



**Special Commission Meeting
MINUTES**

Monday, April 26, 2021, 11:00 AM

1.0 Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Chair Dr. Rocio Hernandez called the meeting to order at 11:05 am
Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held on a web-based platform.
Vice-chair introduced the meeting protocols.

Commissions in attendance during roll call were:

District 1: Dr. Rocio Hernandez
District 2 Alternate: Vidya Iyengar
District 3: Lee Ross
District 4: Gareth Ashley
District 4 Alternate: Matt Regan
Health Services: Dr. Chris Farnitano
Board of Supervisors Alternate: Diane Burgis
EHSD: Kathy Gallagher

Also present: County Counsel Keiko Kobayashi

Commissioners absent were: District 2: Marilyn Cachola Lucey, District 5: John Jones,
Children & Families Services: Kathy Marsh, and Board of Supervisors: Candace Andersen.

Alternates absent were: District 1: Genoveva Garcia Calloway, Health Services: Daniel
Peddycord RN, and Children & Families Services: Roslyn Gentry.

2.0 Public Comment

No comment.

3.0 Approval of Consent Calendar

Kathy Gallagher made a motion to accept the consent calendar, seconded by Lee Ross.

Roll call vote:

District 1: Dr. Rocio Hernandez - YES
District 2: Vidya Iyengar - YES
District 3: Lee Ross - YES
District 4: Gareth Ashley - YES
Board of Supervisor: Alternate Diane Burgis - ABSTAIN
Health Service Department: Dr. Chris Farnitatno - YES
EHSD: Kathy Gallagher - YES

Nos: None

Abstain: Diane Burgis



Absent: Marilyn Cachola Lucey, John Jones, Candace Andersen, Kathy Marsh, Genoveva Garcia Calloway, Daniel Peddycord and Roslyn Gentry

The Consent Calendar was **APPROVED**.

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

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

5.0 Consider approval of Thrive By Five Proposal for American Rescue Plan Act funding.

Ruth Fernandez reported on the First 5 Contra Costa Thrive by Five Proposal for ARPA funding. In her report, she highlighted the following:

- Acknowledgement that this proposal is directly aligned with the current Strategic Plan goals.
- Aims to build sustainable growth for First 5 Early Childhood investments in the community.
- In the wake of the pandemic, based on the data we collected, and the data we see regionally and across the nation, families with lowest household income are most affected.
- ARPA funding is an opportunity to repair, restructure and improve the way we support young children and families especially those farthest from opportunity.
- We disseminated over \$125 million dollars of the Proposition 10 funding over the past 10 years.
- Staff recommendation is to leverage First 5 Contra Costa's role as a long standing county partner and proven steward of public funding.
- Staff recommend that the Commission approve the Thrive By Five Proposal with an ask of \$11 million or 5 % of the American Rescue Plan Local COVID-19 Response Funding allocated to the county to ensure that young children and their families have the support they need.
- This allocation will be spaced over a 3-year period (2021-2024) would provide \$3.7 million annually to increase access to critical resources and services.

Proposal includes 5 budget categories (these categories are most critical now).

- o Tackling long term effect of trauma: 10%
- o Immediate support to mitigate current mental health crisis: 40%
- o Family Resource Centers, trusted connections and brokers for families: 15%
- o Immediate financial assistance to child care providers at risk of permanent closure: 30%
- o Community organizing to advance equitable and community-driven recovery policies: 5%

If approved by county leadership, the three years that ARPA funds are available, First 5 Contra Costa would be contributing approximately \$1 million in in-kind support via reporting and evaluation and staff time & expertise.

After presentation, the staff answered questions from the panel:

Q& A:

Lee Ross asked about the allocation of the 5% towards community organizing. He asked if there were groups specified for this or if it was intentionally unnamed at this time. He asked if there will be an RFP.

Ruth informed that at this stage of the proposal it was premature to make specific identification of who it will be assigned to. She mentioned the Regional Groups are kept in mind but also kept the proposal broad intentionally.



Gareth Ashley: assumed this wasn't in the budget as revenue that was approved last month. The expenditure associated with this proposal is going to additional program expenses. He then asked the panel members from the county if this item is in line to the County spending allocation.

Diane Burgis read the current county budget document:

"Contra Costa County will receive \$223.7 million for COVID related expenditures incurred or from lost revenues resulting from the pandemic. This funding is for the time frame from March 6, 2021 through December 31, 2024. Additionally, the Health Department budget assumed any costs or losses related to COVID during July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. We still do not know what those costs are."

She added that the County is looking to spend \$110 million for the FY2021-22, \$110 million for FY 22-23 and \$110 million for FY 23-24. Diane also mentioned that "right now it costs \$14 million to maintain housing and funding ends in June 2021. The county continues to vaccinate people and are hitting a wall with getting to "herd immunity" and may require to allocate additional funds to further the effort into more vaccination (citing booster shots and children's vaccination).

She stated that she really supports First 5 and wants to have reasonable expectations of that money. She had received other requests of a percentage of that fund from other organizations that provide services as well and want to help explain what is available out of this fund.

Dr. Farnitano supported Diane Burgis' budget and said that the estimated allocation for the vaccines were accurate. He expects that another million doses are still needed (includes children). He explained that vaccinations are in line for teenagers and boosters in the future. A vaccine infrastructure needs to be maintained for at least another year.

Kathy Gallagher commented that she supports the First 5 Contra Costa proposal with all the services outlined in the Staff Report and recognized its necessity. However, the ARPA fund of \$223.7 million is for the County to replenish funding from the reserves the county had put forward to respond to COVID. Beyond that there are other sources of funds earmarked for Child Care and Early Education Resources. She asked if staff had looked into those other funds. Those monies are under the direct guidance of State Agencies (e.g. Department of Education or State Department of Education, State Department of Social Services, Health Care Services). EHSD could be provided direction as to where they can focus spending for the county and create flexibility to use those funds through EHSD.

Ruth replied that staff had looked at state connected ARPA funds through First 5 Network. There are multiple efforts to long-term planning with other state budget allocations through multiple state-level coalitions.

Kathy asked what First 5 CA is doing with regards to the ARPA funds.

Ruth responded that First 5 CA is currently in deliberation on efforts to support and compliment relief investments. First 5 CA invested \$4 million in PPE, diapers, and other supplies to help child care providers and families. Ruth also mentioned that she would welcome support and collaboration from leadership at the County Departments to advocate and identify opportunities to align state to county policies to streamline resource allocation and dissemination.



Kathy offered to provide staff resources to build this proposal and in parallel create some advocacy through our state associations and directly through our state departments on how to create the guidance, to define how to spend the ARFA funding on the local level before they get too deeply into regulations. We should be looking at any other funding sources available.

Diane Burgis added that she asked County Administrator to provide a funding source list to the County Department Heads and the County's trusted partners so we can all work together.

Ruth thanked everyone on the panel and expressed her great respect for the very difficult decisions they have to make regarding the fund allocation. Ruth acknowledged that the circumstances are dire and she is aware that there are a lot of other agencies advocating for these funds. She stated that it's imperative to boldly ask for children's needs be elevated and looked at intentionally. It is important step to take to speak on behalf of the children of Contra Costa County and advocate for them.

Dr. Hernandez asked if what we are proposing is being asked in other counties as well.

Ruth responded that other First 5s are having the same conversations.

Camilla Rand, gave this additional comment: at the state level there is a lot of discussion around transitional kindergarten and pre-school slots and access. This is important and also something we intentionally did not include in the plan for that reason.

Gareth Ashley made a motion, and seconded by Vidya Iyengar to approve the Thrive By Five Proposal for American Rescue Act Fund.

Roll call vote:

District 1: Dr. Rocio Hernandez - YES

District 2: Vidya Iyengar - YES

District 3: Lee Ross - YES

District 4: Gareth Ashley - YES

Board of Supervisor: Alternate Diane Burgis - ABSTAIN

Health Service Department: Dr. Chris Farnitarno - ABSTAIN

EHSD: Kathy Gallagher - YES

Nos: None

Abstain: Diane Burgis, Dr. Chris Farnitano

Absent: Marilyn Cachola Lucey, John Jones, Candace Andersen, Kathy Marsh, Genoveva Garcia Calloway, Daniel Peddycord and Roslyn Gentry

The motion was **APPROVED**.

6.0 Commissioner F.Y.I. Updates

There were no Commissioner updates.

7.0 Adjourn

Dr. Rocio Hernandez adjourned the meeting at 11:47 am.

She announced next standing meeting on June 14, 2021.