

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

**Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, March 6, 2012, 5:30 PM
601 Texas Street, Conference Room A, Fairfield, CA**

Attendance

Commissioners: Dana Dean, Chair; Dan Ayala, Stephan Betz, Sheryl Fairchild, Debbie Gossell, Elaine Norinsky, Jay Speck, Norma Thigpen.

Staff/Public: Commission staff and 1 member of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Vice-Chair Dean.

I. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

II. Consent Calendar

A. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for March 6, 2012

B. Approve Minutes of the January 10, 2012 Commission Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Ayala moved to approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for March 6, 2012, and approve Minutes of the January 10, 2012 Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Election of 2012 Officers

A. Approve the recommendation from the Nominating Committee to elect Dana Dean as chair and Linda Seifert as Vice-Chair for the calendar year 2012.

Motion: Commissioner Betz moved to approve the recommendation of the nominating committee. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. FY2012/13 First 5 Solano Proposed Budget

A. Approve the First 5 Solano FY2012/13 Proposed Budget

Discussion: Michele Harris, Deputy Director gave a PowerPoint presentation of the FY2012/13 proposed budget. She noted that year is unlike previous years in that the Commission recently updated their Strategic Plan and established a new, three-year Program Investment Plan with a set level of spending for each of the Priority areas. County Commissions are still waiting to see if State will file an appeal to the ruling invalidating AB99 by the deadline approaching of March 19, 2012. The Commission also approved four Requests for Proposals (RFPs); three closed on March 5, 2012 with review panels to be convened, and recommendations of awards for funding set for the next Commission Meeting on April 3. Ms. Harris also reviewed the revenue streams and estimated expenditures for FY2012/13, with explanations on revenue losses, which are primarily loss of matching funds from the First 5 State Match Program for School Readiness.

Christina Arrostuto, Executive Director presented information regarding a developing proposal with the County Administrator's Office for First 5 staff to manage a number of General Fund

Contracts, with appropriate compensation for staff time. This plan is in the formative stages of discussions, and estimates of staff support were included as a separate section in the FY2012/13 budget. Commissioner Dean inquired as to the accuracy of the cost estimates and whether First 5 would otherwise be faced with laying off staff. Ms. Arrostuto agreed that there is work to do to clarify the cost issues (currently First 5 is proposing 10% of the value of contracts managed for administrative support), and confirmed that, absent this plan, First 5 would lose staff. She estimated that the Board of Supervisors would discuss this proposal in late March or early April, and if approved, the plan would be included in the supplemental budget information that is part of annual County budget deliberations in June 2012.

Ms. Harris commented that revenue streams have steadily decreased over the last few years (with the exception of FY2010/11, when unspent First 5 Solano school readiness funds and First 5 California state match dollars for school readiness were reallocated from the first four-year cycle of funding to Cycle 2, which ends June 30, 2012).

The largest expenditures in the budget are program expenses. Funds are identified in the budget for Year 1 of the 2012-2015 funding cycle, and staff are implementing the Commission's approved Program Investment Plan by renewing contracts or selecting new providers through Requests for Proposals. The operations budget of 15% includes costs for the First 5 staff and internal programs. In addition, 3% of the budget is set aside for evaluation and data collection expenditures.

For FY2012/13, the proposed First 5 expenditures are \$5,706,886, plus \$180,000 for General Fund contract management, for a total of \$5,886,886. This represents a significant decrease from FY2011/12, reflecting the new spending level set in the 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan. Ms. Harris presented a summary of the grants and program budgets in the Program Investment Plan, noting one small difference in CARES Plus matching funds. She noted the funding for First 5 Futures, Community Engagement and the Discretionary Fund and went over the recommendation to reinstate the fund for the audio technician for Commission Meetings as part of the Professional Services budget.

Ms. Arrostuto went over the First 5 Futures budget, noting partnerships staff and Commissioners are pursuing with Chambers of Commerce, and the upcoming third annual Solano Economic Development Corporation breakfast sponsored by First 5 Solano will be held in May 2012 and will include the second annual Family-Friendly Business awards. Staff will focus on meeting with foundations to build relationships and apply for grants, developing a federal and state grants timeline, and identifying ways to track and weigh in on legislation, policy and ballot initiatives.

Staff noted that once the Commission approves its FY2012/13 budget, staff will work to finalize awards of funding and ensuring that all contracts to implement the FY2012-2015 funding cycle are approved by the Board of Supervisors for services to begin on July 1, 2012. An RFQ for collaboration/coordination of the Commission's initiatives, as well as consultant services to help develop and manage the flow of coordination with data collection and evaluation activities, will be created over the next few months. The Program and Community Engagement Committee will work to develop recommendations on how to deploy Discretionary funds. Staff will continue to work with the County Administrators office to implement the transition of the General Fund Contracts to First 5 Solano.

Next, the Commission discussed a line item in the budget for Staff and Operation Expenditures. This number (\$867,665) number exceeds the amount in the approved Program Investment Plan by \$34,665. This overage is attributed to two factors, the first is Workman's Compensation increase of approximately \$26,000 that was unexpected, the second is unanticipated increased space costs. Staff are working with the Auditor-Controller's Office, General Services and the County Administrators office on the latter issue. Commissioner Dean asked how this will be

accounted for. Ms. Arrostuto suggested that staff bring a draft amended Program Investment Plan to the Commission next month.

Commissioner Speck commented that he would future budget presentations to include overall revenues, expenditures and ending fund balance, with the notation that we are “deficit spending” in the report. Ms. Arrostuto noted that, unlike most (if not all) public agencies, First 5 Solano does not consider annually accessing reserves to be “deficit spending,” since this is approved in the Long Term Financial Plan. Nevertheless, she agreed that both Commissioners and the public should have a clear understanding of the amounts of reserves accessed and remaining annually for prudent and effective long-term planning.

Commissioner Dean asked how the potential litigation for AB99 was handled in this budget. Christina Arrostuto advised that, per Commission direction, the amounts funded for FY2012/13 do not require accessing any funds restricted by AB99.

Commissioner Betz moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously with further direction to Staff to bring back the amendment to the 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan.

V. First 5 CA FY2010/11 Annual Report

A. Consider acceptance of the First 5 California Children and Families Commission’s FY2010/11 Annual Report, pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 130150

Discussion: Cherelyn Ellington, School Readiness and Community Programs Manager, presented the First 5 California’s annual report for FY2010/11. The report takes information from all of the First 5 County Commissions throughout the State and uses it to inform the Governor, the state Legislature and the public about the work that the First 5 Commissions are doing. First 5 Solano was mentioned in this report in the context of the matching funds received from First 5 California for School Readiness and CARES Plus.

Motion: Accept the First 5 California Children and Families Commission FY2010/11 Annual Report

Commissioner Speck moved to approve this motion. The motion passed 7-0-1. Commission Gossell abstained.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Systems and Policy Committee

1. Approve the minutes of November 18, 2011 Systems and Policy Committee Meeting.

Discussion: Commissioner Dean is bringing forward a request for approval of the November 18, 2011 minutes.

***Motion: Approve the minutes of November 18, 2011
Commissioner Ayala moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

B. Program and Community Engagement Committee

1. Consider approval of updated language in the Discretionary Fund Policy to conform with restructuring of standing Committees.

Commissioner Thigpen explained that these were wording changes only, to conform with the consolidation of standing Committees last year.

Motion: Approve updated language in the Discretionary Fund Policy to conform with restructuring of standing Committees.

Commissioner Betz moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Approve the redirection of up to \$7,500 in currently allocated Community Stability Funding for administration of transitional housing funding for homeless families.

Discussion: Commissioner Thigpen spoke to the Commission that the consideration of the cost of administering the funds. The Interfaith Council asked for consideration in funding administration of the funds for this cause. Venis Jones Boyd, Family Support – Quality Child Care Programs Manager, discussed how the funds are administered to different agencies in support of transitional housing for families. The Interfaith Council would get 10% of the funds being distributed for administering the grant to defray administrative costs, reimbursed on a monthly basis in arrears. This contract amendment item would go to the Board of Supervisors for approval on March 28, 2012.

Motion: Approve the redirection of up to \$7,500 in currently allocated Community Stability Funding for administration of transitional housing funding for homeless families.

Commissioner Betz moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Arrostuto spoke on the upcoming Opportunity Conference, being planned as part of the Safety Net Summit on Poverty activities. Ms. Arrostuto reported that she authorized \$1000 from her Executive Director's Fund to Volunteer Center of the East Bay to help continue the online Solano Volunteer Center services for 2012. She and other Solano partners are working with VCEB to find ways to sustain this important community asset.

She reported that Commissioner Speck has been invited to speak at the end of this month on Solano Pre-Kindergarten Academies at the national GradNation Summit in Washington D.C. Also, California was awarded a portion of federal Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge funds to improve quality. Some of the applicants are Bay Area First 5s, and they are exploring a regional approach to implementing the grant, in which Solano may be able to participate. Ms. Arrostuto also noted that First 5 California has allocated funding for their Child Signature Project. Year one funding goes to currently-funded "Power of Preschool" Counties; Solano may be able to apply for technical assistance funding in year two, with hopes of funding for capacity improvements in year three.

VIII. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Ayala enjoyed the Water Cooler Conference in Sacramento and listening to the Speakers and spoke on the Story of Amy in regards to domestic violence awareness. There are three showings in March at different locations in Solano County.

Commissioner Fairchild let the Commission know that she has submitted her resignation effective June 1, 2012; Supervisor Spearing will be appointing a replacement and noted her appreciation for the opportunity to serve.

Commissioner Speck said he is excited about going to Washington D.C. and showcasing First 5 Solano's success with Pre-Kindergarten Academies. He also reported that he and Christina Arrostuto are invited to serve on a panel in Vallejo this weekend discussing college and career

readiness with parents. He spoke in favor of staff's efforts to broaden the scope of First 5 services by taking on additional County contracting, noting appreciation for the entrepreneurial spirit and acknowledging how important it is to retain good, talented staff.

Carl Thomas, Solano Coalition for Better Health spoke on the federal oral health grant recently awarded to SCBH. He thanked the Commission and Staff for their assistance and reported the services have been started and children are receiving care.

IX. Future Agenda Items, Meeting time/Date/Location

The next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 5:30 PM, 601 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533. Future agenda items include awards of funding for the FY2012-2015 Funding Cycle.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Denise Winters, Account Clerk II

Approved: 

April 3, 2012