



Attachment 2c  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
MANAGEMENT & BUDGET TEAM  
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

825 5th Street, Suite 111, Eureka, CA 95501-1153  
Telephone (707) 445-7266 Fax (707) 445-7299  
cao@co.humboldt.ca.us

---

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

---

**TO:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**FROM:** PHILLIP SMITH-HANES, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER *PSH*  
**SUBJECT:** RESPONSE TO 2010-11 GRAND JURY REPORT 2011-HESS-01  
**DATE:** 9/28/2011

The 2010-11 Grand Jury has issued report 2011-HESS-01 and the Board of Supervisors is required to respond to findings A through G and recommendations A through G of this report. I recommend that the Board respond as follows:

Finding A: *The library's website has considerable information but is difficult to use for anyone not familiar with computers.*

**The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding.**

Although there are always ways to improve upon the format of the Library's website, over the past few years the County's Library has made strides in improving the website and creating a user friendly platform. In 2008 the County Library decided to make the webpage compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The County's Information Technology staff designed the upgrades and a prototype was tested mid 2009. The final webpage was made public July 6, 2010. The intent of the upgrade was not only to bring the webpage into compliance, but also to make the overall structure more intuitive.

Finding B: *Occasionally, donors have not been identified appropriately, nor the donation handled as requested by donor.*

**The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding.**

The Grand Jury has provided no examples of this. The Board is aware of only one incident in which the County Librarian received a complaint from a donor who felt their wishes were not honored. In this instance the error was corrected. The Acquisitions and Technical Services Division (ATS) of the County Library has specific procedures to manage donations, including a spreadsheet with the names of donors and details about their donations. ATS also keeps hard copies of all donation forms.

Finding C: *Services, organizations, and meetings supporting library functions are not always promoted in a timely manner or in accessible places.*

**The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding.**

In this age of "information overload," it is impossible to ensure that the community is always aware of services, meetings, events or functions. Nevertheless, Library staff does a remarkable job of outreach to the public. Each community served by the Humboldt County Library provides unique opportunities for branch managers to engage with local media and there are numerous examples of branch managers publicizing information about the Library through traditional media.

## Attachment 2c

Beyond traditional media, the County Library's homepage is a cost effective and expansive way to inform the public of activities in the Humboldt County Library. Traffic on the webpage increased from 83,488 in the 2009-10 fiscal year to approximately 161,000 in the 2010-11 fiscal year. One full-time librarian makes timely changes to inform the public about upcoming events and services provided by the County Library.

*Finding D: IT services such as public computers are not sufficient in number or in time allotted to meet public demand. Public use is high for filing several required documents related to DMV, State and Federal taxes, and other public agency requirements for electronic forms.*

**The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.**

Public demand (and need) for access to computer services does indeed exceed the capacity of public facilities. The Library system currently has 38 Internet accessible public-access computers. The main library has 10 public-access computers for accessing the Internet, eight of which are limited to 30 minutes of user access and two that are limited to 15 minutes. It would certainly be preferable to have more computers and allot more time, but the constant growth of online services will probably always outpace the ability of the County to provide publicly accessible computers.

*Finding E: Main library directory denoting locations of key resources is not easily seen at current location. There are not indicators above the elevator as to what can be found on the second floor.*

**The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding.**

In August 2009 a staff member of the County Library working at the Eureka branch created a layout map of the interior of the main library. Both the first floor and second floor have maps in convenient locations displaying the layout of the library. The directory maps on the first floor are located in a wood cubicle near the circulation desk. The directory maps on the second floor are located near the elevator exit.

*Finding F: A place for visitors to provide suggestions and comments is not available.*

**The Board of Supervisors agrees with the finding.**

Although members of the public may request a comments and suggestions form, there is no readily apparent physical location (such as a suggestion box) to deposit such forms. After filling out the form, users must submit it to Library staff.

*Finding G: Conference room is too small for holding some popular activities. The original engineering firm confirms that expansion is feasible.*

**The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees with this finding.**

The Grand Jury has not cited examples of activities that would not fit into the existing space. Currently the meeting room has a capacity of 150 people for a single event, which should be sufficient for most community events.

*Recommendation A: Create a more user-friendly website with an easily accessible tutorial on how to use the site.*

**This recommendation has been partially implemented and will continue to be implemented in the future.**

As noted previously, an upgrade to the Library website went live in July 2010. In addition, the Library implemented a new web-based electronic catalog which allows patrons to maintain their reading history, place a hold on items to pick up at a site they determine, and search the catalog by material type at a specific County Library location.

Beyond these improvements, staff will continue to work on upgrades to the site. A project is currently underway to redesign the entire County web presence, but it has been delayed several times due to staffing levels.

## Attachment 2c

Recommendation B: *Establish a consistent protocol on how all donations are administered, especially when there is a specific request for donor recognition.*

**This recommendation has been implemented.**

A consistent protocol has been established by the Acquisitions and Technical Services Division of the County Library.

Recommendation C: *Improve publicity and recognition of organizations/individuals that contribute and support the services the library offers. For example, the McKinleyville branch uses the local Community Services District newsletter for getting information out to the public about events. Create a broader range of support by providing more publicity in local media, especially in rural areas of the County where branches are located. Information that recognizes supporting organizations should be provided for visitors.*

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

The division manager of the branch libraries is tasked with encouraging branch managers to publicize events and library services in the communities served by the County Library. As stated previously, each community served by the Humboldt County Library provides unique opportunities for branch managers to engage with local media. In Arcata, Hoopa and McKinleyville, branch managers write regular columns for local newspapers. The Fortuna branch manager submits articles to the two papers, and the president of the Friends of the Trinidad Library writes a regular column that often includes updates about services and activities at the Trinidad branch library.

The web presence of the County Library has continued to grow, especially after the recent updates in 2010. The webpage recognizes supporters of the library, promotes library programs, and informs the public about library services and events. In addition to the efforts of each branch library, one full-time librarian maintains the homepage.

Recommendation D: *Look further into providing more computers that adequately meet the needs of the public without disrupting operations of the library.*

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

Although not all computers can be updated due to a lack of funding, the County Library replaced nine public-access computers at its main library in April 2011. Staff in the County Library continues to search for funds for additional public-access computers.

Recommendation E: *Relocate main library directory to main entrance area and enlarge it so visitors including the visually impaired may easily see it. Easily readable signage should be posted above the elevator indicating the area available on the second floor.*

**This recommendation will be further evaluated and may or may not be implemented based on funding.**

Two years ago a layout map of the interior of the main library was created and installed in the wood cubicle. The wood cubicle is designed for such displays and can easily be found near the circulation desk on the ground floor. There is also a map on the second floor near the elevator. However, Library staff can consult with County Facilities staff on additional improvements to signage. Implementation of any such improvements will depend on available funding.

Recommendation F: *Place a suggestion/comment box with appropriate forms on the front counter for easy access.*

**This recommendation will be further evaluated and may or may not be implemented based on space.**

As stated earlier, citizens may request a comment and suggestion form. However, Library staff will examine whether counter space at each location is sufficient to accommodate a box for placement of completed forms.

Recommendation G: *Add a community conference room that adequately meets the needs of the public without disrupting*

## Attachment 2c

*operations of the library. It is feasible to expand an open support beams or over the front garage. This would provide increased space for additional public computers and a larger community conference room.*

**This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.**

The current conference room has a capacity of 150 people for a single event. Given the small amount of capital project funding currently available to the County and the many competing needs for this funding, expansion of the relatively new main library building is not a high priority.