

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

**Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, June 4, 2013, 5:30PM
601 Texas Street, Conference Room B, Fairfield, CA**

Attendance

Commissioners:

Dana Dean, Dan Ayala, Jay Speck, Elise Crane, Marisela Barbosa, Liz Niedziela, Aaron Crutison, Stephan Betz (Commissioner Linda Seifert arrived at 6:43pm)

Staff/Public:

7 former First 5 Solano Commissioners (Barbara Kondylis, Lisa Lee, Dee Alarcón, Ellen Blaufarb, Sheryl Fairchild, Maureen McSweeney and Dr. Randall Thomas), Commission staff and 35 members of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33PM

I. Public Comment

Tracy Nachand (Health & Social Services/Public Health Division Sr. Health Education Specialist) spoke about safety activities, including the Solano Car Seat Connection, The Helmet Safety Program, and The Safe Routes to School Program (Solano Transportation Authority). Mr. Nachand thanked First 5 Solano on behalf of Robin Cox, for helping present a resolution to the Board of Supervisors recognizing June as Children's Safety Month.

Commissioner Crutison commented that child safety is a serious issue, and that H&SS Child Welfare Services staff are working on getting the word out that children, even excellent swimmers, should not ever be left alone around water.

II. Consent Calendar

A. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for June 4, 2013

B. Approve the minutes of the April 2, 2013 Commission Meeting

Moved: Commissioner Ayala

Vote: 8-0-0

III. A. Honoring Kimberley Thomas for her 19 years of dedicated service to the children and families of Solano County as Executive Director, Children's Network of Solano County

Commissioner Dean read and presented a resolution to Ms. Thomas thanking her for all of the contribution that Ms. Thomas has given to Solano County over the 19 years that Ms. Thomas has worked and served in Solano County.

Moved: Commissioner Crutison

Vote: 9-0-0

Ms. Thomas thanked the Commission for this special honor and advised the Commission that she is not "totally" retiring; her new title is "Adventure Grandma" as designated by her oldest grandchild.

B. Introduce and honor former First 5 Solano Commissioners.

Discussion: Ms. Venis Jones Boyd, Family Support & Parent Education Programs Manager, presented the First 5 Solano former commissioners that were in attendance, giving a brief synopsis of what each former commissioner contributed throughout his/her tenor.

In his capacity as a First 5 CA Commissioner Patrick Duterte, (Solano Health & Social Services Director) discussed what First 5 has done statewide to make changes in children ages 0-5 and their families. As Mr. Duterte continued to learn about brain development of children, and became a First 5 CA Commissioner, his goal was to bring the state and local Commissions together and work towards common goals, including prenatal programs, early childhood development programs and pre-kindergarten classes, emphasizing the goal that that our children read at grade level.

(Commissioner Seifert Arrived 6:43)

Commissioner Seifert commented on how proud she is to serve on the First 5 Solano Commission and remarked on the stellar reputation that First 5 Solano carries forward thanks to the former First 5 Solano Commissioners.

Commissioner Dean introduced Don Lowrie, representing Assembly Member Yamada; Brandon King, representing Assembly Member Frazier; and Venis Jones Boyd representing First 5 Solano; each in attendance to present the First 5 Solano Former Commissioners with certificates and tokens of appreciation.

IV. Public Hearing: Annual Review of the First 5 Solano 2012 Strategic Plan

Open Public Hearing.

(No public comment)

Close Public Hearing

A. Review of Strategic Plan Priorities, Goals and Results

Discussion: Cherelyn Ellington, Early Childhood Education & Community Programs Manager, made a presentation about the First 5 Solano 2012 Strategic Plan, which is the basis of the current 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan. Ms. Ellington went over the information used in preparing the First 5 Solano Strategic Plan update in 2011 and noted that the Commissioners, with much research and public input including two retreats, a Community Input Report and family surveys, worked very hard in preparing the Strategic Plan and making difficult choices about priorities for the current funding cycle. In addition to the ongoing Priority Areas (Health & Well Being, Family Support, Early Childhood Immersion and Development), a fourth Priority area, First 5 Futures was added.

During FY2012/13 the Commission has been receiving overviews of its grant funded programs for 2012-2015, and will receive its first performance reviews for this funding cycle in October 2014.

Committee Reports

A. Systems and Policy Committee *(Commissioner Dean)*

1. Consider approval of revisions to the Co-Sponsorship of Conferences and Training Fund Policy

Discussion: Commissioner Dean presented updated language for the Co-Sponsorship of Training and Conferences Fund Policy. The Policy was updated to reflect changes in forms and procedures since this component of services was last funded two years prior, and to align these forms and procedures for this fund with those for the Community Engagement Fund.

Moved: Commissioner Dean

Vote: 9-0-0

B. Program and Community Engagement Committee *(Commissioner Betz)*

1. Consider extending an award of funding of up to \$64,000 to the Interfaith Council of Solano County for an additional 12-month period (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014) for services to support the transition of homeless families to permanent housing (Source of funding: 2012-2015 (Program Investment Plan))

Discussion: (PCE Committee Member Commissioner Speck presented for Committee Chair Betz, who was not at the PCE Committee meeting)

The Committee is recommending the extension of a grant for permanent housing services to continue to fund the Interfaith Council of Solano County for an additional 12-month period. This grant was extended once before due to a variety of issues with start-up and implementation. Over the past year there were more problems with this grant that were generally beyond the control of the grantee. The Interfaith Council's new Executive Director has committed to ensuring that these funds are expended to serve homeless families, and considers them critical to their family support efforts.

Commissioner Speck stated that the new Executive Director and staff met with the PCE Committee, and the Committee believes that it is a valuable and important service for children and their families and worth extending the grant funds for FY2013/14.

Public Comment: Mr. Rivera, representative of Heather House, Operations Manager. Mr. Rivera assured the Commission that the funds are greatly needed in the community, and will be expended.

Moved; Commissioner Crutison

Vote: 9-0-0

2. Consider approval of revisions to the Community Engagement Fund Policy

The Program and Community Engagement Committee reviewed the Community Engagement Fund (as noted in the SPC item above) policy and forms, and recommend a few appropriate changes to the application and the policy to align the two funds.

Moved; Commissioner Dean

Vote: 9-0-0

3. Consider approval of deployment of \$37,000 in Community Engagement Funds for: Event Partnerships (up to \$12,000); Promotional Materials (up to \$6,500), Social Media Plan; Development (up to \$5,000); messaging (up to \$5,000); and Community Engagement College Intern (up to \$8,500)

Commissioner Speck noted that the PCE Committee has been discussing this issue over the past few months and recommends the deployment of funds as brought forward.

Moved; Commissioner Dean

Vote: 9-0-0

VI. Executive Director's Report

Discussion: Christina Arrostuto, Executive Director, thanked the staff for putting together a wonderful gathering for the First 5 Solano Former Commissioners. Ms. Arrostuto advised the Commission that First 5 Solano will again have the Breast Feeding Friendly Express van at the Solano County Fair in August.

Commissioner Seifert asked Ms. Arrostuto about the EDC Breakfast and the outcome of Pre-Kindergarten Academy championship awards. First 5 Solano has raised more than \$11,000 to date to fill the chair for Pre-K academies.

Public Comment: Ms. Debbie Peralez, Solano/Napa Child Start Executive Director, advised the Commission that because of federal "Sequestration" cuts, Child Start, Inc. is closing down its Dixon Head Start operation at the end of this fiscal year, as well as restructuring two center-based Early Head Start classrooms elsewhere in the county into a home-based program. This is mitigated somewhat by opening one new Head Start classroom in Vacaville.

She noted that these decisions were very difficult for their Board, and their Napa operations are also being reduced. Ms. Peralez wanted to be sure that the Commission was informed.

Commissioner Betz asked if a press release will be issued. Ms. Peralez assured the Commission that there will be a press release issued for public awareness. Commissioner Barbosa asked if additional cuts will be made this year. Ms. Peralez advised the Commission that because sequester is a 10 year process that there is a possibility that there will be additional cuts.

VII. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Speck thanked Ms. Arrostuto for the Former Commissioner Reception, commenting that he enjoyed remembering his early time on the Commission; and that he appreciates that institutional continuity is very important, and knowing what has taken place in the past will help with future decisions.

Commission Niedziela commented on the speech that Commission Speck delivered at the EDC Breakfast was phenomenal and put things into perspective.

Commissioner Crutison was very pleased that the Commission will be going to the board to help prevent children from drowning.

Commissioner Barbosa thanked the Commission for the EDC Breakfast and what a success the event was.

Commissioner Seifert welcomed all of the new Commissioners and reminded everyone that questions are welcome and it takes time to learn the acronyms that First 5 Solano uses.

Commissioner Dean echoed Commissioner Seifert's comments in welcoming the new Commissioners.

Meeting adjourned: 7:48

Approved:  _____