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CITY OF PERRIS

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101 NORTH "D" STREET
PERRIS, CALIFORNIA 92570
TEL: (909) 943-6100

November 3, 1999

H.L. Wright, Foreperson
1998-99 Riverside County Grand Jury
Post Office Box 829
Riverside, CA 92500

Re: Grand Jury Report/June 28, 1999

Dear Mr. Wright:

This letter is in response to the Grand Jury Report. I apologize for the lateness in responding to the report. It was my mistaken belief that the report was distributed to all members of the City Council, the City Manager and the City Attorney and that staff had responded on behalf of the City Council and I. I am pleased to report that almost all of the recommendations in the report have already been implemented by the City.

I agree with the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury. I will summarize below the steps the City has taken in the last months to improve the management, operation and financial condition of the City. Also, you should know that on November 2, 1999, the citizens of Perris elected a new Mayor and two new City Council members. The recommendations should be the first order of business for the new City Council when they are seated on November 23, 1999. I will forward this letter to them.

1. The City has stabilized the City Manager position by appointing Ron Molendyk as permanent City Manager in January 1999. Mr. Molendyk has approximately 40 years experience in City government. He was the City Manager for the City of Lake Elsinore for over 14 years.

2. The City recognizes the need to have a qualified Assistant City Manager. Unfortunately, current budget constraints do not allow for the position. The City will evaluate the budget mid-year to attempt to fund the position. The City Council discussed hiring an Assistant City Manager during budget hearings in June. We all support the position.

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3. The City has retained the services of an independent accounting firm, Rogers, Anderson, Malody & Scott, LLP, 290 North "D" Street, Suite 300, San Bernardino, CA 92401 to serve as full-time Finance Director. Currently, the City is in the process of recruiting a full-time, permanent Finance Director with mid-year budget.

4. The new Council will review your recommendation to establish a Finance Committee. The City utilized a Finance Committee in 1995 to balance the budget. It put the City on the right track to financial recovery. I served on that committee, and I agree with the concept.

5. I agree that the City should reinstate the Planning Commission. The new Mayor and City Council should proceed with this recommendation as part of the budget review.

6. Currently, the City's policy is that all requests for City Attorney services or opinions by City staff must go through the City Manager. The new Mayor and City Council majority should reinforce the policy.

7. I agree that all City Council members route all administrative and operational requests through the City Manager. Currently, it is City policy. The new Mayor and City Council should reinforce the policy.

8. With the assistance of the City's current contract Finance Director, the financial activities of the City conform with accepted ethical principles and are able to withstand public scrutiny. The financial audits are up to date and, in June, the City adopted a balanced budget for fiscal year 1999-2000. More importantly, the City addressed the debt. The City will review the budget mid-year to make adjustments if necessary to stay on track.

9. As presiding officer of City Council meetings, I agree that City Council meetings should be conducted with proper decorum and members should refrain from demeaning personal comments. In the last months, the meetings have improved. They are more civil and I am sure this will continue with the new Mayor and City Council.

10. I agree that City administration should brief the City Council in study sessions scheduled a week in advance of meetings. This practice should be implemented by the new Mayor and City Council.

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11. I agree that the City should consider, utilize and support the advice of the Technical Advisory Committee. The technical committee concept was approved by the City Council in June. It is formed and the City is amenable to its assistance.

I sincerely hope that the information provided above demonstrates to the Grand Jury that the City is on the right track. When the new Mayor and City Council is seated on November 23, 1999, I will forward this letter to them so that the findings and recommendations will be the first order of business.

Very truly yours,

CITY OF PERRIS

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Al Landers".

Al Landers, Mayor

AL:mf