

Summary of Responses to the 2017-2018

Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury's Final Reports

SUMMARY

Each year the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) issues reports with findings and recommendations directed to Stanislaus County officials, agencies, and municipal and other public entities. The Continuity Committee's responsibility is to monitor the filing of responses to the previous year's grand jury reports and advise the current grand jury if those responses are complete and legally sufficient, or if additional follow-up is necessary.

BACKGROUND

California Penal Code §933(a) requires the civil grand jury to "submit to the presiding judge of the superior court a final report of its findings and recommendations that pertain to county government matters during the fiscal or calendar year." §933(c) requires comments from the governing body, elected county officers, or agency heads to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations within a required time period. Governing bodies of public agencies are required to respond no later than 90 days after the civil grand jury submits a final report; elected county officers and agency heads are required to respond no later than 60 days after the civil grand jury submits a final report.

All SCCGJ reports and the responses can be viewed on the following website: stanct.org/final-reports.

METHODOLOGY

The responses and comments submitted concerning reports issued by the 2017-2018 civil grand jury were evaluated by the 2018-2019 civil grand jury. A review of California Penal Code §933.05(b) requires responses to both findings and recommendations. Responses to findings include one of the following:

1. Agrees
2. Agrees partially
3. Disagrees wholly

Responses to recommendations include one of the following:

1. Has implemented the recommendation
2. Will implement the recommendation
3. Further analysis is needed
4. Will not implement the recommendation/other

California Penal Code §933.05 (b)(3) requires that respondents indicating "further analysis is needed" must conclude such study within six months from the date of the publication of the civil grand jury report.

GLOSSARY

SCCGJ	Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury
BFPD	Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
CSDA	California Special Districts Association
BOD	Board of Directors
BOS	Board of Supervisors
CFPD	Ceres Fire Protection District
DFPD	Denair Fire Protection District
HFPD	Hughson Fire Protection District
IFPD	Industrial Fire Protection District
KFPD	Keyes Fire Protection District
MVFPD	Mountain View Fire Protection District
ORFPD	Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District
RPTCBOD	Riverdale Park Tract Community Board of Directors
SFPD	Salida Fire Protection District
SCFPD	Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District
TRFPD	Turlock Rural Fire Protection District
WFPD	Westport Fire Protection District
WSFPD	West Stanislaus Fire Protection District
WAFPD	Woodland Avenue Fire Protection District

The SCCGJ developed a chart to track responses from county officials, agencies, municipal and other public entities. The following charts reflect each entity's responses to the findings and recommendations of the 2017-2018 SCCGJ final report.

Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District Board of Directors

Dynasty or Democracy?

Case #18-06C

Reason for Investigation

The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) initiated an investigation in response to a complaint of alleged mismanagement by the board of directors of the Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District (BPFDP). The allegations included violations of the Brown Act and poor financial decisions. The investigation was expanded to determine compliance with selected articles of state law and generally accepted governance practices.

Agency Asked to Respond

- ❖ Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District Board of Directors

Agencies Invited to Respond

- ❖ BPFDP Fire Chief
- ❖ Local Agency Formation Commission
- ❖ Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F1. The BPFDP-BOD is dysfunctional. Board members lack training, leadership skills, and the ability to communicate effectively.				R1. LAFCO should consider dissolving BPFDP or consolidating it with another district by June 30, 2019.				X

Findings	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F2. The lack of written conflict of interest policies and procedures is a frequent issue.				R2. BPPFD-BOD must conduct public meetings in a professional manner led by the board chair in congruence with the district's adopted written policies, customary parliamentary procedures, and the Brown Act by August 1, 2018.	X			
F3. Legal fees have depleted the funds available for the district's core mission.				R3. Develop procedures and rules for BPPFD-BOD on conducting public meetings by participating in state-approved courses on the Leadership of Special Districts Foundation in California by December 1, 2018.	X			
F4. No records exist accounting for the cash funds received from the sale of the BPPFD fire truck.				R4. Develop and implement a conflict of interest policy and procedures to establish expectations of balancing the personal and business interests of BPPFD.	X			
F5. State funds reimbursing the district for administrative costs for strike teams were improperly paid to an employee.				R5. Retain Financial Disclosure Forms (Form 700) for a minimum of five years to be held at the BPPFD office and at the Stanislaus County Election Office by September 1, 2018.	X			
F6. Credit cards were left unsecured with no written policy for their use.				R6. Maintain Ethics training certificates for a minimum of three years to be held at BPPFD office by August 1, 2018.		X		

Findings	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F7. BPPFD-BOD failed to provide financial statements and audit reports.				R7. Establish bylaws requiring new and returning BPPFD-BOD to complete biennial training in the Brown Act, Public Records Act (Government Code 1090-1098), and the Political Reform Act (Government Code 87100-87505) by December 1, 2018.		X		
F8. BPPFD-BOD failed to provide Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests and evidence of ethics training as required by California law.				R8. The BPPFD website should focus on governance information and financial transparency no later than August 1, 2018 by posting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meeting agendas 72 hours prior to the meeting • Special meeting agendas 24 hours prior to the meeting • Emergency meeting agendas one hour prior to the meeting • Board minutes • Monthly budget reports • Financial transaction reports • Annual audit information 		X		
F9. BPPFD-BOD failed to provide board agendas and minutes as required by the Brown Act.				R9. Use the BPPFD website to provide information about the district to encourage public attendance and participation by September 1, 2018.		X		

Findings	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F10. Agendas for special meetings were not posted as required by the Brown Act.				R10. Encourage public attendance and involvement by clearly posting BPPFD-BOD meeting dates, times, agendas, at locations visible to the public by August 1, 2018.		X		
F11. BPPFD-BOD has no written policies, procedures, or bylaws.				R11. BPPFD-BOD needs to develop job descriptions and responsibilities for all employees and volunteers by December 1, 2018.	X			
F12. Employees have no job descriptions and therefore have little understanding of what their job responsibilities truly are.				R12. Develop a grievance procedure free from the fear of retaliation by January 1, 2019.	X			
F13. BPPFD has no grievance procedure for protection against any form of abuse.				R13. BPPFD-BOD is directed to support the current fire chief and assistant chief by encouraging them to connect with the Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office to assist this leadership staff with strategic planning, training, and other support services to effectively manage the district by August 1, 2018.	X			
				R14. Ensure LAFCO website shows the correct monthly board meeting time and location and update when necessary by September 1, 2018.	X			

Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **not satisfied** that the Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District responded to all findings and recommendations as no **responses to findings** were included in its report to the Presiding Judge. The BPPFD did submit its response within the timeframe stipulated by the California Penal Code §933(c), §933.05(a) and (b).

Independent Special Fire Districts
Relics of the Past or Resources for the Future?

Case #18-15GJ

Reason for Investigation

California law established special districts as independent state agencies to provide infrastructure or services of importance to voters within specific limited boundaries. Special districts are an important part of local government. The districts are governed by boards that are accountable to the voters within district boundaries. Stanislaus County is home to forty-two independent special districts including fourteen fire districts. Stanislaus County independent special fire districts administer \$26 million a year of taxpayer money with little scrutiny from citizens. Fire districts as a group have never been reviewed by SCCGJ. In 2017-2018 all fourteen special fire districts were evaluated to assess the transparency and accountability of governance.

Two areas of concern for the 2017-2018 SCCGJ were:

- ❖ Oversight of special districts, specifically opportunities to bolster the effectiveness of LAFCO
- ❖ The continued need for special fire districts to improve transparency and public engagement

Agencies Asked to Respond

- ❖ Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District
- ❖ Ceres Fire Protection District
- ❖ Denair Fire Protection District
- ❖ Hughson Fire Protection District
- ❖ Industrial Fire Protection District
- ❖ Keyes Fire Protection District
- ❖ Mountain View Fire Protection District
- ❖ Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District
- ❖ Salida Fire Protection District
- ❖ Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District
- ❖ Turlock Rural Fire Protection District
- ❖ Westport Fire Protection District
- ❖ West Stanislaus Fire Protection District
- ❖ Woodland Avenue Fire Protection District

Agencies Invited to Respond

- ❖ Local Agency Formation Commission
- ❖ Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other**
Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.				R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).				
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.				R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).				
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.				R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.				

Findings	Agrees w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>				<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>				
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>				<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>				
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>				<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>				
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>				<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>				

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>				<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>				
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>				<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>				
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>				
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand”</p>				

			section announces volunteer opportunities.				
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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **not satisfied** with the Burbank-Paradise Fire Protection District as no response was submitted for Case # 18-15GJ **even after repeated requests in writing.**

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Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Ceres Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.			X	R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).		X		
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.			X	R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).		X		
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.		X		R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.	X			
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.	X			R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.	X			R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.			X	
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.		X		
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).				X
F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.		X		R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.	N o r e s p o n s e			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>	X			<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	N o r e s p o n s e			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>	N o r e s p o n s e			

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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** the Ceres Fire Protection District submitted its response within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c); however, the SCCGJ is **not satisfied** with the report since no responses to recommendations 9, 10, and 11 were provided.

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Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*

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Denair Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.				R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).				
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.				R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).				
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.				R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>				<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>	X			
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>				<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>				
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>				<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>				
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>				<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>		X		
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>				<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>				<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				

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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** the Denair Fire Protection District submitted its response within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c); however, the response was not specific as to findings and recommendations and was found to be **unsatisfactory** in detail.

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Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Hughson Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>	X			<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>		X		
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>	X			<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>			X	<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>	X			
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>	X			<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.	X			R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				X
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.	X			R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>	X			

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** the Hughson Fire Protection District submitted a detailed response within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Industrial Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>	X			<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>		X		
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>	X			<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>				X
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>			X	<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.			X	R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.			X	
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.			X	R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*:
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>				X
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				X

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** the Industrial Fire Protection District submitted a detailed response within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

Findings				Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly					
Keyes Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.			X	R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).	X			
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.			X	R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).		X		
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.	X			R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>			X	<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>	X			
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>		X		<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>			X	
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>			X	<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>			X	
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>	X			<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>	X			
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>			X	<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>		X		<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>		X		
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>	X			<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>		X		

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Conclusion

After repeated requests both in writing and in person, the 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** with Keyes Fire Protection District’s late response.

Findings	Agree w/ Finding			Recommendations	Agree w/ Finding			
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Mountain View Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.		X		R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).		X		
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.		X		R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).				X
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.		X		R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.	X			R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.	X			R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				X
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.	X			R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.	X			R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*:
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>		X		
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>	X			<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>	n / a			

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** with the Mountain View Fire Protection District response; however, the response was not received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c) and was only received after repeated requests.

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District								
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.			X	R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).	X			
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.			X	R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).				X
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.				R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.			X	

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.			X	R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.			X	R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*:
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				X

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** with the Oakdale Fire Protection District response; however, the response was not received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Salida Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>	X			<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>	X			<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>				<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>			X	

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.			X	R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.			X	R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				X

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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** with the Salida Fire Protection District response; however, the response was not received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

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Findings	Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District			Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly					
F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.		X		R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).	X			
F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.		X		R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).		X		
F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.		X		R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.		X		

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.			X	R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.		X		R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.		X		R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				X
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.		X		R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).		X		

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.	X			R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.		X		
F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.	X			R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.	X			
				R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.		X		

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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is completely **satisfied** with the Stanislaus Consolidated Fire Protection District response. The response was received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

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Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Turlock Rural Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>				<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>				<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>				X
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>				<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>	X			

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>				<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>	X			
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>				<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>				X
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>				<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>				X
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>				<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>	X			
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>				<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>				X

Findings				Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly					
F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.				R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.				X
F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.				R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.		X		
				R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.		X		

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** Turlock Rural Fire Protection District submitted its response within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c); however, its response was not specific as to findings and was found to be **unsatisfactory** in detail.

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Westport Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>	X			<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>		X		
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>	X			<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>		X		
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>		X		<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>		X		

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>	X			<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>				X
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>	X			<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>				X
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>		X		<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>		X		
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>	X			<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>		X		
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>			X	<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>			X	

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*:
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>	X			<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>	X			<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>		X		
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>			X	

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Conclusion

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The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is completely **satisfied** with the Westport Fire Protection District response. The response was received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

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Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
West Stanislaus Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>			X	<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>			X	<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>	X			
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>				<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>				X

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.</p>				<p>R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.</p>	X			
<p>F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.</p>			X	<p>R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.</p>				X
<p>F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.</p>			X	<p>R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.</p>				
<p>F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.</p>		X		<p>R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.</p>	X			
<p>F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.</p>			X	<p>R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).</p>			X	

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*:
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>				<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				X

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Conclusion

3 The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is completely **satisfied** with the West Stanislaus Fire Protection District response.

4 The response was received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c).

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Woodland Avenue Fire Protection District								
<p>F1. Few districts are in full compliance with state laws in transparency, accountability, and governance.</p>			X	<p>R1. All Stanislaus County fire district boards should adhere to California law. All districts should have a written manual of generally accepted governance policies and procedures. The manual should include policies for nepotism, credit card control, and check signing. The manual should be completed by December 31, 2018 (see appendix).</p>		X		
<p>F2. Many board members are not adequately prepared to assume office. Stanislaus County lacks a standardized governance training program.</p>			X	<p>R2. All fire districts should establish a training requirement for board members in addition to that required by law. The curriculum is to be established no later than December 31, 2018 and shall include at least good governance, parliamentary procedure, Brown Act, nepotism, and conflict of interest (see appendix).</p>				X
<p>F3. Most district board members are appointed by the SCBOS.</p>				<p>R3. Certificates of ethics training and Financial Disclosure Form 700 must be on file in each fire district office for five years and at the Stanislaus County Elections Office.</p>				X

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F4. The SCCGJ observed that some fire districts perceive that they are accountable to the SCBOS. Conversely the SCBOS has no responsibility beyond appointment of board members.			X	R4. Fire districts are to ensure that meeting times and locations are posted consistently and accurately on district websites and with LAFCO.	X			
F5. Citizen participation is lacking at board meetings.			X	R5. The fire districts and the community at large would benefit if the SCBOS would exert oversight of governance training.				X
F6. Most board meetings are not welcoming to citizens.			X	R6. The SCBOS should advise the forty-two special districts in Stanislaus County to obtain a copy of this report from the SCCGJ website for informational purposes.				X
F7. Many of the district websites lack required information about governance and finances.		X		R7. All fire district boards must comply immediately with the requirements for meeting notices, posting of meeting agendas, publishing of minutes, and financial statements as required by California law.	X			
F8. No apparent effort exists to increase citizen participation and involvement.			X	R8. Websites should be effectively maintained to abide by California law. The priority of websites should be to provide information and transparency about governance and finances. Current and prior agendas, minutes, financial statements, and audits should be posted (see appendix).				X

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
<p>F9. The fire districts spend \$26 million yearly with little public scrutiny.</p>			X	<p>R9. Board meeting locations and times should be boldly identified. Signage visible from the street should announce meeting dates and times. Signage should be in place to direct citizens to the meeting room. Meeting rooms should be well-lighted, provide adequate seating, and free of exhaust fumes.</p>	X			
<p>F10. While the SCCGJ focused its investigation on independent special fire districts, our findings and recommendations should be of interest to all special districts in Stanislaus County.</p>			X	<p>R10. Board meeting structure should routinely reflect the basic elements of accepted rules of order while conducting the people’s business. They should start on time with a gavel or announcement. Board members and officers should be identified by roll call. Names of board members should be visible. Topics and guest speakers should be clearly identified, and sidebars eliminated.</p>	X			
				<p>R11. The districts should utilize local print media to seek candidates for the boards of directors. For example, the Modesto Bee’s “Lend a Hand” section announces volunteer opportunities.</p>				X

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Conclusion

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ is **satisfied** with the Woodland Avenue Fire Protection District response; however, the response was not received within the timeframe stipulated by California Penal Code §955 (c) and was received only after repeated requests.

Is Modesto City Water in Riverdale’s Future?

Case #18-25C

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

In December 2017 Stanislaus Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) received a complaint from a resident in the Riverdale Park Tract Community Services District (RPTCSD) accusing the current RPTCSD Board of Directors (RPTCBOD) chairperson of inappropriate use of authority and allowing Brown Act violations to occur. In January 2018 the complainant submitted documentation alleging additional improprieties against the RPTCSD board chairperson.

AGENCIES ASKED TO RESPOND

- ❖ Riverdale Park Tract Community Board of Directors (RPTCBOD)

AGENCIES INVITED TO RESPOND

- ❖ Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors
- ❖ Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

Findings				Recommendations				
	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly		Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
F1. The RPTCSD BOD has no bylaws on how to conduct meetings or resolve the simplest issues regularly causing dissension and division within the board.				R1. RPTCSD should seek organizations that provide training, mentorship, website, and personnel support to facilitate their transition to an effective and productive board by December 31, 2018. One such organization is California Special Districts Association – www.csda.net .				
F2. The governance and operating expenses are outpacing revenues and significantly reducing operating reserves.				R2. RPTCSD residential and business water rates should be increased no later than December 31, 2018 in order to maintain a positive cash flow position.				

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis	Will Not Implement/Other*
F3. RPTCSD BOD has failed to properly post its monthly meetings to the public in violation of §54954.2 of the Government Code (part of the Brown Act).				R3. RPTCSD shall create a conflict of interest policy as required by law to minimize board meeting issues by October 1, 2018.				
F4. Nepotism exists on the RPTCSD BOD.				R4. Each RPTCSD board member should attend training by March 31, 2019 in the following areas: Brown Act, parliamentary procedures, conducting efficient meetings, and team building.				
F5. The RPTCSD BOD has one vacancy that often results in a tie vote on motions, thus preventing completion of unfinished business.				R5. RPTCSD BOD should adopt bylaws by July 1, 2019 that provide written procedures specific but not limited to conducting BOD business, job descriptions, filling board vacancies, and emergency contacts.				
F6. Stanislaus Chief Executive's Office provided support to the RPTCSD BOD but had little impact on improving Brown Act compliance, meeting effectiveness, and internal discord within the board.				R6. RPTCSD should create a website in order to improve transparency by December 31, 2018. Meeting agendas, minutes, special reports, financial audits, bylaws, and the governing ordinance are examples of documents that foster increased trust and communication within this community.				
F7. The chairman of the board has no control of the meetings. Attempts to control outbursts and interruptions are unsuccessful.				R7. RPTCSD should ensure by July 31, 2018 that the meeting agendas are posted pursuant to Brown Act regulations.				

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis	Will Not Implement/Other*
F8. Financials are not discussed during board meetings. Checks are passed down the table to each board member to review and sign, but no voting or discussion is done to approve expenditures.								
F9. Board agendas and minutes are not provided to the general audience during board meetings unless requested.								
F10. No set policy of minimum physical requirements, procedures, or responsibilities has been agreed upon for on-call pay and emergency duties.								
F11. RPTCSD does not have a website to provide the general public with meeting agendas, minutes, or other documents to encourage public participation.								
F12. The biennial financial audit is current.								

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CONCLUSION

California Penal Code §933.05 stipulates that elected officials to whom the grand jury directs its requests are required to respond to report findings and recommendations within 60 days.

The 2018-2019 SCCGJ received no explanation from the RPTCSD Board of Directors for its failure to respond despite the many reminders by letter and demands made in person by SCCGJ foreperson and the continuity committee chairperson.