

Chair Gjerde and Members of the Board,

I am speaking with you this morning regarding a grant issue which came up last week. As the Board will recall we have had two agenda items to discuss the need for additional Sheriff's Office personnel to effectively respond to illegal cannabis cultivation including violent crimes, environmental crimes and other threats to public health and safety.

It was my understanding an agreement was made, the Sheriff's Office should seek grant funding from the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to lessen the impact to the General Fund. The Sheriff's Office has been working in partnership with Behavioral Health to submit a grant for funding to be used for youth education regarding cannabis abuse as well as funding for enforcement against illegal cultivation sites within Mendocino County.

At the same time, the Drug Free Coalition was also working on a grant with the Mendocino County Probation Department to form a teen peer court through Redwood Community Services and the Arbor. I believe this is an excellent program and I fully support the teen peer court proposal.

Unfortunately, both of these grants were applying for BSCC funding pursuant to Proposition 64. BSCC contacted CEO Carmel Angelo and advised her that only one of these grants could move forward. CEO Angelo reviewed the two grant proposals and decided to move forward with the grant application in which Probation partnered with the Arbor instead of the one where the Sheriff's Office was partnering with Behavioral Health. CEO Angelo then notified all parties involved of her decision.

I am bringing this situation to your attention because I believe there will be future opportunities for grant funding to support our shared goal of combatting drug trafficking organizations and crimes of violence associated with illicit drug activity in our county. I am concerned that there was less than optimal coordination between departments. I believe we were extremely fortunate to be considered for either grant at this point.

I strongly believe we need to honor our commitments to the people of Mendocino County. As Sheriff, I have clearly committed to continuing to combat crimes associated with drug trafficking organizations as well as all crimes of violence associated with illicit drugs in our county. Our deputies have a sworn duty to protect public safety. Public safety is identified by the State Constitution as the first priority of government.

Today I am asking for support and clear direction from the Board of Supervisors to prioritize future grant proposals to assist in fulfilling our shared commitment to public safety.

Thank you,

Sheriff Matt Kendall

