



Office of the Sheriff-Coroner Public Administrator

Douglas A. Binnewies
Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator

Jeremy R. Briese
Undersheriff

January 14, 2020

The Honorable F. Dana Walton
Presiding Judge
Mariposa County Superior Court
P.O. Box 28
Mariposa, CA 95338

Re: Response to Mariposa County 2019-2020 Grand Jury Final Report

Dear Judge Walton:

I am in receipt of the 2019-2020 Mariposa County Grand Jury Final Report. Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933(c), this shall serve as a response to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations regarding the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office (Patrol Functions).

Regarding the Grand Jury's Finding F-1 and the Grand Jury's R-1, I agree, maintaining public safety in a jurisdiction as large as Mariposa County presents its challenges. Staffing is one of the greatest challenges. To clarify, the Sheriff's Office currently maintains 50 sworn law enforcement officers with full-time state-wide peace officer authority. Of those, four (4) patrol sergeants and twenty-one (21) patrol deputies are assigned to the patrol division (uniformed patrol). These twenty-five (25) peace officers are responsible for fulfilling the patrol/first responder services for the entire county. The remaining sworn officers are assigned to other Divisions and Units such as the Office of Emergency Services, Court Security, Detectives, Boating Safety, School Resources, and management positions within the Sheriff's Office. At this time, the Sheriff's Office has two Deputy Recruits attending the Police Academy for state peace officer credentialing and we are actively recruiting for three funded but unfilled Patrol Deputy positions. Fully staffed, these additional five (5) full-time law enforcement officers would be assigned to the Patrol Division to assist with uniformed patrol functions.

The County has supported the Sheriff's Office FY2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget with additional Measure M monies. This additional funding has supported various Divisions within the Sheriff's Office, including two (2) additional Patrol Deputies, one (1) additional 911 Emergency Dispatcher and two (2) additional Office Assistants as well as equipment and training funds to support these positions. Additional Measure M funding has been provided to support various funding lines within the Sheriff's budget.

Once the Sheriff's Office is able to recruit and fill the currently open Deputy Sheriff positions, we anticipate that an additional two patrol deputies will be needed to fulfil all responsibilities that the

Patrol Division is tasked with. This will allow the Sheriff's Office to staff patrol shifts more appropriately to achieve more of a uniformed presence in our satellite communities that currently do not see regular patrol. The additional two patrol deputies will also greatly enhance officer safety by supporting two patrol deputies per shift in larger patrol areas of the County such as the North County Beat, consisting of the Don Pedro Sub-Division, Coulterville, Greeley Hill and the Buck Meadows communities which are currently patrolled by a single deputy.

Regarding the Grand Jury's Finding F-2 and R-2, I agree. I believe that at a minimum the County should compensate their law enforcement personal at the median of comparable counties. The median is the 'middle of the road' compensation of comparable counties. However, I feel Mariposa County is receiving much greater bang for their buck by compensating at this level and better compensation for our law enforcement personnel should be seriously considered. The complexities of the job coupled with the turbulent atmosphere in our society support this. Today there is a demand for qualified law enforcement officers and jurisdictions are aggressively competing for these officers. Mariposa County cannot afford to lose our deputies to higher paying counties and cities.

In addition, specific to the Sheriff's Office I would offer to clarify two items reported in the Grand Jury report. First, in regards to the call load that deputies are responding to, during the 2019 year deputies responded to 30,224 Calls For Service (CFS). This averages to 83 calls for service per day. Second, in regards to the Mariposa County Fire Department, the Sheriff's Office was providing leadership command to the Mariposa County Fire Department for three and one half years starting in August, 2014, to help identify a successful future. Since, the County transitioned to contract with CALFIRE for command and control which has proven to be successful.

I would like to take this opportunity to publically recognize the many fine members of the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office for their continued dedication and professional work.

I also wish to thank the members of the 2019-2020 Grand Jury for their willingness to serve and I appreciate their sincere interest, comments and support.

Respectfully submitted,


Doug Binnewies

CC: Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

Reviewed: 
Honorable F. Dana Walton, Per PC933