

VISAL

SEPTEMBER 25-26, 1999

State re

Attorney General's Office wants to know why no charges were filed against Lindsay animal facility

By Rebecca Hollis

Times-Delta

The state Attorney General's Office wants to know why the Tulare County district attorney did not prosecute a case involving the Lindsay Animal Shelter.

Supervising Deputy Attor-

ney General Jo Graves wrote a letter to District Attorney Phil Cline, asking to review information about the shelter, accused by the Tulare County grand jury of record-keeping mix-ups and improper rabies treatment, quarantine and euthanasia.

LA TIMES-I

WEEKEND EDITION

views shelter



Phil Cline

"Somebody told them, evidently, that the grand jury sent us a case. They never did. We were never involved in the case at all."

— Phil Cline, Tulare County district attorney

"Several individuals have requested that we review your decision to decline prosecution in the Lindsay Animal Shelter matter," read the let-

ter, dated Sept. 10.

"According to the information we received, the Tulare Grand Jury conducted an investigation and made a

What's next

An open house at the Lindsay Animal Shelter on Oct. 16 will showcase changes that have been made based on grand jury recommendations.

report in this case. I would appreciate it if you would send me the materials you considered, including the grand jury report and any related transcripts."

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er case

Cline said Friday that the letter was based on misinformation provided to the Attorney General's Office. He said the grand jury report was for the benefit of the public and was never referred as a case to the District Attorney's Office.

"Somebody told them, evidently, that the grand jury sent us a case," Cline said. "They never did. Nothing about the Lindsay Animal Shelter was ever referred to

us. We were never involved in the case at all."

When an earlier version of the grand jury report was released, Lindsay Mayor Valeriano Saucedo requested that a group of animal-shelter and humane-society representatives from Sacramento and Hayward take a look at the shelter.

The group visited the shelter in June and delivered a draft report to city officials.

See Shelter/3A

Shelter

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Saucedo said Friday that he had just returned from vacation and had not had a chance to review it.

He said, however, that the city will share the group's suggestions during an open house at the shelter Oct. 16. At that time, the public can learn about changes that have taken place since the grand jury's investigation.

"I am excited about the fact that we have more information that we can use to put this into better perspective," Saucedo said.

City Manager Bill Drennen said staff members are still looking over the group's suggestions. They'll check for factual errors. Until they do that, he said, the team's draft is considered an internal document and not available to the public.

"I guess the issue is that the report gives generally some recommendations that are all positive," said Drennen, who added that the team found nothing illegal or inap-

propriate.

"They are all aimed at trying to provide the best level of service for animals," he said.

Members of the team are Greg Armes, president of the California Animal Shelter Society in Sacramento; Richard Ward, administrative director of the State Humane Association of California; and Geoffrey T. Simmons, program coordinator for the Humane Society of the United States.

Ward declined to say what was included in the recommendations, saying the report should first be reviewed by city officials. He referred questions to Armes, who was out of his office and did not return phone calls from the Times-Delta.

Ward did say that independent studies by humane-society representatives typically cost about \$15,000. The team decided to complete the study for free after reviewing the grand jury report. The City of Lindsay paid for the team's housing and food during its three-day visit.