



MINUTES

Special Meeting of the Commission

Monday, September 14, 2015, ***5:00 pm**

**One hour earlier start time*

1485 Civic Court, Suite 1200

Large Conference Room

Concord, CA

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 5:14 PM by Vice-Chair Kathy Gallagher for PJ Shelton.

Commissioners in attendance were: Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, Supervisor Candace Andersen, Wanda Session for Dr. William Walker, and Joan Miller.

Alternates present were: Belinda Lucey and Katharine Mason.

Also present was Contra Costa County Deputy Counsel, Nina Fong for Keiko Kobayashi.

Absent: PJ Shelton, Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, Matt Regan and Kathy Marsh.

2.0 Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

3.0 Approval of Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Candace Andersen, seconded by Gareth Ashley to approve the consent calendar.

AYES: Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, Candace Andersen, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker and Joan Miller.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

5.0 Consider accepting the final financial report for fiscal year 2014-2015.

Director of Finance and Operations Marnie Huddleston presented the FY 14/15 financial report. She reported that we received revenues of over \$300,000 from First 5 California for the CARES Plus Program and new funding of \$99,000 from the California Preschool Quality Block Grant, which were distributed through the Contra Costa County Office of Education for the Early Care and Education Initiative. Thomas J. Long Foundation funded \$990,000 for the Preschool Makes a Difference program and \$640,000 to implement the Help Me Grow program in Contra Costa County.

Out of the \$16,012,137 budget last year, \$14,061,053 was spent. The savings were due to underspending in the Early Intervention Initiative and in overhead expense. Overall, First 5 Contra Costa spent approximately \$1.8 million less of its unrestricted fund balance than budgeted.

Gareth Ashley asked if it the “savings” were a result of a reduced service to the community. He also asked that if it were so, was there something that the Commission could do to authorize the use of “saved” funds and allocate it to that service?

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Sean explained that the principal reason for the program savings was due to the Early Childhood Mental Health Programs previously supported by the Commission are now funded by the County.

Marnie reported that the auditors had completed their audit fieldwork and will be presenting the audit at the upcoming October 2015 Commission meeting.

A motion was made by Maria Fort and seconded by John Jones to accept the final financial report for fiscal year 2014-2015.

AYES: Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, Candace Andersen, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker and Joan Miller.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

6.0 Presentation and discussion of First 5 Contra Costa 2016-2020 Strategic Plan & Long-Term Financial Plan.

Nicole Young, the consultant for the First 5 Contra Costa 2016-2020 Strategic Plan facilitated the presentation. She started by noting that this presentation was a result of the accumulated contributions of First 5 Contra Costa Commission, staff and contractors, parents and community members. These contributions, as well local community data, resulted in the briefing book that was used for the Commission's May 2015 Strategic Plan Retreat and further refined in the draft plan.

The presentation at this meeting was for discussion; the Commission will have the opportunity to formally adopt the plan at its October 5, 2015 Meeting. Nicole reviewed the Commission's Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles, which remain unchanged from previous plans.

Sean Casey then led the Commission through the core elements of the strategic plan. Proposition 10 revenue is now 36% less than it was 15 years ago and will continue to decrease about 3% a year. Even though we have been fortunate to have additional, external funding, it does not make up for the continuing decline in tobacco tax revenues.

By 2020, the Commission will have expended its available fund balance and its external funding. Even with diminishing resources, First 5 still has the opportunity to maximize long-term impact. Sean identified several "drivers of systems change," such as advocacy, social marketing, collaborations and partnerships and training and professional development that would be the base for First 5's activities in the coming years.

Sean reviewed the three initiatives that will continue to be the focus for First 5 in the next four years: Early Childhood Education, Early Intervention, and Family Support. To sustain these initiatives, given First 5's fiscal constraints, we will no longer be able to support programs that don't fit within our core strategies. Many of them we have supported for over a decade, and we are proud of the work that these agencies have done for children and families with First 5's investment. But we are soon reaching the point where we cannot afford to support programs that don't fall within our core strategies. Over the next two years, First 5 will reduce its support for such programs as the family shelters, teen parent programs, and others.

Sean ended by reminding the Commission that even though the fiscal landscape is changing, we still have the opportunity to do great things and First 5 will ultimately remain a driver of changes for children and their families for years to come.

The Commission then discussed the proposed strategic plan. They expressed concern regarding how these changes would be communicated, and how the reduction in funding would be carried out over the next two years. Sean assured the Commission that staff have already been in discussion with many of the affected agencies about this potential shift and that First 5 will do what it can to help them find a soft landings after the First 5 funding has ended. Sean also noted that First 5 will still be able to advocate for homeless families and teen parents even when it can no longer provider program support.

Wanda Session asked how First 5 intended to effectively reach and engage underserved families in the county. She responded that First 5 is not alone in desiring to do this, and would look to partners in county agencies and elsewhere. She suggested that the potential to support underserved families be added to the criteria for future funding.

John Jones stated that there are resources for young children in the county besides First 5 Contra Costa. He also said First 5 can be an effective advocate for ending homelessness, through efforts like the Ensuring Opportunity campaign or efforts to seek additional funding, such as the Regional Groups have done. It may be better for First 5 to engage in advocacy rather than compete with other providers for valuable funds.

Staff will bring the final plan for adoption by the Commission at its October meeting.

7.0 Executive Director's Report

Sean Casey gave the following report:

There has been a great deal of legislative activity these past few weeks. Our state association has been doing great work tracking the many tobacco-related bills, particularly the proposed taxes on cigarettes and e-cigarettes. We were very concerned when a \$2.00 cigarette tax was proposed with no backfill allowance for the existing tobacco tax funding streams, including Prop 10. First 5s around the state reached out to legislators to point this out, and Sean met with Assemblymember Bonilla and the respective staff members for Assemblymember Baker and Senator Glazer to talk about how changes to the tax structure would affect First 5. About a week ago legislative leadership assured us that any new bill would include a backfill, as did the two that were proposed last week. At this point it appears unlikely that any new taxes on e-cigarettes would carry the existing tobacco tax framework.

We have two new staff to support Help Me Grow: Shaun-Adrian Chofla, the new Help Me Grow coordinator and Sonja Thompson, the new early intervention assistant. We're very happy to have them both.

8.0 Communications

Sean called attention to a legislative letter from June 17, 2015, initiated by Assemblymember Mark Stone, to the State Secretary of Health Diana Dooley seeking leadership in improving early identification of developmental delays in California's youngest children. Sean informed that all of our local representatives eventually signed on to the letter.



9.0 Commissioner F.Y.I. Updates

Katharine Mason announced the Head Start Annual Report is complete and the full report can be found on the EHSD/CSB website: <http://ehsd.org/headstart/>

10.0 Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.