.

The responsibilities of the former Executive Director and the General Counsel were not well-defined, and it was reported that employees weren't sure who was in charge. The General Counsel took over responsibilities that should have been handled by the former Executive Director. The former ED, at times, was hesitant to take on certain tasks. The Board appointed the General Counsel as the Public Information Officer, a job usually handled by an executive director.

The Board bears some responsibility for the contentious relationship between the former Executive Director and the General Counsel by allowing the General Counsel to become involved in the day-to-day operations of the Housing Authority. As the relationship between the former ED and the GC worsened, the Board let it fester. Confusion was the order of the day and morale at the Housing Authority began to plummet. As this atmosphere worsened over the next few years, employees began to look for work elsewhere. The former ED resigned in February 2015.

The former Deputy Director filled the position of Interim Executive Director until November 2015, when the current Executive Director was hired. The former Deputy ED left the Authority in 2016.

### **Reason for Investigation**

The 2015-2016 San Joaquin County Grand Jury received a complaint about problems at the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin. The issues, all regarding the General Counsel, included excessive costs for services, conflicts with one or more board members and abuse of authority. Because of time constraints the 2015-2016 Grand Jury was unable to complete the investigation and referred the complaint to the current grand jury. Due to the enormity of issues and additional information a further investigation was required. A new investigation was initiated.

### **Method of Investigation**

#### **Materials Reviewed**

- Previous San Joaquin County Grand Jury reports;
- Housing Authority by-laws and policies;
- Housing Authority agendas and minutes;
- Housing Authority financial documents;
- Employment contracts;
- Legal billing practices and time cards; and
- Unlawful detainer summaries.

## **Interviews Conducted**

- Former and current Housing Authority staff;
- Former and all current commissioners;
- Members of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors;
- Housing Authority tenants; and
- San Joaquin County community leaders.

## **Sites Visited:**

- Housing Authority administrative offices;
- Attended several Housing Authority board meetings;
- Conway Homes and Sierra Vista Homes;
- Claremont Manor Apartments; and
- STAND Affordable Housing.

## **Discussions, Findings and Recommendations**

### **1.0 Leadership is changed.**

At the Mar. 10, 2015, board meeting Bob Murray & Associates was selected to conduct a national search for the executive director position. The Board of Directors and Bob Murray and Associates developed a list of qualifications that met the needs of the Housing Authority. Among them:

*“The new Executive Director must be a strong leader who believes in quality services, strategic cooperation/partnership, and is eager to assume challenge and implement positive change. ... This position requires significant experience in real estate development process...”*

A former deputy executive director from Albany, New York, was hired by the Board in November of the same year. This Executive Director’s approach to management differed from past executive directors. Those differences were welcomed by most, though a period of adjustment was sometimes difficult. This change period was normal, adjusting to the current executive director took time. However, as the staff came to know the current ED, trust developed and staff appreciated the autonomy they were given. Eventually, the administration began working well together.

### **A. Challenges abound.**

On arrival, the current Executive Director (hired in November 2015) also noticed challenges at the HA headquarters and enacted changes which made the office more comfortable and efficient. There was only one person working in the office reception area, creating a potential safety risk and a lower level of service to clients. A second person was added to improve security and provide better customer service. Bullet proof glass was also added to the receptionists’ work stations. New software was purchased and new maintenance trucks replaced outdated ones.

Boxes of outdated files had piled up and were taking a huge amount of the administration building's space. Truckloads of paperwork were appropriately destroyed.

**B. A Low-income Housing Tax Credit Program effort is underway.**

The current Executive Director came to the Housing Authority with an extensive background in technology and public housing development. The current ED had served almost 20 years with the Albany Housing Authority, and was familiar with many methods of development, including the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC). This complex program had not yet been utilized by the Housing Authority. In order to meet growing, affordable housing demands, the current Executive Director has identified the need for developing private-public partnerships through the LIHTC.

The Housing Authority applied for a LIHTC grant with HUD in time for the March 2017, deadline. It was subsequently revealed that the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) Score Report for Interim Rule rated the organization as a "High Performer." This score placed them at the top of the area's grants and is a positive indicator for success.

If this \$2,430,801 grant is received, it will be used to begin the redevelopment of 115 Sierra Vista Homes. These rental homes are more than 50 years old, and they are past their useful life for this type of housing. Maintenance costs have increased substantially. It is time to demolish and replace them. This project, if funded, will be one of the most ambitious in the history of the Housing Authority.

**C. The Housing Choice Voucher Program is an award winner.**

The Board of Commissioners revised its by-laws to give the current Executive Director discretion to reorganize the staff. Previously the Rental Assistance Director, whose responsibility it is to run the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) program, did not report directly to the Executive Director. This person reported to the Deputy Director, creating a buffer, which slowed work progress. The HCVP program has the most employees and utilizes \$30 million of the Housing Authority budget. The director of this program now reports directly to the current Executive Director. In March 2016, HUD was holding approximately \$5.3 million for the HCVP. Funds not utilized would be taken back by HUD. Working directly with the Rental Assistance Director on outreach to clients, the Housing Authority reduced that amount to \$2.8 million by December 2016. This greatly reduced the risk of losing these funds.

The Housing Authority was under-utilizing more than 600 rental vouchers. They developed a strategy to increase the use of the vouchers. Those efforts included the following:

- Contracted out inspections to assist with lease up response time;
- Held leasing fairs on Saturdays and involved more staff to expedite eligibility determination;
- Utilized mail screening instead of face-to-face appointments to allow more administrative time for case work-up;

- As more vouchers were utilized and earning more administration fees, three more leasing specialists were hired for continued occupancy;
- Increased Project-Based Vouchers (PBV); and
- Applied for more Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing vouchers and contracted a VASH Leasing Coordinator to assist with VASH leasing.

Utilizing these strategies, the Housing Authority assisted nearly 500 new low-income families with a voucher subsidy.

During a recent HUD Regional Conference the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin was given a prestigious award for being the region’s most-improved Housing Authority in the Housing Choice Voucher program. This shows the above strategies are succeeding.

**D. Organizational changes led to timely unlawful detainers.**

A similar shift in personnel was implemented in the handling of unlawful detainers (evictions). When public housing tenant contracts are violated (unpaid rent, upkeep rules or criminal behavior) ultimately the tenant can be evicted by the courts. The legal department at the Housing Authority processes evictions. Previously, the Asset Manager sent the notices to the Deputy Director who ultimately sent them to the legal department. This process took a long time. Now the paperwork goes directly to the legal department. Since this change was instituted by the current Executive Director, monthly unlawful detainers have increased by 200 to 300 percent.

**E. Personnel are comfortable with expectations.**

Other changes, included the hiring of more employees to reduce the caseload, where warranted. Employees are given clear expectations and the authority to do their job. They are expected to own their position. Communication is clear. The current Executive Director’s door is always open and employees are allowed to express their views. When all is said and done, he makes the final decisions. Relationships have improved and employees now feel that the Housing Authority is where they belong. Staff are enthusiastic about achieving the Housing Authority’s ambitious goals.

**F. The Executive Director and the General Counsel roles are clarified.**

Another positive change noted by employees and commissioners alike, is the relationship between the current Executive Director and the General Counsel. The staff and board of commissioners’ relationships with the GC have also “greatly improved.” The negative atmosphere, caused at least in part by the contentious relationship between the GC and the former Executive Director no longer exist. Commissioners have made it clear the current Executive Director is in charge of the Housing Agency. There is a team atmosphere. The current Executive Director brought the General Counsel into the Executive team. The General Counsel is much more involved as part of the team.

This Grand Jury assessed numerous housing authorities around the state to determine what legal arrangements were made and what monies were spent on legal services. As a result of this

research, it was determined that the expenses for legal services were in line with common practices. The board's decision to have the General Counsel report to them rather than to the Executive Director is not an unusual arrangement. Equally important, the Grand Jury discovered that this arrangement is also preferred by the current Executive Director.

Though positive changes have been made there remains an area of concern. The contract between the General Counsel and the Housing Authority details guidelines that address completion of time cards. The contract states:

*“At a minimum the invoice shall detail the following information .brief description of services rendered, including applicable time frame, total hours being billed for each service and at the approved rate.”*

The General Counsel's time cards reviewed by the Grand Jury showed little to no information.

The public information officer's duties also changed. Commissioners acknowledged that the GC was asked to do this job, but now they feel comfortable with the current ED. He is now considered to be the spokesperson for the Housing Authority.

#### **G. Board communication improves.**

Communication between the Executive Director and the Board is vital. Board members are pleased with the quality and quantity of information they are receiving and feel sufficiently informed to make appropriate decisions.

#### **H. Community relationships are strengthened.**

The Grand Jury interviewed numerous community leaders from both governmental and non-governmental agencies. Several were keenly aware of the Housing Authority's difficulties which caused some local funders to decline to work with the Housing Authority.

Positive changes have occurred. Since taking the leadership position, the current ED has interacted with numerous community and governmental organizations and is a participating member of the San Joaquin County Homelessness Task Force. The current ED frequently attends various Stockton City Council and Board of Supervisor meetings which are related to housing. These meetings have concentrated on bringing funding opportunities to the county to increase the pool of low-income housing. For example, the current ED has reinvigorated the Housing Authority's relationship with STAND Affordable Housing. STAND is a nonprofit organization helping to renovate south Stockton through the development of affordable housing. Another example is the potential partnering project being discussed with the San Joaquin County Behavioral Services Department which will provide housing for some of their clients.

In the summer of 2015, the Progressive Community Church proposed a partnership with the Housing Authority for an after-school and summer program at Sierra Vista Homes. It is operational and staffed with volunteers from the church. The facility has a computer lab with 26 computers and a refurbished gymnasium.

### **I. Tenants voice opinions.**

The Grand Jury visited Conway Homes and Sierra Vista Homes. After touring these neighborhoods, interviews were arranged with residents of both. The voices of these remarkable tenants were unified. Each tenant expressed:

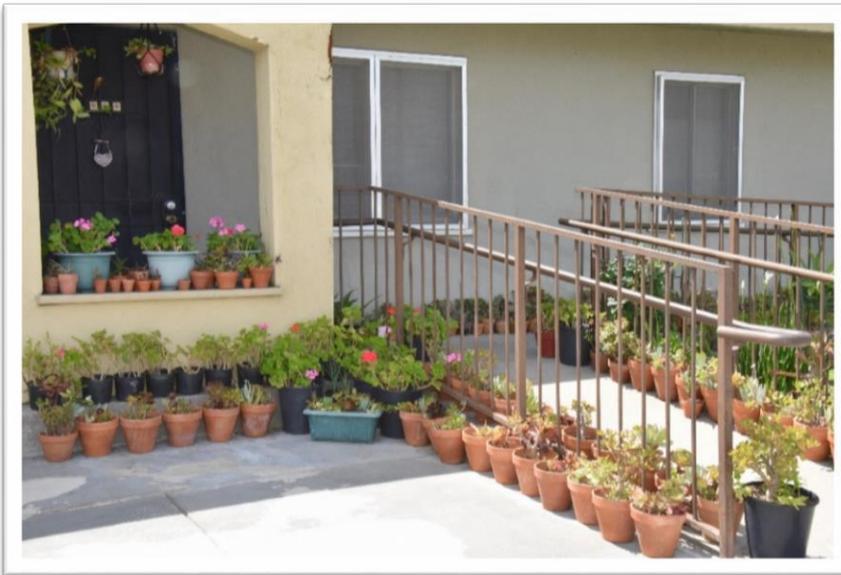
- Pride in their community;
- Appreciation that the HA has made clear that tenants are responsible for their actions; and
- Enforcement of consequences if lease agreements are not met.



*Sierra Vista Gymnasium*

Given a choice they would strongly prefer to live in these homes rather than utilize housing choice vouchers for rentals outside of the public housing. The Grand Jury interviewed long-term and short-term residents. The negative reputation of public housing is undeserved. Tenants feel safer in their neighborhood rather than outside of it. Each tenant had a compelling story, including having struggled through the morass of homelessness while raising five children.

Positive changes in the last 18 months have been noticed. The neighborhoods are a lot cleaner and quieter. The reasons given were: an increase in lease enforcement by the asset managers who they feel are tough but fair, and a new maintenance worker who responds quickly to their problems.



*Sierra Vista Homes Unit*

*Resident councils act as liaisons representing the tenants. Sierra Vista Homes has had an active resident council for some time. Conway Homes has recently restarted their council with the help of the Asset Manager. The leaders of both councils are enthusiastic about the services they provide to the residents. They hold regular resident meetings and sponsor several high-profile events each year, helping to build community pride and encourage positive engagement.*

## **Findings**

**F 1.1** Personnel and procedural changes have improved the efficiency and quality of services provided by the Housing Authority.

**F1.2** Morale among employees of the Housing Authority has improved, increasing employee satisfaction.

**F1.3** An aggressive approach to development has resulted in the submission of a grant application to begin the process of Sierra Vista Homes redevelopment.

**F1.4** The current Executive Director is now the spokesperson for the Housing Authority, resulting in a clarification of roles.

**F1.5** Communication between the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and the current Executive Director has improved, resulting in less confusion between leadership and staff.

**F1.6** The Housing Authority has improved relationships with public and private community organizations, which creates opportunities for public and private partnerships.

**F1.7** Lease agreements are being enforced rigorously, leading to increased tenant pride and safety.

**F1.8** The General Counsel's time cards do not include sufficient detail, as required by the contract.

## **Recommendation**

**R1.1** By September 30, 2017, the Board of Commissioners assures the General Counsel's time cards are completed in compliance with the requirements of the General Counsel's contract.

### **2.0 A succession plan would help to ensure stability.**

The Housing Authority has no succession plan for the Executive Director position. If, the current Executive Director were to suddenly leave, who would lead the agency until another director was hired? The Deputy Executive Director position was vacant for 10 months. Recently a new Deputy Director has been appointed. Even though that position has been reinstated, there appears to be no written, board-approved procedure for filling executive vacancies. The Grand Jury notes that steady, strong leadership is essential for successful operations at the Housing Authority. Persons with the administrative skill set for accomplishing the complex tasks at the Housing Authority are not easy to find. To maintain stability and continued progress, consistent leadership is essential. History has shown that any gap in strong leadership at the Housing Authority creates difficulties and jeopardizes operations.

## **Finding**

**F2.1** There is no written succession plan or procedure for the replacement of executive staff.

## **Recommendation**

**R2.1** By December 31, 2017, the Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin develop, adopt and implement a succession plan for executive staff.

### **3.0 Board selection.**

#### **A. The commissioner selection process can be strengthened.**

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors is responsible for the appointment of more than 115 persons to boards and commissions each year.

[https://www.sjgov.org/uploadedfiles/sjc/departments/board/boards\\_commissions/local\\_appointments\\_list.pdf](https://www.sjgov.org/uploadedfiles/sjc/departments/board/boards_commissions/local_appointments_list.pdf)

The 2016-2017 Grand Jury interviewed members of the Board of Supervisors and county personnel. The quality of boards and commissions directly affects the quality of county agencies. The BOS process for selection was explored. The vice-chair of the board is usually the point person for the appointment process, although many appointments are apportioned in specific supervisorial districts. The supervisor of that district recommends a person to fill the position in these cases, sometimes after interviewing the candidates. In all cases, the full board votes to approve the appointment. Appointees oversee a wide variety of agencies. Some are small, some are large. Some oversee small budgets and some, like the Housing Authority, oversee multi-million dollar budgets.

#### **B. Full-board interviews strengthen the selection of commissioners.**

In the selection of the most recent appointment to the Port Commission, the entire Board of Supervisors interviewed candidates. The rationale had to do with the substantial size of the organization, budget and political and financial impact on the entire community. It would not be possible for the supervisors to interview over 100 candidates. The supervisors, however, are positive about exploring the expanded interview process for some appointments, such as the Housing Authority.

#### **C. Agency “Fact Sheet” provides minimal expectations.**

The following link to the Fact Sheet details the position of Housing Authority Commissioner: <https://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6689> . The description of the commissioner’s duties only states the following; *“To establish policy and provide general direction for the operation of the District.”* “Fact Sheets” on the county website vary in the amount of detail included in the *“Duties”* section. The “Fact Sheet” for the Council for Quality Education and Care of Children has two pages of listed duties.

## **Findings**

**F3.1** The quality of boards and commissions directly affects the quality of agencies in San Joaquin County.

**F3.2** The full Board of Supervisors interviewed the candidates for the Port Commission, strengthening that selection process.

**F3.3** With a budget of nearly \$50 million, the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin is one of the largest and most impactful agencies in the county, requiring a more thorough candidate selection process.

**F3.4** The “Fact Sheet” for the Housing Authority provides minimal details about the duties, and does not allow potential commissioner candidates to fully understand the requirements of the position.

### **Recommendations**

**R3.1** By September 30, 2017, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors develop, adopt and implement a policy that requires the full board interview final candidates for the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin.

**R3.2** By September 30, 2017, the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin develop a thorough list of duties for the appointments “Fact Sheet.”

### **4.0 Board training is not mandated.**

Grand Jurors attended Housing Authority Board meetings which are held on the third Thursday of each month. At these meetings some commissioners appeared confused about the Ralph M. Brown Act, as it applied to the Commission. The ability to insert items into the agenda as the meeting was underway is not allowed, though this was unclear to at least one commissioner. The General Counsel and the current Executive Director, along with the chairperson, were able to clarify this at the time, and no Brown Act violation occurred. Some commissioners were unfamiliar with Robert’s Rules of Order, which is used to organize and facilitate meetings.

Understanding the issues of housing, specifically in San Joaquin County, is a complex and time-consuming task. San Joaquin County is one of the most impoverished counties in the state, and the need is great. Commissioners make decisions about how to spend large amounts of public money. They must understand the policies and proposals in order to decide whether to approve complicated recommendations. This requires training. There are ample opportunities for the commissioners to obtain this training, but there is no requirement to do so. If the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors includes questions in the interview process regarding the candidates’ commitment to attend the necessary training, it would make it more likely that the selected commissioners attend.

### **Finding**

**F4.1** Members of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin are not required to attend a thorough orientation or ongoing training.

## **Recommendation**

**R4.1** The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors seek a commitment to receive necessary training from each candidate for the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin.

## **Conclusion**

The need for affordable housing in San Joaquin County is great. The history of the Housing Authority is marked by controversy and has at times created chaos. This is at least a part of the reason that no tenant has stepped up to fill the tenant commissioner vacancy on the Commission.

A chart of the agency's morale over time would look like a roller coaster. Currently morale is on the upswing. Many employees are pleased with the new positive direction of the Housing Authority. Staff are excited about the move from caretaking to developing. They understand it is needed to meet the challenges for providing affordable housing needs in San Joaquin County. Relationships among employees have improved and those who were once looking for other jobs have now found the Housing Authority is the place they want to work.

Relationships with the residents have improved, thanks to an attentive and respectful administration. Residents understand the need for accountability. Community organizations are now willing to work with the Housing Authority, and there should be many opportunities for future projects.

The key to sustaining this progress is found in a stable environment with positive leadership and employee engagement. Leadership starts at the top, and the quality of the Board of Commissioners correlates with the success of the organization. The person the commissioners choose to lead the Housing Authority is critical to the success of the enterprise. This is the reason the Grand Jury recommends strengthening the process for the selection of commissioners and assuring that commissioners receive the necessary training.

The development of a succession plan is also critical for the Housing Authority to continue moving toward reaching its ambitious goals. Change can happen suddenly, but if properly prepared, the Housing Authority need not fall back into past difficulties.

It is important the Housing Authority continues to move toward reaching the goal of providing affordable housing for residents most in need. The citizens of San Joaquin County deserve no less.

## **Disclaimers**

Grand Jury reports are based on documentary evidence and the testimony of sworn or admonished witnesses, not on conjecture or opinion. However, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing such evidence except upon the specific approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, or another judge appointed by the Presiding Judge (Penal Code section 911.924.1 (a) and 929). Similarly, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing the identity of witnesses except upon an order of the court for narrowly defined purposes (Penal Code sections 924.2 and 929).

## **Response Requirements**

California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05 require that specific responses to all findings and recommendations contained in this report be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court within 90 days of receipt of the report.

The Board of Supervisors shall respond to the following findings and recommendations within 90 days of receipt:

F3.1, F3.2, and F4.1  
R3.1, R4.1

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin shall respond to all other findings and recommendations within 90 days of receipt.

Mail or hand deliver a hard copy of the response to:

Honorable José L. Alva, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of San Joaquin  
180 E. Weber Avenue, Suite 1306  
Stockton, CA 95202

Also, please email the response to Ms. Trisa Martinez, Staff Secretary to the Grand Jury at [grandjury@sjcourts.org](mailto:grandjury@sjcourts.org)

## Appendix

<b>Asset Manager</b>	<a href="http://www.hacsj.com/home/depart/public-housing.html">http://www.hacsj.com/home/depart/public-housing.html</a>
<b>Conway Homes</b>	<a href="http://hacsj.com/housing/conway-homes.html">http://hacsj.com/housing/conway-homes.html</a>
<b>HCVP</b>	<a href="http://www.hacsj.com/home/depart/hcvp.html">http://www.hacsj.com/home/depart/hcvp.html</a>
<b>HUD</b>	<a href="https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD">https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD</a>
<b>LIHTC</b>	<a href="https://www.occ.gov/topics/community-affairs/publications/insights/insights-low-income-housing-tax-credits.pdf">https://www.occ.gov/topics/community-affairs/publications/insights/insights-low-income-housing-tax-credits.pdf</a>
<b>OIG</b>	<a href="https://www.hudoig.gov/">https://www.hudoig.gov/</a>
<b>Sierra Vista Homes</b>	<a href="http://hacsj.com/housing/sierra-homes.html">http://hacsj.com/housing/sierra-homes.html</a>
<b>STAND</b>	<a href="http://standaffordablehousing.org/">http://standaffordablehousing.org/</a>
<b>Housing Authority</b>	<a href="http://www.hacsj.com/home/about.html">www.hacsj.com/home/about.html</a>
<b>2009 Final Grand Jury Report</b>	<a href="https://www.sjcourts.org/grandjury/2009/Final_Report_-_SJCGJ-0809_-_0808_Housing_Auth_Report.pdf">https://www.sjcourts.org/grandjury/2009/Final_Report_-_SJCGJ-0809_-_0808_Housing_Auth_Report.pdf</a>
<b>2008 OIG audit</b>	<a href="https://www.hudoig.gov/sites/default/files/documents/audit-reports//ig0891008.pdf">https://www.hudoig.gov/sites/default/files/documents/audit-reports//ig0891008.pdf</a>
<b>ED search brochure</b>	<a href="http://executivesearchneher.com/pdf/HACSJExecDirBrochure.pdf">http://executivesearchneher.com/pdf/HACSJExecDirBrochure.pdf</a>
<b>Boards and appointments list</b>	
	<a href="https://www.sjgov.org/uploadedfiles/sjc/departments/board/boards_commissions/local_appointmentslist.pdf">https://www.sjgov.org/uploadedfiles/sjc/departments/board/boards_commissions/local_appointmentslist.pdf</a>
<b>HA Fact sheet</b>	<a href="https://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6689">https://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6689</a>
<b>CQECC Fact sheet</b>	<a href="https://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=25018">https://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=25018</a>

## Photographs



*Fourplex in Sierra Vista Homes*



*Duplex in Conway Homes*

