



Commission Meeting MINUTES

Monday, September 12, 2016, 6:00 pm
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 6:09 PM

Commissioners in attendance were:

Vice-Chair Kathy Gallagher for PJ Shelton, Secretary-Treasurer Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker and Joan Miller.

Alternate Commissioners present were:

Marilyn Lucey, and Katharine Mason.

Also present was Contra Costa County Deputy Counsel Keiko Kobayashi.

Absent were: PJ Shelton, Federal Glover, alternates Karen Mitchoff, Matt Regan and Kathy Marsh.

2.0 Public Comment

Laurel te Velde Shelter Inc.'s Director of Transition Services reported various success stories of parents with young children who completed classes in Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). She also shared stories on how their agency were able to help parents with job search and transition to more permanent housing for their family.

3.0 Approval of Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Maria Fort and seconded by Barbara Cappa to approve the consent calendar.

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

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

Dr. William Walker arrived to the meeting at this time.

5.0 Consider accepting the final financial report for fiscal year 2015-2016.

Marnie Huddleston, First 5 Director of Finance reviewed the final financial report for the recent fiscal year 2015-16.

Beginning her report, she noted the recent audit fieldwork was completed in three days. She then focused on the 6/30/16 financial report. Of particular note, the income from Proposition 10 was \$400,000 above what was expected for the year and \$222,000 more than last year. Sean Casey noted that this was unexpected and that overall consumption in California apparently increased last year. He reminded the Commission that with the recently-raised smoking age, and the proposed \$2.00 increase

in the tobacco tax on the November ballot, it will be very hard to determine the overall state of First 5 revenue until next fiscal year at the earliest.

Marnie reported FY15/16 was the last year of both the California First 5 CARES Plus funding as well as the Race to the Top federal grant, which provided over \$2 million over the last four years. Both grants funded the Early Care and Education Initiative and will be replaced in part by IMPACT, First 5 California's newest initiative. She noted the tremendous amount of work that the ECE program officer Edirle Menezes and her assistant Elida Treanor did to wrap up these two large grants. Additionally, funding from the County Office of Education for the California State Preschool Program Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Block Grant continued in its second year.

The Early Intervention Initiative continued the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) with \$75,000 in Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds granted by the County Behavioral Health Division. In addition, the Thomas J. Long Foundation grant supported the continuing development and deployment of the Help Me Grow program.

Overall, the Commission expended \$1.03 million less than budgeted, including savings of over \$100,000 in administrative costs. Marnie also reviewed the elements of the Commission's fund balance as of 6/30/2016 which included \$14.4 million in unassigned funds available to fill First 5's revenue gaps in upcoming years.

Kathy Gallagher commented that the budget reports were easy to read.

John Jones made a motion and Gareth Ashley seconded, to accept the final financial report of the FY 2015-16.

AYES: Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, William Walker, and Joan Miller.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

6.0 Consider appointing nominating committee for 2017 Officers Election.

In preparation for the 2017 Officers Election, Sean Casey introduced the nominating committee:

Chair: Wanda Session

Members: Marilyn Lucey and Matt Regan

The new committee will meet in October to discuss and approve the nomination of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary/Treasurer for 2017.

Motion was made by Barbara Cappa and seconded by Gareth Ashley to appoint Wanda Session as Chair and Marilyn Lucey and Matt Regan members of the Nominating Committee.

AYES: Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, William Walker, and Joan Miller.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

Katharine Mason announced that she is stepping down as Additional Non-Voting Member of the

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Executive Committee.

7.0 Consider approving the standing meetings for 2017.

Sean Casey presented the Standing Meetings Calendar for 2017. The Commission and Executive Committee will continue to meet on the first Monday of the months of February, April, June, October and December, and the second Monday of the months of July and September due to the holidays.

Maria Fort made a motion and William Walker seconded to approve the standing meetings for 2017.

AYES: Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, Maria Fort, Barbara Cappa, John Jones, William Walker, and Joan Miller.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

8.0 Update on QRIS activities.

Sean Casey presented an update on the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

The End of Race to the Top

June 30 marked the official end of California’s Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. As you know, we were among 16 counties selected to participate in this effort to pilot a framework for setting objective standards for early learning quality, rate sites according to them, and help sites improve.

Because of the work that we were able to do with our “Preschool Makes a Difference Program”, which extended from 2009-2014, we were able to transition easily in to RTT, which expanded the number of participating sites, broadened the scope from preschool to child care, and increased the standards to five tiers of quality.

Over the course of 3.5 years, we have received \$2,063,000 to implement RTT in Contra Costa, ultimately involving over 100 early learning sites, all of which serve low income and other children who stand to benefit the most from a high quality prekindergarten experience.

We have made great strides in raising the quality of early learning in Contra Costa. Even though the number of sites participating in QRIS so far represents only 6.25% of all licensed sites in the county, it represents almost half of all publicly funded sites. This is also reflected across the six RTT counties in the Bay Area region which combined reach 54% of publicly –funded sites.

Results of Re-rating

Over 50 of the QRIS sites have now been rated twice, first in 2014 and again this spring. This allows us to see how sites have fared with their improvement plans, and the ongoing coaching and professional development activities that we and our partner agencies – the CC Child Care Council, and the Office of Education – have been providing to support improvement.

From the first to the second rating, 26 of 55 sites improved to a higher rating. This is very good considering that 29 were already at level 4 or 5 on the first rating. We also saw shifting upward at every tier, among both family child care and centers. We also learned that every West Contra Costa district school in cohort one is now a four or five – Murphy Elementary jumped from level 3 to a 5. And every Head Start rated so far is now at level 4 or 5.

Publishing Info

All of this information is now available on our website, and at www.qualitychildcarematters.org, where you can see the breakdown of each site's latest rating.

Coming up

We're setting up site visits to some of the sites that have improved in the re-rating. On Thursday we'll be out in Brentwood to honor the staff at two Head Start sites – Los Arboles and Marsh Creek – both of which went from a 4 to a 5. Staff from Assemblyman Jim Frazier's office will be there to recognize the providers for their great work and we'll take a picture with the big sign with the staff and kids. And new sites are coming into QRIS, thanks to our IMPACT funding from First 5 CA and the state's two block grant programs for quality early learning, through the Office of Education. As of now, 13 new programs have signed on for QRIS: 3 private centers, 2 public centers and 8 family child care homes. Our recruitment continues.

Next month, staff from the Legislative Analyst Office will conduct a Bay Area site visit here in Contra Costa, including a couple site visits to high and medium rated sites. And, as we speak, our new kindergarten readiness assessment is going on in 21 kindergarten classes in the Pittsburg, Mt Diablo and Antioch school districts. Kindergarten teachers are carrying out short assessments, and parents are filling out questionnaires, on children in randomly selected classrooms, which will allow us to determine kindergarten readiness broadly and the degree to which readiness may be linked to participation in QRIS participating sites, as well as in First 5 centers and other F5 programs.

All in all, we are very proud of the great strides we made under RTT, and look forward to continuing to sustain and expand these efforts in the future.

After his report, Wanda Session asked what the motivating factor is to the provider to the re-rating of the sites. Sean replied that participating sites get access to training and coaching to help develop and implement an improvement plan.

Katharine Mason also pointed out that, besides stipends, another incentive for providers to participate is the morale booster for staff, to go up a level and to succeed in your plans. The public is getting to know about these ratings and it gives them options. Agencies such as the Community Service Bureau in turn can also use this high rating in applying for grants or advocacy programs.

Also regarding the QRIS report, Gareth Ashley asked how to qualify to participate in the program. What is the test for the greatest need in order to be part of the program?

Sean reported that the federal grant had a couple of different criteria addressing areas where there's a need for special needs, areas that have higher poverty and homelessness rate, and incentives for English language learners. Our Local Planning Council for Child Care and Development has also established high need areas in our county based on income, access, supply, etc.

Dr. Walker asked how subjective is the teacher-child interaction component of the QRIS? Sean reported that there are assessors trained in a research-based method called CLASS that observe the teacher-child interaction in the classroom and score it accordingly. The CLASS information becomes the basis for coaching and improvement.

Barbara Cappa wanted to know if the teacher-child relationships tend to score lower due to the way the assessment is made.

Sean informed that it is still unknown at this time due to the variety of qualifications needed.

Maria Fort wanted to know if we are able to combine QRIS participation and the kindergarten readiness assessment. Sean replied that in the parent survey that goes along with the readiness assessment we capture the preschool and child care history of the child and from that determine if the site was in the QRIS.

After his report, Sean acknowledged and thanked our many fine partners to this systemic change effort including the Contra Costa Child Care Council, the Contra Costa County Office Of Education and the community colleges.

9.0 Executive Director's Report

Sean Casey gave the following Executive Director's report:

Annual First 5 California Conference:

This year it will be held in Sacramento on November 9 and 10 with a Pre-Conference on November 8. Commissioners are all invited and more information will be emailed out soon.

First 5 Contra Costa Commission Retreat:

The date is on Wednesday October 12 from 9:30 am to 3 pm at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building. The agenda will be sent out a week before the retreat and may include business reports including the auditors' report and an item regarding the premium contribution rates for active employee health and dental benefits.

The previously scheduled October 3rd Commission and Executive Committee meetings will be cancelled. More email information to follow.

FESP Event:

Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP) is sponsoring an Elections Forum called "Voting Matters: Let's Get Engaged" on Thursday October 6, 2016 from 8:30 am to 12 noon at the Contra Costa County Probation Department in Martinez. Please contact FESP@first5coco.org or call (925)771-7342 for more information.

Recruiting for our new Strategic Information and Planning Manager:

We have begun the search for the new position of Strategic Information and Planning Manager. The posting is now found on the First 5 CC website: <http://www.first5coco.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Job-Description-SIP-Manager-09.06.2016.pdf>

Detroit Avenue Event:

In celebration of the complete street project for safe bicycle and pedestrian passage on Detroit Avenue, First 5 Contra Costa is sponsoring this event on September 24 from 10 am to 2 PM at Meadow Homes Park (at Sunshine Drive Detroit Avenue Intersection) Please join us.

Lastly, Sean showed the brief new video describing the Monument First 5 Center. The Monument Community First 5 Center is a great place for parents to take their kids. The video can be found on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19hKs2LuiDs&feature=share>

10.0 Communications

Sean Casey noted that there were several articles to be found in the packet pertaining to activities in the county on Early Childhood Education, on new restrictions to tobacco sales to minors, and an article on a Pittsburg group launching an exercise program for the community.

11.0 Commissioner F.Y.I. Updates

John Jones, Executive Director of the Contra Costa Child Care Council announced that their agency is celebrating its 40th Anniversary on Wednesday September 14 with a luncheon and speaker event at the Pleasant Hill Community Center.

12.0 Adjourn

Kathy Gallagher reminded that the next meeting is the October 12 Commission Retreat at 9:30 am in place of the regular Monday night meeting that month.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.