



City of Brea
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September 12, 2022

Honorable Erick L. Larsh
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Orange
700 Civic Center West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Response to the 2021-2022 Orange County Grand Jury report, *Water in Orange County Needs "One Voice"*

Dear Presiding Judge Larsh:

In accordance with Section 933 of the California Penal Code, this letter contains the response of the City of Brea to the Orange County Grand Jury report, dated June 17, 2022, titled *Water in Orange County Needs "One Voice"*. The responses included correspond to Findings F1, F2, F3, F5, F6, and Recommendations R1 and R2 as requested by the Orange County Grand Jury.

RESPONSES TO FINDINGS F1, F2, F3, F5, AND F6:

F1. A singular water authority for Orange County's wholesale water supply likely would result in further opportunities at the local, State, and federal levels in legislation, policy making, and receiving subsidies and grants.

Response: The City of Brea wholly disagrees with this finding.

Explanation: The City of Brea believes that multiple water agency voices on Orange County water policy and legislative issues are more persuasive to local, State, and federal policy makers than a single agency voice would be. Brea believes that having one wholesale water supplier would result in a reduction of the influence of the collective voice of Orange County's multiple water agencies.

F2. The current fragmented water system structure and operations provides challenges as it relates to development of new interconnected infrastructure as well as maintenance of existing systems.

Response: The City of Brea wholly disagrees with this finding.

Cecilia Hupp
Mayor

Glenn Parker
Mayor Pro Tem

Christine Marick
Council Member

Marty Simonoff
Council Member

Steve Vargas
Council Member

Explanation: The City of Brea successfully maintains its own local water infrastructure needed to provide water service to its local residents and to businesses it serves. Brea also has four interconnections with neighboring water agencies for emergency water needs. Brea believes that a change to one wholesale water authority actually would create challenges to the maintenance of the City's existing local water infrastructure.

F3. There is a great disparity between the North/Central and South Orange County water sources, management, and operations carried out by OCWD and MWDOC.

Response: The City of Brea wholly disagrees with this finding.

Explanation: The City of Brea believes that the water sources, management, and operations of OCWD and MWDOC are reasonably comparable.

F5. Orange County Water District is a recognized worldwide leader in groundwater resource management and reclamation. Its leadership, innovation, and expertise can be further utilized to serve all of Orange County in developing additional innovative and beneficial programs.

Response: The City of Brea partially disagrees with this finding. The disputed portion is the second sentence of the finding.

Explanation: The City of Brea agrees that Orange County Water District (OCWD) is a recognized worldwide leader in groundwater resource management and reclamation. However, Brea does not receive water from the OCWD basin. The City of Brea has made a significant investment in California Domestic Water Company (CDWC) stock over the years. Through those water rights, Brea is able to satisfy the bulk of the City's water needs at CDWC's comparatively cheaper water rates. Brea does not believe that it would benefit from new OCWD programs.

F6. Orange County currently does not have a countywide coordinated policy regarding water conservation, which results in difficulty when complying with any new State mandated conservation regulations.

Response: The City of Brea wholly disagrees with this finding.

Explanation: Both OCWD and MWDOC are in agreement on the importance of water use efficiency and conservation within Orange County. Brea believes that water efficiency and conservation programs and policies are most successful if they are locally designed, implemented, and managed to reflect a community's needs.

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS R1 AND R2:

- R1. By January 2023, Orange County wholesale water agencies should formally begin analysis and collaboration towards forming a single wholesale water authority or comparable agency to operate and represent wholesale water operations and interests of all imported and ground water supplies. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F6)**

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented by the City of Brea because it is not warranted. Brea has made a significant investment in California Domestic Water Company (CDWC) stock over the years. Through those water rights, Brea is able to satisfy the bulk of the City's water needs at CDWC's comparatively cheaper water rates. Brea believes that any formal analysis and collaboration towards forming a single wholesale water authority should start between MWDOC and OCWD.

- R2. Any future "One Voice" consolidated Orange County wholesale water authority should have Directors that examine and vote on issues considering the unique needs of all water districts. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F6)**

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented by the City of Brea because it is not reasonable. Brea believes that any formal analysis and collaboration towards forming a single wholesale water authority should start between MWDOC and OCWD. Brea does not have sufficient information at this time to take a position on the board composition of a consolidated Orange County wholesale water authority.

The City of Brea values the Grand Jury's report, *Water in Orange County Needs "One Voice"* and appreciates the opportunity to provide responses to the report. Should you have any questions, please contact City Manager, Bill Gallardo, at (714) 990-7711 or by email at billga@cityofbrea.net.

Sincerely,



Bill Gallardo
City Manager
City of Brea

cc: Brea City Council