

## First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

### Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, August 9, 2011, 5:00 PM 601 Texas Street, Room B, Fairfield, CA

#### Attendance

Commissioners: Dan Ayala, Chair; Linda Seifert, Vice-Chair; Dana Dean, Sheryl Fairchild, Debbie Gossell, Elaine Norinsky, Jay Speck, Norma Thigpen.

Staff/Public: Commission staff and approximately four members of the public were present.

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 5:08 PM by Chairperson Ayala.

#### I. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

#### II. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for August 9, 2011

*Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for August 9, 2011.*

*Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### III. Approve Minutes of the June 7, 2011 Commission Meeting

*Motion: Approve Minutes of the June 7, 2011 Commission Meeting.*

*Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### IV. Approve the 2012 Commission Meeting Schedule

*Motion: Approve the 2012 Commission Meeting Schedule.*

*Commissioner Dean moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### V. Committee Reports

##### A. Program and Community Engagement Committee

1. *Motion: Approve Minutes of the March 10, 2011 Program Committee meeting (Commissioners Fairchild and Norinsky).*

*Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve this motion. The motion passed 2-0-0.*

2. *Motion: Consider approval of the Community Engagement Fund Policy Update.*

Discussion: Commissioner Dean asked that the Chair of the Program and Community Engagement Committee receive a report with each application that included how much of the fund had been expended, the amount remaining in the fund and a list of programs that had been funded in the past.

*Commissioner Seifert moved to approve this motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

## B. Systems and Policy Committee

The Systems and Policy Committee had not met since the last Commission meeting.

## VI. Executive Director's Report

Christina Arrostuto, Executive Director for First 5 Solano, reviewed her Executive Director's report.

First 5 Futures (F5F) had several activities currently in progress, including coordinating the application for a federal oral health grant, working on a fund development plan and business engagement community partner visits. Staff were working on identifying ways Commissioners could participate in F5F, and should have a better picture at the October Commission meeting. The goal of F5F is to strengthen and sustain the early childhood service system, with fund development as a strategy to help achieve those results.

Ms. Arrostuto commented that the Commission had decided to infuse System Change into the current initiatives instead of funding this area as a separate item, and this had worked well in the currently funded initiatives. However, there are now activities, such as F5F, that don't fit into other areas in the strategic framework. She asked the Commission to consider whether they would want to make "System Change" a fourth priority area in the framework.

Commissioners Fairchild and Seifert requested more information regarding what the different levels of evaluation would mean, if the evaluation costs were reduced. They asked how the evaluation work that had already been completed would fit into the other types of evaluation.

Ms. Arrostuto commented that the FY2010/11 audit might be completed later than usual, but still within statutory timeframes (October 15). If that occurred, the audit would be brought to the Commission at the retreat on October 22, to ensure the November 1 statutory deadline for submission to First 5 California is met.

## VII. Strategic Planning

Dr. Lori Allio, 2011 Strategic Plan Update consultant, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation that included the revised vision, mission and values, upcoming strategic planning activities and meeting dates, activities completed and data synthesis.

During the data synthesis portion of the presentation, Dr. Allio asked the Commissioners to review data points from the recent Community Indicators Report, Community Input Report and Family Survey. She then asked the Commissioners questions for each priority. The questions and answers were:

### **Priority One**

Question 1: What were the greatest areas of need?

Answers:

- Dental services: 1. increasing the amount of dentists who accept Medi-Cal through outreach, 2. Leveraging funds for dental services.
- Access to health care.
- Transportation to health care appointments.
- Shortage of appropriate mental health services.

Question 2: What were the data trends?

Answers:

- Discussion regarding trends was only based on the information that was brought to the Commission. There might be trends that weren't related to current programs.

- When looking at how to reduce funding, sometimes things are reduced to the point where the amount of funding won't make an impact. These data points need to be stacked against each other and evaluated.
- Important to understand what's coming forward with health care reform. (Some Commissioners thought that new programs might be able to address health and dental issues – the Executive Director expressed doubt about this.)
- Increase in infant mortality rates is concerning. It was noted that these data are countywide, not program-specific. Staff noted the Commission should look not just at infant mortality rates (there are relatively few deaths) but more at birth weight and length of gestation, and more importantly, at funded programs.

Question 3: Were there areas where the three reports presented different perceptions?

Answers:

- The grantee sample in the Family Survey stated there was a higher use of non-prescription drugs.
- The references to the Healthy People 2020 objectives are troubling (they allow an increased level of need), those should be removed.
- If First 5 stopped programs where the data showed the programs had been having a positive effect on the community, the positive results might be reduced.

### **Priority Two**

Ms. Arrostuto commented that the funding for the centralized eligibility list for subsidized child care had been eliminated by the state. The state had also taken almost \$300 million out of funding for subsidized child care and moved the funds to the general fund.

Question 1: What were the greatest areas of need?

Answers:

- Many children weren't able to access early learning or preschool opportunities due to loss of slots and the cost. An idea was to allow the first month of kindergarten to be a Pre-K Academy for all of the incoming kindergarteners, instead of having a gap between the current Pre-K Academies and the beginning of school.
- Affordable child care.
- Recreation for children.
- Access to books - a bookmobile could provide access to books for families.
- Advocacy for child care funding and more slots.
- Parent literacy levels.

Question 2: What were the data trends?

Answers:

- Defunding the centralized eligibility list.
- Children who have fewer opportunities to begin with lose the opportunity for preschool.
- If we accepted the enormity of this as a trend, maybe an alternative was to accept that only thirty percent of Solano County children would have the opportunity to participate in preschool or early learning programs. Instead, look at how to improve the condition of the current preschools and child care centers/homes. Provide training and services for non-licensed providers, and serve as an information clearinghouse.
- Transitional kindergarten.

Question 3: Were there areas where the three reports presented different perceptions?

Answers:

- There is a debate going on at the state level regarding whether preschool/child care falls under the early childhood development realm or if it is a social service program.

### **Priority Three**

Question 1: What were the greatest areas of need?

Answers:

- When people used drugs, children in the house suffered. Child abuse and neglect increased.
- Advocacy for increasing access to transportation was needed, maybe at the Solano Transportation Authority meetings.
- Need to support life skills for parents, such as financial management, budgeting and job skills.
- Look at getting information out about getting kids outside, as opposed to playing video games or being inside.

Question 2: What were the data trends?

Answers:

- Lack of access to services is an issue. Is there a way to use new technologies to improve access?
- Trends in rise of poverty, cost of recreational activities and transportation are all things that are changing the faces of families.
- Most of these issues were related to generational poverty – we should support United Way's drive to reduce poverty.
- Look at the causes of poverty, such as lack of education.

Question 3: Were there areas where the three reports presented different perceptions?

(No comments were made for this question.)

The Commission reviewed the draft System Change priority area for the draft updated strategic framework.

Commissioner Speck commented that this system change focused on Solano County. There was so much happening at the state and federal levels that those systems also needed to be included.

Ms. Arrostuto commented that one of the projects that came out of the Safety Net Summits was a systems scan of the county. A survey of the providers in Solano County would be completed including information on what services they offered, where their funding came from, where their clients were from and other information.

Commissioner Dean commented that this area seemed to be more of an overarching item, a prism that the Commission uses to look at the priorities. She was more concerned with programs.

Commissioner Gossell agreed with Commissioner Dean and commented that system change seemed to be a business practice, something that belonged in the core values, not in the strategic framework.

The Commission reviewed the "Map of the Day" for the upcoming retreat and requested the following items:

- Four discussion tables, three for the priorities and one for out of the box ideas and system change discussion.
- Staff would take notes at each table to record the discussion.
- Information on First 5 funding and the amount of leveraged funds brought in for each result area.
- Reviewing the "Integrity" Core Value and possibly rewording it.
- Discussion on the draft proposal for system change and where First 5 Futures fits into the

strategic framework.

### **VIII. Commissioner Remarks**

Commissioner Dean commented that she had participated in the project to build the new Green Academy at Benicia High, which was opening on Wednesday, August 17. The new student center would also be opening that day. She commented that the Benicia USD School Board had worked hard over the summer on increasing the health of the Benicia USD students, including providing healthy snacks and lunch. Commissioner Dean had staffed the Solano County booth at the fair, and visitors had been very interested in hearing about First 5 Solano and what the Commission does.

Commissioner Fairchild commented that she had attended the First 5 California Commission meeting last month. There was a lot of talk about the current uncertainty around the budget.

Commission Gossell commented that she was officially retired from Vacaville USD, and was looking forward to doing more work with First 5. She was also getting involved with the United Cerebral Palsy organization.

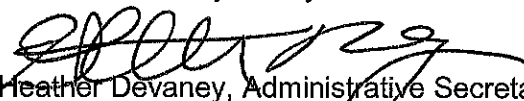
Commissioner Seifert commented that with the Hands on Health Van and the community booth, First 5 had a great presence at the county fair.

Ms. Arrostuto commented that she had volunteered to staff the early family needs booth at the "Mad City Money" training that Travis Credit Union put on in July.

### **IX. Future Agenda Items, Meeting Time/Date/Location**

The First 5 Solano Commission Retreat will be held on Saturday, August 20th from 9:00 AM – 3:00PM at Solano County Office of Education, 5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield. The next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting will be held on October 4, 2011 at 5:00 PM at 601 Texas Street, Fairfield. Future agenda items include: FY2010/11 Annual Report Submission to First 5 California; FY2010/11 Audit; Nominating Committee for 2012 Officers; Strategic Planning.

Commissioner Ayala adjourned the meeting at 7:21 PM.

  
Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary

Approved: *October 4, 2011*