



Commission Meeting MINUTES

Monday, July 13, 2020, 6:00 pm

To slow the spread of COVID-19, the Health Officer's Shelter Order of March 16, 2020, prevents public gatherings (Health Officer Order). In lieu of a public gathering, the First 5 Contra Costa Children's & Families' Commission meeting will be accessible via Zoom Meeting to all members of the public as permitted by the Governor's Executive Order 29-20.

Members of the public may participate in the meeting online, or by telephone but MUST REGISTER in advance in order to do so.

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call

Marilyn Lucey opened and closed the meeting at 6:01 PM.

Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held on a web-based platform. The Chair introduced meeting protocols.

Commissioners present on roll call as follows:

District 1: Dr. Rocio Hernandez

District 2: Marilyn Lucey

District 3: PJ Shelton

District 4: Gareth Ashley

District 5: John Jones

EHSD: Katharine Mason for Kathy Gallagher

Children & Families Services: Roslyn Gentry for Kathy Marsh

Health Services Department: Dr. Chris Farnitano

Also present was Deputy Counsel Keiko Kobayashi.

Note that Commissioner Kathy Gallagher of EHSD was visible in the zoom participants' list but had been unable to speak due to technical issues with zoom. She had prompted the executive assistant by email to announce her attendance via participant's text reply.

Alternates present on roll call as follows:

District 1: Genoveva Garcia Calloway

District 3: Lee Ross

Absent were: BOS Commissioner Diane Burgis, BOS Alternate Candace Andersen, Health Services Alternate Daniel Peddycord, and Children & Families Services Kathy Marsh.

2.0 Public Comment

There were no comments from the members of the public via phone or online chat. There were no public written comments sent to the Communications Manager's email.

3.0 Approval of Consent Calendar

Motion was made by John Jones seconded by Dr. Chris Farnitano to approve the consent calendar.

All in favor by roll call:



AYES: District 1: Dr. Rocio Hernandez
District 2: Marilyn Lucey
District 3: PJ Shelton
District 4: Gareth Ashley
District 5: John Jones
EHSD: Katharine Mason for Kathy Gallagher
Children & Families Services: Roslyn Gentry for Kathy Marsh
Health Services Department: Dr. Chris Farnitano

NOS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Board of Supervisor: Diane Burgis, Alternate Board of Supervisor: Candace Andersen

Motion was **APPROVED**.

5.0 COVID-19 Response Presentation

- Brian Kelley, First 5 Contra Costa Communications Specialist and Sarah Burke, First 5 Contra Costa Database Coordinator
 - Lisa Korb, First 5 Contra Costa Family Support Program Officer
 - Ruth Fernandez, First 5 Contra Costa Executive Director & Ali Uscilka, Director of Healthy and Active Before 5
1. Sarah Burke reported that First 5 Contra Costa designed a COVID 19 Community Impact survey to assess the needs of families with children from zero to 5 in the county. She reported that nearly 300 County's families responded. The survey asked questions on Economic Impact, Employment Status, Childcare, Child Development Concerns, Adult Resources, Mental Health and Policy Advocacy. Brian Kelley gave the preliminary result of the survey indicating that 35% needed assistance with rent/mortgage/paying bills, 32% needed baby supplies, 29% needed parenting support, 28% needed financial support, 26% needed access to food. Additionally, concerns for children with programs in early learning, social isolation and anxiety were also reported.

PJ Shelton asked if the participants were able to elaborate what their cash assistance was going to be used for?

Marilyn asked if there was any action that the county planned to take regarding food assistance. Brian informed that there were no response to that item at this time.

Marilyn also asked how many families were able to avail of this survey?

Sarah responded the survey only went out to families who signed a release and allowed to be contacted. Some people declined. She will look back on the numbers later.

John Jones asked about testing, protective gear, counseling support. Families are feeling higher need. So if 75% comes from F5 sites, is the larger from East County since we have more sites there? Is there a way to push the survey beyond our First 5 sites?

Sarah will look further into the numbers after the survey conclude and will then provide the Commission updates.



John Jones and Gareth asked if the survey indicated the reason for the high demand for diapers and wipes.

Katharine Mason reported that at Head Start families reported that diapers and wipes were their top needs and were difficult to find in retail stores.

2. Lisa Korb reported on the Family Resource Center Emergency Relief Fund (state funds from the California Family Resource Association to provide relief to Contra Costa families. The grant released from the Office of Child Abuse Prevention, named Family Resource Centers as the recipient of the grant and foster and tribal families as the priority populations to be served.) First 5 Contra Costa purchased and distributed gift cards, children's books, and other supplies such as diapers, wipes, cleaning supplies to approximately 1,000 families who experienced loss of income resulting from COVID-19. First 5 Contra Costa collaborated with the local community partners, the Child Abuse Prevention Council and Scotts Valley Tribal to extend reach beyond our First 5 families. This outreach gave families unfamiliar to First 5 Centers an insight into the resources. Families that needed help but were afraid to ask for it now have First 5 to look for help.
3. Ruth Fernandez gave an update on the Cash Assistance efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most impacted were immigrant families. We collaborated with Healthy and Active Before 5 (Countywide collaborative focusing on health equity issues of young children). Ali Uscilka, Director of Healthy and Active Before 5 reported on their partnership with Community Financial Resources who served as the bridge to get the payments out to families (via US Bank Focus Card that requires a Social Security Number and Self-Help Credit Union Savings account that does not require SSN). Over \$155K distributed to 79 Regional Group Families. List of funders include East Bay Community Foundation, RCF Connects, Hellman Foundation Fund, S.H. Cowell Foundation, Y&H Soda Foundation, Contra Costa Regional Health Foundation, John Muir Health, SF Foundation, and Travis Credit Union.

6.0 Program Headlines Team Presentation

- ACEs Aware Grant – Presenter: Wanda Davis, First 5 Contra Costa Early Intervention Program Officer
 - Census 2020 – Presenters: Fran Biderman, First 5 Contra Costa Special Projects Coordinator & Rhea Laughlin, First 5 Contra Costa Community Engagement Program Officer
 - Ready Kids East County – Presenters: Liliana Gonzalez, First 5 Contra Costa Help Me Grow Coordinator and Lisa R. Johnson, First 5 Contra Costa Grants & Contracts Manager
1. Wanda Davis reported that First 5 Contra Costa is now the recipient of the ACEs Aware Grant. First 5 Contra Costa in partnership with Contra Costa Health Services Department, Trauma Transformed, and the Employment and Human Services Department has received \$299,261 in grant funds from the Office of the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to participate in the state's [ACEs Aware initiative](#). We will have an early childhood curriculum and will give provider training. Grant activities also include provider engagement from CBOs and medical and health services practitioners through a Network of Care and a local Communications campaign linked to the ACEs Aware Communications and Public Awareness content.



2. Fran Biderman gave the following report on the Census:
Census outreach extended through October 31, 2020. First 5 Centers have been active on social media and conducting workshops virtually. Information distributed and the First 5 Contra Costa website frequently updated. We are working closely with the First 5 Association on census outreach, and the First 5 Regional Groups had been very active.
Rhea Laughlin reported that the Regional Groups launched a leadership training since last Fall on why the Census matters, utilizing strategies like peer to peer outreach. The COVID-19 bore new strategies including phone tagging making over 4,000 calls. This resulted in reaching underrepresented families with young children. They also organized efforts on advocacy by posing questions on pressing concerns in our community.

John Jones asked if the date got pushed back?

Fran reported that yes, the date was pushed back. Additionally, she added that people who lost their ID number can still complete the census without their ID number.

Lee Ross asked if we have a sense of who the 29% are who have not completed it?

Families who are going undercounted, low income people of color. San Pablo, Richmond Bay Point Antioch, Pittsburg, and the Monument Community in Concord.

Bethel Island and Byron may not have easy access to mail and/or may not have access to the internet.

Gareth asked how do you alleviate the fear of people who are afraid to be reached out to?

There is a lot fear fueled by the administration threats of the immigration questions. Key piece to help alleviate is utilizing the "peer to peer outreach" strategy. Help explain what are the benefits and what are the gains. Answer any questions based on misinformation. One of the concerns that some of the families had for example was "Would there be inter-agency sharing of information (such as ICE)? "This is where peer to peer outreach has been helpful.

3. Liliana Gonzalez provided an overview of the Ready Kids East County Initiative. She reported that learning and recommendations collected through the 2017 School Readiness Assessment and the 2018 African American Needs Assessment Project helped shape and guide the work for the initiative sponsored by the Leshner Foundation. The focus of the Ready Kids Initiative is to identify policy solutions and strategies to increase school readiness of African American young children (and all young children eventually).

Lisa R. Johnson presented on the project structure and core values established by Design Team members of the Ready Kids East County initiative (with First 5 Contra Costa as the "backbone" organization). She outlined the timeline of virtual activities from 2020 through 2021 including a series of virtual Parent Cafes co-created and planned by the initiative's Design Team (a diverse group of community leaders, advocates, elected officials, and school leaders) and a Parent Advisory Group. The Ready Kids East County Initiative further advances First 5 Contra Costa's vision that all children will be healthy, ready to learn, and supported in safe nurturing families and communities. Our vision calls on First 5's courageous leadership to eradicate systems and structures that perpetuate racism and inequalities in income, education, housing, health, and well-being of young children and families of color.

7.0 Executive Director's Report

Dr. Ruth Fernandez gave a presentation on the following:

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

Staffing Updates:

1. Announced the hiring of our new Deputy Director, Camilla Rand and Communications Manager, Natalie Blackmur.
2. The Job Brochure for Finance Operations Director has been posted.
3. Updates on the return to Work plan and Remote work assessment for the First 5 Contra Costa office.

County Initiatives and Policy Advocacy Updates:

- a. Sales Tax Revenue Measure - On June 16, the BOS approved the expenditure of \$10,000 to contribute to a second poll to assess voter interest in a half-cent sales tax. The poll was just completed and results were revealed last Friday, July 10 during a special Community Debrief session. Results of the second poll will be revealed and discussed tomorrow at the BOS meeting - the BOS will decide whether to place the measure on the November ballot. If the ballot measure was approved by voters - it would bring in over \$81 million to the county. The official website was just released last week (<https://www.healthyandsafecontracosta.com>).
- b. July 14 Board of Supervisors Meeting – Several items will be discussed at this meeting including the results of the second poll conducted for the Sales Tax Measure, proposed criteria for new County Administrator, and the eviction moratorium and the grace period to pay back rent ending July 15.
- c. Reminder- Truth Act Forum scheduled for July 28, 2020.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS

FY 20-21 State Budget:

Child Care Moved to Social Services

- a. Quality Early Learning and Child Care Contracts moved from Department of Education to the Department of Social Services. The budget moves forward with transferring child care services, with the exception of CSPP, to the Department of Social Services. The budget appropriates \$2.3 million to assist in the transfer and creates the position of Deputy Director of Child Development to be appointed by the Governor. The First 5 Association never took a position on the transfer of child care or its policy predecessor as introduced in January as the "Department of Early Childhood Development". The First 5 Network will be watching this very closely and will be participating in discussions ahead, especially as they pertain to quality improvement efforts and linkages to other systems of care for children and families. The Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) and the Department of Finance are required to submit a report to the legislature in March 2021 with analysis of how this "structural shift" will improve services for children and their families. The Association is requesting comments and input from local commissions on this subject.

Nicotine-based Vaping Tax

- b. Vape Tax deferred until later this summer. Negotiations around fund allocation and taxation structure to continue in the weeks ahead. The First 5 Association continues to advocate for the Prop 10 equivalency (of 14.8 %) of the Vape Tax, regardless of how funding from the tax is generated. The First 5 Network will continue working with champion state legislators and



their staff on the Vape Tax, and will be asking local County First 5 Commissions to contact their lawmakers on this measure.

Prop 10 Revenue

- c. Conversations continue with the CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration. Financial analysis will be completed for all Prop 10 financials reporting through HdL Consulting. The Association committed to pay for initial financial analysis – counties to contribute pro-rated fee for fund recovery.

Final Comments - First 5 Contra Costa has been involved in the Sales Tax Working Group meetings from the beginning recognizing the urgent need to identify new revenue strategies for community wellness and prevention services. Staff would like to bring to the September Commission meeting a report with recommendations on the Sales Tax Measure and other Revenue Generating Measures for Commission approval.

The Staff will come with a recommendation as suggested by Chair Marilyn Lucey.

Communications

- State Final Budget 2020

9.0 Commissioner F.Y.I. Updates

Gareth Ashley led a round of applause and thanked our Health Services Commissioner, Dr. Farnitano for all leadership and his contributions during the pandemic.

Katharine Mason announced that she will step down from the Commission after 9 years of service. Katharine recently been appointed as interim Director of Community Services Bureau. She thanked the Commission for the work they have been doing. PJ Shelton and Lee Ross led a round of applause and thanked Katharine Mason for her services.

Marilyn Lucey announced that her father in law, Gerald Lucey, recently passed away. Gerald Lucey is also the husband of our former District 2 Commissioner Belinda Lucey.

10.0 Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm