



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 520, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2100 FAX: (831) 454-3420 TDD: (831) 454-2123

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

January 21, 1999

AGENDA: January 26, 1999

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

THE WARDS OF THE COURT BUDGET

Dear Supervisors:

Attached is a letter from the Chief Probation Officer which addresses the matter of a cost overrun in the Wards of the Court budget and requests a transfer from the County's General Fund Contingency in the amount of \$180,000 to finance existing placements made by the Juvenile Court to out-of-county Camps and Ranches for the County's 1998-99 fiscal year. The Chief Probation Officer's letter is the first of a series of agenda items which will be before your Board in the next few weeks which involve juvenile treatment services, the Juvenile Justice System and the County Budget. The other items are:

- the Chief Probation Officer's request for approval of a grant application for State and Federal funds to finance a significant expansion of the County's Juvenile Hall and for a commitment of local funds to finance the required match for the construction grant and to finance the operation of the expanded facility;
- the Chief Probation Officer's request for approval of a grant application for State Juvenile Challenge Grant funds to finance services for at-risk youth identified through a Local Action Plan;
- the Health Services Agency's report on residential adolescent drug treatment programs; and
- the Governor's Proposed State Budget for 1999-00.

The purpose of this letter is to: (1) provide a financial context for your Board's deliberations on the Chief Probation Officer's request for County funds to renovate and expand the Juvenile Hall and

the Health Services Agency's report on the funds required to operate a residential adolescent drug treatment program, both of which will be presented to your Board on February 23, 1999; and (2) recommend the requested transfer from the General Fund Contingency as a one-time augmentation of the Wards of the Court Budget.

The material which follows provides a brief overview of the potential financial effect of the Proposed State Budget, a summary of the preliminary estimates of the new County cost for the Juvenile Hall renovation and expansion program; the Juvenile Challenge Grant; the adolescent residential drug treatment program; and the Wards of the Court Budget problem.

1999-00 Proposed State Budget

The difficult program and financial decisions which your Board will confront in the next few weeks have been aggravated by Governor Davis' decision to increase County costs as part of his 1999-00 Proposed State Budget. This office is currently reviewing the Governor's Budget proposal and preparing a report on the Proposed State Budget for your Board's consideration. The Report on the 1999-00 Proposed State Budget will advise your Board that for counties the cornerstone of Governor's Davis' first Proposed Budget is a reduction in the State's commitment to finance the operation of the State Trial Courts. The proposed reduction for Santa Cruz County is approximately \$2.25 million for 1999-00. This reduction has the same overall effect on discretionary financing in the County Budget as the State taking additional county property tax revenue into the State General Fund as was done by Governor Wilson in the 1992-93 and 1993-94 State Budgets.

Governor Davis' proposed reduction in the 1999-00 financing of the State Courts affects all counties but falls hardest on the smaller counties, like Santa Cruz. As with the property tax reductions of 1992-93 and 1993-94 the proposed increase in the County's costs for the Courts appears to be driven solely by the State's desire to balance its budget without reducing State programs. The Court funding which the Governor is now proposing to reduce is part of the fiscal relief which Assembly Member Keeley and Senator McPherson were able to secure for the County during the 1998 Legislative Session. The mechanism for the fiscal relief which our legislators secured for us was the elimination of the County's share of the direct operating costs of the State courts.

Governor Davis's Proposed Budget illustrates:

- the financial uncertainties which plague County Government;
- the absence of continuity from one year to the next in State commitments to local government; and
- the sad state of State/County relations.

This latest taking of local resources also demonstrates that the horizon for long-term financial planning for County Government is a few short months.

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**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WARDS OF THE COURTS**

**AGENDA: January 19, 1999
PAGE 3**

Juvenile Hall Expansion

The State Board of Corrections has established a program intended to provide badly needed funds for County Juvenile Halls through a process which requires a long term financial commitment by counties in the form of a local match for the construction funds and added operating costs. The Probation Department's preliminary estimate is that they will be requesting a commitment of County funds in the amount of \$1.1 million over the course of three years for the local match on a construction grant and operating costs for 4.3 additional positions for an expanded facility.

Juvenile Challenge Grant Funds

The Probation Department is currently in the process of developing a Local Action Plan and grant application for State Juvenile Challenge Grant funds which are due to the State on March 1, 1999. The local Action Plans must identify a continuum of responses for at-risk youth from prevention to incarceration with an emphasis on increasing or enhancing the existing number of out of home placements. The grant requires a minimum hard or in-kind match of 25% with priority given to applications that exceed the match requirements. The Probation Department has indicated that they will be using TANF or other existing resources to meet the match requirement. It is unclear whether any overmatch will be requested or if there would be any impact on the County general fund from this proposal.

Adolescent Drug Treatment

During 1998-99 Final Budget Hearings your Board directed the Health Services Agency to develop a proposal for a residential adolescent drug treatment program. The Agency's proposal will be presented to your Board on February 23, 1999. The preliminary estimate of the County Cost of the program is approximately \$200,000 per year.

The Wards of the Court Budget

The requested Contingency Transfer of \$180,000 for the Wards of the Court Budget, which is discussed in the attached letter, is in addition to a previous augmentation of the Wards of the Court budget approved by your Board in December 1998. The previously approved augmentation used unanticipated revenue and Probation Department salary savings to augment the Wards of the Court Budget by \$105,000. Because contingencies, unanticipated revenue and salary savings all contribute to the County's year end fund balance or carry over, which is an important financing element for next year's budget, the combined effect of the two transfers of funds is a reduction in available funding for 1999-00 of \$285,000.

Additionally, the Chief Probation Officer has advised this office that he believes that a new expenditure baseline for the Wards of the Court Budget is needed. If the approval of these two transfers is interpreted as an endorsement by this office and your Board of a new baseline expenditure level for the Wards of the Court budget, rather than the financing of an unfortunate anomaly, then the effect of the two transfers on the 1999-00 County Budget is \$570,000, as opposed to \$285,000, as illustrated in the table below:

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Item	Amount
-- Reduction in Fund Balance Available for 1999-00 from the use of unanticipated revenue, salary savings and the General Fund Contingency during the 1998-99 Fiscal Year.	\$ 285,000
-- Increased requirement for 1999-00 if the mid year augmentation of the Budget is a commitment to a new expenditure baseline for the Wards of the Court Budget	285,000
Potential Effect on the 1999-00 County Budget	<u>\$ 570,000</u>

We do not believe that the Graph on page 3 of the Chief Probation Officer's letter, which shows actual expenditures for the last ten years, supports the use of the projected expenditures for 1998-99 of \$397,000 as a baseline for 1999-00.


With respect to the 1998-99 Wards of the Court Budget, the expenditures in the Wards of the Court Budget are court ordered expenditures and the County has little choice but to approve a Contingency Transfer to finance these expenditures. However, our recommendation of this transfer does not represent a commitment to recommend expenditures at this level for 1999-00 and we expect the Probation Department to continue its efforts to contain the County Cost of the Wards of the Court budget.

Recommendation

At this time it is RECOMMENDED that your Board take the following actions:

1. accept and file this report for use in your deliberations on the matters of the Juvenile Hall renovation and expansion, Juvenile Challenge Grant, and the residential adolescent drug treatment program; and
2. approve the recommendations on page 4 of the Chief Probation Officer's letter of January 12, 1999.

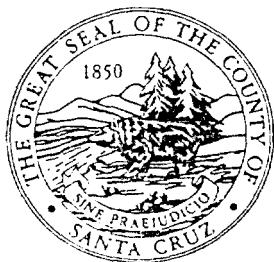
Very truly yours,


Pat Busch
Acting County Administrative Officer

Attachments

cc: Juvenile Court
Probation Department
Health Services Agency
Human Resources Agency
Auditor-Controller

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County of Santa Cruz

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 1812, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-1812

(831) 454-2150 FAX: (831) 454-3035

JOHN P. RHOADS
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

January 12, 1999

Agenda: January 26, 1999

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

REPORT ON CARE OF COURT WARDS BUDGET

Dear Board Members:

On December 15, 1998, your Board considered a preliminary status report on the unanticipated and extraordinary expenses being incurred in this fiscal year for the placement of juveniles in camps and ranches, and for undocumented juveniles in group homes, funded through the Care of Court Wards budget. The report informed your Board that the estimated cost over-run for the current fiscal year is estimated at \$285,000, and that salary savings and unanticipated revenue in the Probation Department would offset this budget shortfall by \$105,000, resulting in the need for a transfer from general contingencies in the amount of \$180,000. The report also informed your Board that the Probation Department and the Courts were meeting on a regular basis to address these cost overruns, and that the Probation Department would aggressively pursue reversal of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) policy regarding PRUCOL status for undocumented minors in placement.

STRATEGIES FOR CONTROLLING PLACEMENT COSTS / STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Thus far this fiscal year, twenty minors have been ordered into ranch/camp. As your Board is aware, a number of cost controlling measures were implemented in FY 96/97 in an attempt to reduce costs in this budget index. These strategies remain in place, however, the large number of minors coming before the Court with serious delinquent histories and offenses has resulted in the current situation.

Administrative Screening

Each Probation recommendation for ranch/camp placement requires careful screening and approval by the Division Director. The budgeted amount in this index would be only adequate for 5-6 minors each year, assuming an average length of stay of 6 months. California Youth Authority (CYA) administrative regulations, which are based on decisions by the Appellate and Supreme Courts of California, require that before a minor is committed to CYA, all other resources available to the Juvenile Court system must be exhausted. According to the Welfare and Institutions Code, the Court must endeavor to place the minor in the least restrictive environment that both protects the community and serves the minor's needs. Consequently, many minors may have significant prior records of adjudications and still not qualify for a commitment to the CYA due to the types of offenses and the availability of the ranch/camp option, which is considered less restrictive.

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Additionally, these minors have escalated beyond local placement alternatives to a point where a commitment to a secure facility is warranted.

A review of the profiles of the 20 wards committed to ranch/camp thus far this year substantiates this analysis. These wards have an average age of 17 years old, and have committed a total of 9.8 offenses per ward. In the aggregate, they have committed a total of 53 felonies and 143 misdemeanors. Thirty percent of these wards committed a violent felony, and on average they have been in 2.5 previous placements. Four, or twenty percent, had never been previously placed out of home, but due to the serious nature of their offenses, were committed directly to ranch/camp by the Court. Twenty percent of the minors were clients of the Probation/Mental Health GROW Family Preservation Program. The GROW Program was designed to reduce group home placements and it has been very successful in that regard. Group home costs from Probation dropped \$500,000 from FY 96/97 to FY 97/98 and have remained at this low level this fiscal year. In fact, cost savings for FY 98-99 are estimated at \$220,000 in this budget index, which resides with the Human Resources Agency. Not all minors are successful in this family preservation program, and it is these serious offenders whom we see escalating to group home and ranch/camp.

Reduction in Length of Stay

An additional strategy that has been employed is to aggressively work with the ranches to reduce length of stay. Typically, ranch/camp programs are nine months in duration. Ranch placements have been reduced to three months in some cases and the average is now six months. However, there have been cases wherein the Court has indicated a longer commitment program due to the seriousness of the offense and prior history.

Administrative Conferences With the Court

The Probation Department meets monthly with Judge Kathleen Akao to keep her apprised of the budget situation, however, as was stated earlier, ranch/camp is a disposition that is legally available to Juvenile Court Judges in California, and the Court must be able to exercise this option without undue influence. Judge Akao will be available to your Board to answer any questions and is writing a letter to express the Court's view on this matter. It should be noted that due to the patterns of chronic delinquency and/or serious nature of the offenses presented by these wards, the Court is faced with an older ward who has exhausted all other options. By law, a punitive sanction may be imposed by the Court. Although ranches do have vocational and educational programs, they are not treatment programs. The wards committed to ranch programs earn custody credits for the time they spend in the ranch. Because these wards are, on average, 17 years of age, it is difficult to measure recidivism. A review of the thirteen minors who were committed to ranch in 1997 demonstrated that 23% of these wards re-offended in the year following release. Two of these wards went on to the California Youth Authority and one re-offended as an adult.

INS Protocol

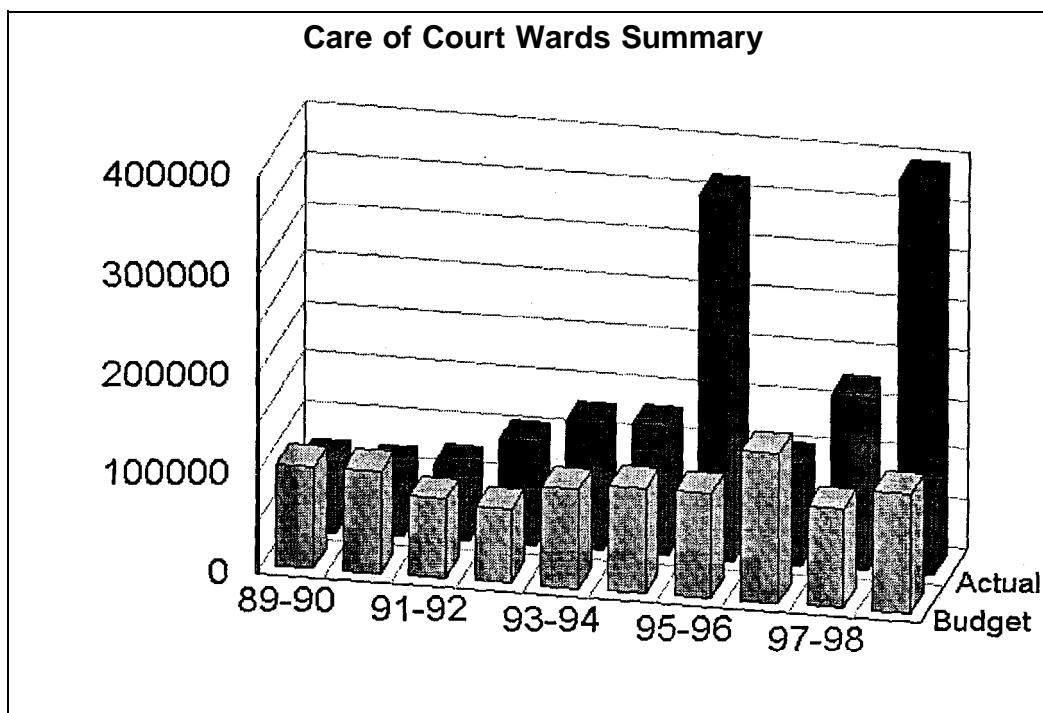
The Care of Court Wards budget has been severely impacted by the change in INS policy regarding the granting of PRUCOL status (Permanently Residing Under Color of Law) to minors in placement. The local cost of maintaining citizens and documented minors in placement is shared with the Federal and State governments. PRUCOL statutes previously made undocumented minors eligible for State funding for foster care reimbursement. In October 1996, the local INS office stopped granting this status, which resulted in 100% county costs for

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undocumented minors in group home care. The Probation Department, with assistance from the County Administrative Officer, has aggressively pursued reversal of this policy, and appears to have been successful as the most recent two applications have been granted PRUCOL status. A third request is currently pending. Savings in the amount of \$21,000 were realized due to these recent approvals, however, this year nine undocumented wards have been ordered into group home placement, representing a significant increase over previous years.

BUDGETING

Shown below is a graph that displays the actual costs in the Care of Court Wards budget, along with adopted budget amounts for the last ten fiscal years. The graph indicates an overall gradual increase in actual costs each fiscal year, with a significant deviation in FY 95/96 and again in the current fiscal year. Expenditures have exceeded the budget amount in seven of those years, an indication of the difficulty in predicting placement patterns. Amounts budgeted in FY 97/98 were decreased due to the lower costs in the prior fiscal year, but actual costs at year-end exceeded the prior year amount by 72%. The current fiscal year budget amount was requested at \$150,000, again based on the prior year estimated actual; it was recommended at \$120,000 and is now estimated to spend out at \$397,000, a 225% increase over the prior year.



SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As discussed in this report, significant effort continues to be made to address both the short and

Board of Supervisors Agenda 1/26/99
 Care of Court Wards
 Page 4

long term costs associated with the court **ordered** placement of juveniles. All parties involved in the placement process recognize the fiscal constraints that are placed on the County's general fund by the expenditures in this program.

Outstanding obligations, however, must be paid by the County and the Probation Department again recommends the transfer of funds from general contingencies in order to process vendor payments through June 30, 1999.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Accept and file this report on the status of the Care of Court Wards Budget and direct the Chief Probation Officer to continue to monitor and examine the placement process to minimize expenditures;
2. Approve the attached AUD 74 Transfer Request, authorizing the transfer of \$180,000 from General Contingencies to Care of Court Wards Budget to finance the increased cost for juvenile camp and ranch placements through June 30, 1999; and
3. Approve increases in contracts and encumbrances for various camp and ranch placements per attached ADM 29 forms.

Sincerely,


 JOHN P. RHOADS
 Chief Probation Officer

JPR:

Attachments

RECOMMENDED:

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
 County Administrative Officer

cc: County Administrative Office
 Auditor-Controller
 courts
 Human Resources Agency
 Probation Department

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COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OR REVISION
OF BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS AND/OR FUNDS

Department: Probation

Date: 1/13/99

TO: Board of Supervisors / County Administrative Officer / District Board

I hereby request your approval of the following transfer of budget appropriations and/or funds in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1999

AUDITORS USE ONLY						
DOCUMENT #	AMOUNT			L/N	T/C HASH	
JE 6, , , ,	I I	I ,	I I I I	,	I I I I	

BATCH #	
DATE	Keyed By:

		T/C	INDEX	SUBJECT	USER CODE	AMOUNT		ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION *
T R A N S F E R	T O	0 2 1	5 7 7 0 0 0	4 5 1 0		1 8 0	0 0 0 0 0 0	Foster Care
F R O M		0 2 2	1 3 1 3 7 5	9 6 9 5		1 8 0	0 0 0 0 0 0	General Contingencies

Explanation: Cost over run in the Care of Court Wards budget, foster care payments

Name John P. Rhoads John P. Rhoads Title Chief Probation Office?::

Auditor-Controller's Action: I hereby certify that unencumbered balance(s) is/are available in the appropriations/funds and in the amounts indicated above.

Auditor-Controller, by Ronald A. Aiton, Deputy Date 1/14/99

County Administrative Officer's Action: ☒ Recommended to Board ☐ Approved ☐ Not Recommended or Approved

County Administrative Officer Pat Bush Date _____

State of California } As the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, I do hereby certify that the foregoing request for
County of Santa Cruz } ss. transfer was approved by said Board of Supervisors as recommended by the County Administrative Officer by an order
duly entered in the minutes of said Board on

_____, 19____, By _____, Deputy Clerk

(A-C)* Desc: _____ # _____ - Budget Transfer

Distribution: BRD. NAME AGENDA DATE ITEM NO.
White-Board of Supervisors Green-County Administrative Officer Goldenrod-Departmental Control Copy
Yellow-Auditor-Controller Pink-Originating Department

A-C Review		

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COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT

TO: Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller

FROM: Probation

John P. Rios Chief (Signature) 1/13/99 (Date)
(Dept.)

The Board of Supervisors is hereby requested to approve the attached agreement and authorize the execution of the same,

1. Said agreement is between the Santa Cruz County Probation Dept. (Agency)
and Fouts Springs Youth Facility, P.O. Box 189, Stonyford, Ca 95979 (Name & Address)
2. The agreement will provide contracted detention services
3. The agreement is needed for court-ordered placement of wards in Ranch/Camps
4. Period of the agreement is from 7/1/98 to 6/30/99
5. Anticipated cost is \$ 180,414 (~~Fixed amount~~ Monthly rate Not to exceed)
6. Remarks: Increase due to unanticipated increase in court placements Increase \$120,000
7. Appropriations are budgeted in 577000 (Index#)(Subct)

NOTE: IF APPROPRIATIONS ARE INSUFFICIENT, ATTACH COMPLETED FORM AUD-74

Appropriations are available and have been encumbered.
are not will be

Contract No. 80915A Date 1/14/99

GARY A. KNUTSON, Auditor - Controller

By Ronald J. Silva

Proposal reviewed and approved. It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the agreement and authorize the Chief Probation Officer to execute the same on behalf of the County of Santa Cruz

Probation (Agency).

County Administrative Officer

Remarks: _____ (Analyst)
By Pat Buck Date _____

Agreement approved as to form. Date _____

Distribution:

Bd. of Supv. • White
Auditor-Controller • Blue
County Counsel • Green •
Co. Admin. Officer • Canary
Auditor-Controller • Pink
Originating Dept. • Goldenrod

*To Orig. Dept. if rejected.

State of California)
County of Santa Cruz) ss

I, _____ ex-officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of S
State of California, do hereby certify that the foregoing request for approval of agreement was al
said Board of Supervisors as recommended by the County Administrative Officer by an order di
in the minutes of said Board on _____ County Administra

_____ 19 _____ BY _____ Df

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COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT

TO: Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller

FROM: Probation (Dept.)
John P. Knutson, Chief (Signature) 1/13/99 (Date)

The Board of Supervisors is hereby requested to approve the attached agreement and authorize the execution of the same.

1. Said agreement is between the Santa Cruz County Probation Dept. (Agency)
and Bar-O Boys Ranch c/o Del Norte County, 583 G St., Suite 1, Crescent City CA 95531 (Name & Address)
2. The agreement will provide contracted detention services
3. The agreement is needed for court-ordered placement of wards in Ranch/Camps
4. Period of the agreement is from 7/1/98 to 6/30/99
5. Anticipated cost is \$ 74,023 (Fixed amount, Monthly rate, Not to exceed)
6. Remarks: Increase due to unanticipated increase in Court placements Increase \$30,000
7. Appropriations are budgeted in 577000 (Index#) 4510 (Subobject)

NOTE: IF APPROPRIATIONS ARE INSUFFICIENT, ATTACH COMPLETED FORM AUD-74

Appropriations are available and have been encumbered. Contract No. 80741A Date 1/14/99
are not will be

GARY A. KNUTSON, Auditor, Controller
By [Signature] Deputy.

Proposal reviewed and approved. It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the agreement and authorize the Chief Probation Officer to execute the same on behalf of the County of Santa Cruz
Probation Dept. (Agency).

Remarks: _____
By [Signature] Date _____
County Administrative Officer

Agreement approved as to form. Date _____

Distribution:
Bd. of Supv. - White
Auditor-Controller - Blue
County Counsel - Green
Co. Admin. Officer - Canary
Auditor-Controller - Pink
Originating Dept. - Goldenrod

To Orig. Dept. if rejected.

ADM - 29 (6/95)

State of California)
County of Santa Cruz) ss

I _____ ex-officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz,
State of California, do hereby certify that the foregoing request for approval of agreement was approved by
said Board of Supervisors as recommended by the County Administrative Officer by an order duly entered
in the minutes of said Board on _____ County Administrative Officer
_____ 19 _____ By _____ Deputy Clerk

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COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF 'AGREEMENT

TO: Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller

FROM: Probation

(Dept.)

John P. Rhoads (Signature) 1/13/99 (Date)

The Board of-Supervisors is hereby requested to approve the attached agreement and authorize the execution of the same.

Santa Cruz County Probation Dept.

1. Said agreement is between the _____ (Agency)

and Los Prietos Boys Camp c/o Santa Barbara County, 2121 S. Centerpointe Pkwy (Name & Address)
Santa Maria, CA 93455-1332

2. The agreement will provide _____
_____ contracted detention services

3. The agreement is needed _____
_____ for court-ordered placement of wards in Ranch/Camps

4. Period of the agreement is from 7/1/98 to 6/30/99

5. Anticipated cost is \$ 39,450 (Fixed amount; Monthly rate; Not to exceed)

6. Remarks: Increase encumbrance \$30,000

7. Appropriations are budgeted in 577000 (Index#) 4510 (Subobject)

NOTE: IF APPROPRIATIONS ARE INSUFFICIENT, ATTACH COMPLETED FORM AUD-74

Appropriations are available and have been encumbered.
are not will be

Contract No. 7000 Date 1/13/99

GARY A. KNUTSON, Auditor - Controller

By Ronald J. Silva Deputy.

Proposal reviewed and approved. It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the agreement and authorize the _____
Chief Probation Officer to execute the same on behalf of the _____
County of Santa Cruz

Probation Dept. (Agency). _____ County Administrative Officer

Remarks:

(Analyst)

BY [Signature] Date _____

Agreement approved as to form. Date _____

Distribution:

Bd. of Supv. - White
Auditor-Controller. Blue
County Counsel - Green *
Co. Admin. Officer - Canary
Auditor-Controller - Pink
Originating Dept. - Goldenrod

'To brig. Dept. if rejected.

ADM - 29 (6/95)

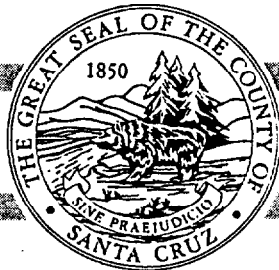
State of California)
County of Santa Cruz) ss

I _____ ex-officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz,
Slate of California, do hereby certify that the foregoing request for approval of agreement was approved by
said Board of Supervisors as recommended by the County Administrative Officer by an order duly entered
in the minutes of said Board on _____

By _____ County Administrative Officer
Deputy Clerk

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GRAND JURY



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

P.O. BOX 542 701 OCEAN STREET
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95061
(408) 454-2099

January 4, 1999

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: GRAND JURY REPORT RECOMMENDING COUNTY APPROVAL TO APPLY
FOR STATE FUNDING FOR JUVENILE HALL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

Dear Members of the Board:

The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury wishes to voice its support for the appropriation of the necessary counterpart funds to enable the County to apply for the challenge grant for the renovation of the County Juvenile Hall to be considered by the Board of Supervisors on January 26, 1999.

In 1996, a Juvenile Hall Needs Assessment Task Force was convened to "focus on the needs of the Hall." The Task Force made 39 recommendations. They represent an excellent body of ideas to deal with the problem of juvenile offenders. Many of them will find echoes in a special report on Youth and Substance Abuse that the Civil Grand Jury is currently preparing. However, only three recommendations dealt with the facilities of Juvenile Hall:

No. 12: "Expand health, vocational, mental health and education services at Juvenile Hall,"

No. 25: "Upgrade existing Juvenile Hall (especially security, kitchen, recreation facilities, storage, medical and therapy rooms," and

No. 35: "Develop plans to meet space and security needs at Juvenile Hall."

The last proposal, at least, has been acted on with the preparation by the Criminal Justice Research Foundation of a proposal to upgrade and redesign Juvenile Hall.

The Civil Grand Jury has been concerned about the condition of the facilities at the Juvenile Hall for some time. In last year's report, we recommended the rehabilitation of the nurses' station

and the possible construction of a new facility in South County. This year we received a special charge from Judge Yonts to examine the serious problem of youth and substance abuse. In the course of our work on that charge, we have devoted considerable time to studying Juvenile Hall. Our conclusion is that it is seriously inadequate to play its part in addressing the problem of youth and substance abuse, as well as its other responsibilities. Based on Probation Department information, we now believe that a new facility in South County would take approximately \$15 million to construct and at least ten years for necessary approvals and construction. Withholding matching funds for the proposed renovation with the idea of using them at some indefinite future date for a new facility is unrealistic planning. The best option in the short and medium term is to focus on the current facility.

In response to our report, you indicated that "the Board of Supervisors has authorized the Probation Department to retain the consultant services of the Criminal Justice Research Foundation (CJRF) of Sacramento. CJRF is conducting a complete Juvenile Hall facility evaluation and needs assessment, as well as developing recommendations on a range of options that may apply to the current Juvenile Hall, as well as additional unmet residential needs CJRF is also tracking bills and legislation that could provide funding, and will assist the Probation Department in the application and response to any Requests for Proposals in which funds are available for the Juvenile Hall."

The proposed renovation plan addresses the most serious deficiencies of the Juvenile Hall. It is not possible in the current facility to adequately segregate the population between males and females, older and younger wards and serious/dangerous offenders and others given the current two-wing, linear structure. The proposed cluster system would make this much easier, as well as providing for increased supervision, central control and safety. The renovation plan also upgrades security through the addition of a sally port and an improved perimeter fence.

The Juvenile Hall faces chronic lack of space despite the strenuous efforts directed by the Board of Supervisors to increase placement outside Juvenile Hall. This requires the routine doubling up of wards in rooms designed for only one person. There is no reason to believe that this situation will improve in the future. The new capacity, which at 60 is only slightly over the recent average in the middle 50s, also gives the flexibility to meet changes in the age, gender and violence potential of the ward population.

Current recreation facilities are open to the elements and actually appear to present some danger to the juveniles. An all-weather facility could also be used for a variety of other purposes, including better visiting facilities.

One of the great triumphs of Juvenile Hall is the successful education program that it carries out. This is done despite having only two rooms not specifically designed as classrooms. The renovation will provide an even more effective learning environment.

Board of Supervisors
January 4, 1999
Page three

The current health facilities are sadly inadequate. For a population facing serious problems from substance abuse, this is unacceptable. The nurses, whose dedication is obvious, are forced to work in one small room which combines examining facilities, records and work space. We understand that the State requires a separate room for examination. These matters urgently need to be resolved and would be addressed by the renovation plan.

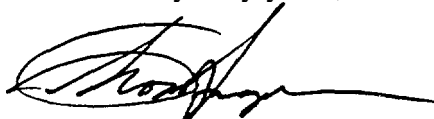
Finally, we understand that a serious asbestos problem exists in the facility. The ongoing palliative efforts will not solve the problem. Removal of this health menace is included in the plan.

Alternatives to incarceration in the Juvenile Hall have been thoroughly explored, stimulated by the 1996 report. Many of the alternatives have been acted upon. However, additional finding has come almost entirely from grants. It seems to us to be a false dichotomy that funding of Juvenile Hall from County sources will reduce the funding available to alternatives to incarceration. These alternatives, while important and effective in many cases, have not been able to actually reduce the demands on the Juvenile Hall. Furthermore, the County should not put itself in the position of being forced to eschew the use of the Juvenile Hall due to overcrowding when such use is appropriate and necessary.

CJRF has completed the facility evaluation and needs assessment. Their proposed design for a renovation of Juvenile Hall appears to deal with most of the concerns which the Civil Grand Jury and others have expressed. Fortuitously, this comes at a time when the largest part of funds for the renovation may be available from a challenge grant from the State. Application for this challenge grant will require matching funds from the County. We believe that this is an opportunity that should not be missed. It is now time to stop studying the matter and to start acting.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge the Board of Supervisors to seize the opportunity presented by the challenge grant to leverage the County's own contribution in order to effect a major improvement in the ability of the Juvenile Hall to meet the needs of the County and its own wards.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Sprague', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Thomas Sprague
Foreperson
Civil Grand Jury

TS:mks