



June 13, 2016

ISSUE 98



Grand Jury Report Eviscerates San Ysidro School Bond Program

May 24, 2016 | By Ashly MGlone | www.voiceofsandiego.org

EXCERPT: The San Ysidro School District's dark days were even darker than previously known and compromised the school bond program, according to a new County Grand Jury report.

Former district officials misspent school bond funds, double paid vendors, spent \$45 million on an ill-advised land purchase and fulfilled few promises made to voters who approved a \$250 million bond measure in 1997, according to the report released Tuesday. About \$376,900 removed from the bond fund may still be unaccounted for.

"Prior SYSD boards did not perform due diligence and disregarded their fiduciary duty, approving expenditures from bond proceeds for purposes other than those listed in the ballot measure," the [Grand Jury wrote](#). "The district has amassed hundreds of millions of dollars in long-term debt with little to show for it."

San Ysidro's superintendent Manuel Paul and board member Yolanda Hernandez were among 18 people convicted in a wide-reaching [corruption probe](#) by the San Diego County district attorney that concluded in 2014. Hernandez was one of five public officials forced from office in the South Bay, and Paul spent time in prison for a separate federal corruption charge. ...

The 19-person citizen jury recommended an independent forensic audit.

District officials say one is already under way, and concurred with the thrust of the report, acknowledging former administration members destroyed records and mismanaged district finances and bond funds. ... The jury also confirmed what's been known for a while: That former district employees [destroyed district records](#). The school board ordered an internal investigation into the matter, but no records show any investigation occurred.

The jury claims the school board at one point approved the destruction of 215 boxes of documents, "but there is no record of what was destroyed."

Many records that do exist, the jury claims, are sloppy and filled with errors. ...

To read the complete article please visit:

www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/grand-jury-report-eviscerates-san-ysidro-school-bond-program/

San Ysidro School District San Diego Grand Jury Report 5/24/2016
www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/grandjury/reports/2015-2016/SanYsidroSchoolDistrictReport.pdf

Poway Unified Paid a Financial Firm Double the Contract Amount in Half the Time

June 6, 2016 | By Ashly MGlone | www.voiceofsandiego.org

Poway Unified staff now say the \$625,000 fee cap on a five-year deal with Dolinka Group was actually an annual amount, so the board really approved a \$3.1 million contract in February, 2014.

EXCERPT: When Poway Unified approved a contract with financial firm Dolinka Group in 2014, it did so with the understanding the deal would "not exceed" \$625,000.

Halfway through the five-year deal, Dolinka Group has already made \$1.27 million on the contract - double the amount publicly authorized by the school board.

The contract authorized Dolinka Group to provide consulting for Poway's Mello-Roos Community Facility Districts - a special district created with property owner approval that lets Poway Unified collect money through an extra tax.

The \$625,000 limit was included in board documents, but is not on the contract itself.

Poway staff now say the fee cap was actually an annual amount, so the board really approved a \$3.1 million contract in February 2014. ...

CEO Benjamin Dolinka did not respond to requests for comment.

Poway staff declined to say whether their interpretation of the Dolinka contract means all other multiyear "not to exceed" contract totals approved by the board are really annual amounts, not totals. ...

Dolinka also works as a consultant on Poway's multimillion-dollar Mello-Roos bond sales, earning tens of thousands more on the bond sale it helped create - posing a potential conflict of interest. The firm has also served as financial adviser on other bond sales, including Poway's notorious \$1 billion capital appreciation bond deal in 2011, which sparked changes to state law.

"I don't want to put any more money in Benjamin Dolinka's pocket since he was the primary architect of the CABs," said Sellers. ...

To read complete article please visit:

<http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/education/poway-unified-paid-a-financial-firm-double-the-contract-amount-in-half-the-time/>

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Mission Statement

To promote school district accountability by improving the training and resources available to California's Proposition 39 School Bond Oversight Committees and educating the state legislature, local school boards and the public about the oversight and reporting powers these Citizens' Bond Oversight Committees (CBOCs) have, and to advocate on a state level, where appropriate, on issues of common concern to all CBOCs.

CaLBOC:

CBOC Operation Guidelines

Provides a basis for the BOC to perform a self-assessment of their operations and identify training needs. Could use as outline to develop a training program for committee members.

[PDF](#)

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