



## Commission Meeting

### MINUTES

Monday, April 3, 2017, 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:

Chairwoman Kathy Gallagher, Vice-Chair Gareth Ashley, Secretary Treasurer John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh interim Director for Children & Family Services Department, Wanda Session for Dr. William Walker and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

Also in attendance were District 3 Alternate Lee Ross, and Contra Costa Deputy County Counsel Jachyn K. Davis who sat in for Deputy County Counsel Keiko Kobayashi.

Absent were Commissioners Barbara Cappa, Supervisor Federal Glover, Dr. William Walker and Alternates Matt Regan, Katharine Mason and Supervisor Candace Andersen.

#### 2.0 Public Comment

Brighter Beginnings CEO Barbara McCullough introduced Antioch First 5 Center's new Director Colleen Thomas and also thanked former Interim Director Lita Gloor Little for her services.

#### 3.0 Approval of Consent Calendar

A motion was made by John Jones, seconded by Gareth Ashley to approve the consent calendar.

**AYES:** Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker, and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

#### 4.0 Consider for discussion any items removed from the consent calendar.

There were no items removed for discussion from the consent calendar.

#### 5.0 Public Hearing on the First 5 California 2015-16 Annual Report

Kathy Gallagher opened the public hearing on the First 5 California 2015-16 Annual Report.

It is a statutory requirement for First 5 Contra Costa to hold a public hearing on First 5 California Annual Report.

Sean Casey reported highlights on First 5 Contra Costa that included results from the Child Care Rating System showed significant quality improvements. Other highlights included implementing Help Me Grow training to 211 operators, expanding developmental screening practices that led to providing developmental screening for 1,955 children. Also included in the report were the parent advocate efforts that helped assess local park conditions and recommendations to city councils that resulted in allocations worth over \$2 million to renovate

some of the county's neglected parks. The Contra Costa County highlights are on page 35 of the report. The report can be found on:

[http://www.cffc.ca.gov/pdf/annual\\_report\\_pdfs/Annual\\_Report\\_15-16.pdf](http://www.cffc.ca.gov/pdf/annual_report_pdfs/Annual_Report_15-16.pdf)

Wanda Session asked what the purpose of the annual report was.

Sean responded that the report serves to educate the legislature on what First 5s are accomplishing across the state. The First 5 Association uses the fiscal data to describe that investments that First 5s make in key areas, such as home visiting and family support. The one-page summary at the end of the report provides useful information on the total First 5 effort across the state, still over half a billion dollars each year.

There were no additional questions from the floor.

Kathy Gallagher closed the public hearing and asked for a motion to accept the First 5 California 2015-16 Annual Report.

Maria Fort moved and PJ Shelton seconded to accept.

**AYES:** Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker, and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

**6.0 ADOPT a position of "Support" on AB 60 (Santiago and Gonzalez), which would set a 12-month eligibility standard for all state subsidized child care programs and update the eligibility threshold for purposes of promoting continuity of care.**

Sean Casey reported that AB 60 will bring the state into compliance with the federally required 12-months of child care assistance by relaxing the shorter 6 month (or even a 4 month) reporting timelines. This bill protects families eligible for child care by updating the SMI income threshold for entering families to 70% of the current SMI, updates income threshold at which families exit to 85% of the current SMI, guarantees eligibility for child care for 12 months, eliminates required interim reporting during the 12 month-eligibility period.

John Jones, who is the Executive Director of the Contra Costa Child Care Council informed that, along with Parent Voices, his agency supports the bill.

Sean Casey reports that the First 5 Association also supports this bill.

Lee Ross asked what the fiscal impact of the bill.

John Jones responded that it is estimated to be at 30 million dollars.

After discussion, Gareth Ashley made a motion and Kathy Marsh seconded to ADOPT a position of "Support" for AB 60.

**AYES:** Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker, and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

**7.0 ADOPT a position of “Support” on AB 435 (Thurmond), a child care subsidy pilot bill that would authorize Contra Costa County to develop an individualized child care subsidy plan, with the flexibility to adjust local eligibility for subsidized child care, increase reimbursement rates to providers, and maximize funding allocated by the state for use at the county level.**

Sean Casey reported that the Early Learning Leadership Group, comprised of First 5 Contra Costa, Child Care Council, the EHSD Community Service Bureau, EHSD Workforce Services, and the Contra Costa County Office Of Education’s Local Early Education Planning Council, had been working with the staff of Assemblymember Tony Thurmond on a bill that would authorize Contra Costa County to develop and implement an individualized county child care subsidy plan. The authorization would sunset January 1, 2022.

The cost of living in the county means that many families are deemed ineligible for subsidized child care and that provider reimbursement rates are insufficient to cover cost, as a result, child care subsidy funds allocated to Contra Costa County are not fully utilized or expended. Approximately \$3.8 million state subsidized child care contracts has been returned to the state for fiscal year 2015-16, and resulted in loss of some subsidized child care contractors due to lack of available child care facilities to continue operating a program that for years had been located at an elementary school district site.

Other State Preschool contractors continue to report challenges with operating their programs due to low state reimbursement rates paid to provide high quality child care which inadequately cover their operational costs.

Sean added that this is First 5 Contra Costa’s first foray working on developing legislation to help meet the needs of Contra Costa County.

John Jones informed that large counties, such as Los Angeles, are not supportive of these local child care subsidy pilots because they feel they would not work in their counties.

Wanda Session asked if there will be a problem if the State is accustomed to receiving unused funds. Sean informed that the State is including the loss of unused funds in their calculation of the “cost” of the bill, though legislators understand that the intent of the bill is to fully expended funds previously allocated.

Kathy Marsh made a motion and PJ Shelton seconded to ADOPT a position of “Support” for AB 435.

**AYES:** Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker, and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

**8.0 Consider approving proposed First 5 Contra Costa Budget FY 2017-2018**

Marnie Huddleston, First 5 Contra Costa Finance & Operations Director reported:

The budget for FY 2017-18 is the second year of the Commission’s 2016-20 Strategic Plan. Revenue highlights include:

1. On April 1<sup>st</sup> the \$2 tax per pack of cigarettes went into effect in California. As a result, statewide tobacco tax income is expected to decline by 17% next fiscal year. The new tax law requires the backfill of Prop 10 tax funds to offset revenue decreases resulting from the additional tax. However First 5 will



not receive the backfill until FY18/19. Prop 10 revenues are expected to increase 16 % that year and decline 2-3% each year after. Because of our conservative revenue projections in previous years, we don't anticipate negative consequences of this one-year decline in overall funding during the current strategic plan period.

2. This is the second year of First 5 California's IMPACT initiative, which, with the State Preschool Quality Block Grant, continues to sustain early learning quality systems in Contra Costa and throughout the state.
3. FY17/18 is the third year of the five-year Thomas J. Long Foundation grant to expand Help Me Grow, and the second year of a three-year general support grant from Sunlight Giving Foundation.

Expense highlights include:

1. First 5 Center contracts will be extended for six months while the RFP process is completed for the centers. The new contracts for First 5 Centers will begin January 1, 2018 and include a 10% increase in funding.
2. Early Intervention Initiative programming includes sustaining funds for mental health wraparound services for uninsured children.
3. Public Information activities include ongoing funding of the public awareness campaign to promote Help Me Grow, supported by grant funds.
4. First 5 California ECE program funding and other grant development will continue the Commission's external funding of its programs in future years.
5. Strategic Information and Planning (formerly Evaluation) expenses increased 7-9% over the previous year reflecting the costs of a broader Kindergarten Readiness Assessment and other activities.
6. External funding sources support staff salaries and benefits including a new Community Engagement Coordinator position. Other positions funded by grants include the QRIS coach coordinator, two QRIS coaches, the Help Me Grow Coordinator and program assistant and a portion of the Community Engagement liaisons. Total staff equals 32, 8 of which are part time.
7. A 3% cost of living increase for staff was recommended by the Executive Committee.
8. There is an anticipated increase in health benefit costs.
9. Overall, administration costs increased to 9.8% of total budget.

Marilyn Lucey inquired about the reason for the year-to-year variance of \$55,000 for Mental Health Therapeutic Services. She asked if it was because there was less need. Staff explained the prior year's budget included funding for children requiring services who did not have health insurance coverage. It was found the funding was not needed at that level due to ACA coverage and was reduced.

Gareth Ashley noted on the budget that 17% of the income is non-prop 10. He also asked how the "backfill" is calculated and how are those funds distributed? Marnie replied that at this time we do not know how the BOE will calculate the backfill, but they will be using the 2017-18 year as experience to do so. We will have to wait until next year to find out how those funds are distributed.

Lee Ross asked for clarification on the changes in Public Information under Systems Change. Marnie answered that next year the contracts for 211 information & referral and new parents kits end. 211 is moving under Help Me Grow and distribution of the kits will be handled internally.

Wanda Session made a motion and Gareth Ashley seconded to approve the proposed First 5 Contra Costa Budget FY 2017-2018.



**AYES:** Kathy Gallagher, Gareth Ashley, John Jones, Maria Fort, PJ Shelton, Kathy Marsh, Wanda Session for Dr. Walker, and Marilyn Lucey for Barbara Cappa.

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Motion was **APPROVED**.

## 9.0 Policy and Advocacy Report

The report began with a presentation from Rhea Laughlin, First 5 Contra Costa Community Engagement Officer with updates on recent activities with the three regional community groups following changing federal policies around immigration. Families in the groups and in the communities at large are reporting fear and concern for the safety of family members attending schools, using community services and obtaining public aid.

The regional groups initiated informational meetings to provide accurate facts, help families know their rights and learn about other community resources. The regional groups are also working with other coalitions on helping families develop plans in case family members become separated and particularly if children are separated from parents.

In conjunction, Sean announced the upcoming Supporting Families Forum on Thursday April 20, 2017 – for family serving agencies to learn what they can do help. The Forum is going to be held at the Crowne Plaza Concord Hotel. Registration begins at 8:30 am. Forum begins at 9:00 am and will end at 12:30 pm.

Marilyn Lucey asked if there is anything the Commission can do to ask the Board Of Supervisors for additional funds for Mental Health. Sean replied that our efforts have been more in how we can collaborate with our partners such as the Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department (EHSD) or the Contra Costa County Health Services Department.

Maria Fort wanted to know what more can the Commission do to help support bills. Wanda Session also wanted to know if there is a statewide “watchdog” that would help us track pertinent bills to First 5. Sean Casey replied that the First 5 Association does monitor a list of bills each year that the Association supports. Marilyn Lucey mentioned the website [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) that tracks bills that affect children. Sean Casey also added that there are agencies such as Children Now, Early Edge and other statewide advocates that also keeping track.

Lee Ross asked about AB 43 authored by Assemblymember Tony Thurmond. Sean explained that AB 43 would tax contractors with state correctional institutions as a way to fund incarceration prevention activities like early childhood programs. The First 5 Association supports the bill.

Sean presented to the Commission a draft statement on advocacy and policy, based on the Commission’s work at last fall’s retreat. The statement is meant to reflect the First 5’s overall approach to advocacy that could eventually be attached to the strategic plan.

Gareth Ashley noted that more awareness had developed in the recent months after the election. PJ Shelton echoes the sentiment and asked to see more reports and outcomes from First 5 activities on advocacy and policy change.

John Jones feels that if the Commission is able to create a dialog, then we are doing our job. We get people to have the conversation and it always get back to how it would help our children.

Wanda Session said she felt the drafted statement was on the right track. She also felt that changing policy needed to be driving all this work to where we are now.

Kathy Gallagher shared that with the turn of events since election, First 5 role around the future of our young children is more important than ever. Especially having seen the outline of the new federal budget, with many of the programs, block grants of our programs being reduced or eliminated.

## **10.0 Executive Director's Report**

### **Supporting Immigrant Families Forum**

The upcoming April 20, 2017 "Supporting Immigrant Families Forum" is at the Crowne Plaza Concord Hotel from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. First 5 Contra Costa will host speakers addressing how family-serving agencies can meet the current needs and concerns of Contra Costa's immigrant families, including agency sanctuary policies, family plans, and rapid response.

### **Media article on AB 43 (Thurmond)**

Sean directed Commissioners to the recent newspaper article regarding AB 43.

<http://www.eastbaytimes.com/2017/03/21/should-companies-that-do-business-with-prisons-be-taxed-to-raise-money-for-preschools/>

### **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment FY 2017-18**

First 5 Contra Costa is going to launch an all-county Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. We have contracted with Applied Survey Research, Inc. to conduct a special study of children's readiness for kindergarten in Contra Costa County in what we hope will be every district in the county.

### **Annual Site Visits**

Sean thanked Commissioners Maria Fort, John Jones, Katharine Mason and Lee Ross for participating in the recently concluded annual site visits.

### **California Budget & Policy Center Presentation**

The Family Economic Security Partnership (FESP) will hold a meeting on Thursday April 6, 2017 on the state budget. Highlight of the meeting will be a presentation by Scott Graves, Research Director at the California Budget & Policy Center. The meeting shed light on the socio-economic context of the governor's proposed state budget and its implications to Californians. Sean encouraged Commissioners to attend.

## **11.0 Communications**

There were none received.

## **12.0 Commissioner F.Y.I. Updates**

There were no Commissioner updates.

## **13.0 Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.