

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, January 14, 2014, 5:30 PM
601 Texas Street, Conference Room B, Fairfield, CA

Attendance

Commissioners: Jay Speck, Elise Crane, Marisela Barbosa, Dan Ayala, Aaron Crutison, Liz Niedziela. (Commissioner Crane arrived at 5:45 PM.)

Staff/Public: Commission staff, former Commissioner Linda Seifert, and 1 member of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM with a salute to the flag.

On behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Speck presented former Commissioner Seifert with an engraved plaque as First 5 Children and Families Commission 2013 Chair, in recognition and appreciation of her outstanding service and dedicated leadership to Solano County's children ages 0-5. Christina Arrostituto, Executive Director, also presented Commissioner Seifert with a bouquet of flowers. Ms. Arrostituto stated that Commissioner Seifert's leadership and the way that she was always available and responsive was appreciated; she's led First 5 through some tough times in the evolution of the Commission and she will be greatly missed. Members of the Commission thanked Commissioner Seifert for her hard work. Commissioner Seifert thanked the Commission and invited the Commissioners to visit her at the Board of Supervisors.

Megan Richards, Deputy Director, introduced Irma Calderon, First 5's new Office Assistant III.

I. Public Comment

No public comment.

II. Consent Calendar

- A. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for January 14, 2014
- B. Approve Minutes of the December 3, 2013 Commission Meeting

Moved: Commissioner Ayala

Vote: 6-0-0

III. Committee Reports

A. Systems and Policy Committee

Discussion: The Systems and Policy Committee did not meet in December 2013. Commissioner Speck reported that Commissioner Crutison, in his capacity as

Vice-Chair, has agreed to join the Systems and Policy Committee. The committee has one more vacancy.

B. Program and Community Engagement Committee

Discussion: Commissioner Speck reported that Commissioner Betz agreed to Chair the Program & Community Engagement Committee for 2014. Commissioner Niedziela will continue on this committee. The committee has one more vacancy.

1. Receive a report on termination of Parent Education Services Contract #2012-702 with Dixon Family Services by mutual agreement effective January 31, 2014 (annual amount up to \$14,173)

Information: Venis Jones Boyd, Family Support & Parent Education Programs Manager, reported that mid-year FY2012-13, it was apparent that Dixon Family Services (DFS) was having a difficult time meeting their performance goals for the number of families committed to doing a 16-week parenting education program; a Compliance Action Plan was enacted August 2013. DFS and First 5 Solano discussed the issues and paths to engage more parents, but numbers did not increase. Under a mutual agreement with First 5, DFS gave a 30-day written notice to terminate contract #2012702 for parent education services effective January 31, 2014. Ms. Boyd referenced a letter of termination from Ms. Cookie Powell, Executive Director of DFS, and noted that DFS wanted to thank First 5 for their support and encouragement provided to them and looks forward to our continued partnership for providing needed services to Dixon 0-5 families. The Committee asked the staff to bring back recommendations about how First 5 might meet the needs of families in Dixon.

2. Receive a report on termination of BabyFirst Solano subcontract with La Clinica de la Raza (Health & Social Services Memorandum of Understanding #2012-602 – annual subcontract amount up to \$83,889)

Information: Megan Richards, Deputy Director, introduced this item and referenced the previous item, stating that although it is unusual, it's not unprecedented for First 5 terminate a contract or subcontract during a funding cycle. Looking at the funding amounts for each contract, they are rather small amounts in proportion to the overall First 5 budget of approximately \$6.5 million.

Regarding the subcontract of La Clinica de la Raza (La Clinica), through the MOU with Health & Social Services for the BabyFirst Solano services, La Clinica was to hire a clinician to provide behavioral health services to women receiving prenatal care at La Clinica. La Clinica had a difficult time staffing a full-time Behavioral Health Clinician since last Fiscal Year and the position has not been filled this Fiscal Year, leading to the subcontractor not meeting their scope of work and ultimately the termination of the contract by Health & Social Services. The Commission asked that the Committee come back with ideas on how to re-allocate funding for prenatal services.

IV. Executive Director's Report

A. Receive the Agenda for the North Bay Region Commissioners Convening meeting on February 13, 2014

Ms. Arrostuto shared that there will be a first-ever regional convening of First 5 County Commissioners. The event will take place on *Thursday, February 13, 2014 from 3 PM – 5 PM* at the *Napa Valley Community Foundation*. Commissioners from four counties in the North Bay will meet to discuss items of mutual interest. Commissioners are asked to RSVP.

B. Receive and discuss an update on FY2013/14 Discretionary Funds

Ms. Arrostuto recommended that Commissioners start thinking of how to utilize the remainder of their FY2013-14 Annual Discretionary Fund. Ms. Arrostuto asked if the Commission would like the Program & Community Engagement Committee to discuss and bring the Commission ideas on what the Commission might want to spend it on or if the Commission wants to have a full Commission discussion about it.

Commissioner Crane shared with the Commission information about The Education Workforce Registry as a potential item for use of discretionary funds. The group involved in this effort is currently cost-modeling, but there are about 300 people from the workforce in Solano County that want to get involved in this project and it will cost approximately \$50 per person to get the project launched.

Commissioner Barbosa commented that pre-kindergarten academies were a need in the community and the Commission might consider allocating additional funds in this area.

Commissioner Speck asked what the timeframe is for the Commission to make a decision on how to use discretionary funds. Ms. Arrostuto advised that if the Commission does not utilize the funds this Fiscal Year, the Commission's Discretionary Fund Policy provides that unspent funds in one year roll forward to the next year, but must be spent by the end of that second year or they revert to the Long Term Financial Plan.

Ms. Arrostuto announced the March 15, 2014 Children & Families Policy Forum coming up in Solano County, sponsored by a planning group that is led by the Children's Network of Solano County. The theme is "Investing in Our Children and Youth: It Makes Perfect Cents!" There will be many legislators and some really good keynote speakers, such as Ted Lempert, President of Children Now.

In addition, Ms. Arrostuto shared that during the next calendar year, there will be short 10-15 minute presentations shared with the Commission so they can learn about some of our community partners that First 5 doesn't necessarily fund, but that we collaborate with, and who provide services in a structure that aligns with First 5's mission and goals. The first presentation will be of the Food and Nutrition Network of Solano County (FANNS).

Ms. Arrostuto shared that she recently attended some anti-poverty events, which included: The Safety Net Summit where it was announced that they're forming a statewide senate caucus called End Poverty and Inequality in California (EPIC); the "End

Child Poverty” statewide summit in Los Angeles; the UC Davis Center for Poverty Research’s 2-day “War on Poverty” conference; and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality’s “National Poverty Scorecard” launch which will give an idea where we stand in terms of poverty and how we can do a better job of addressing the problem.

Ms. Arrostuto thanked First 5 staff for working very hard over the holidays on two campaigns: The United Way Giving campaign, led by Ms. Cherelyn Ellington Hunt, Community Programs & Early Childhood Education Manager, and also Ms. Kara Wilson, College Intern. First 5 came in second place in the County for the highest amount of money raised, and first place in the amount of money per-person raised in The United Way campaign. First 5 also participated in an annual friendly “Food Fight” campaign against Contra Costa County, which raised almost \$400 from a gift basket and other donations, and benefited the Food Banks of Solano and Contra Costa Counties.

Ms. Arrostuto shared that the Governor has provided his budget for the year which proposes increased funding for schools under Proposition 98. In addition, SB837 has been introduced in the legislation, which would expand Transitional Kindergarten to all 4 year-olds.

V. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Crutison wished everyone a happy new year. He inquired if SB837 expanded transitional kindergarten. Ms. Arrostuto shared that in the past, children that were 4-years and 9-months old could start kindergarten, but about 2-3 years ago, a new law was passed in California moving the cutoff date and taking those who formerly qualified for kindergarten and offered transitional kindergarten. SB837 would expand transitional kindergarten from that 3-month cohort of 4-year-olds to all 4-year-olds, and introduce quality measures, such as Early Childhood Education credits for teachers and smaller class ratios. Additionally, this would open up slots for 3-year-olds in Head Start and State Preschool.

Commissioner Ayala thanked Ms. Arrostuto and Ms. Richards for speaking at the Rotary meeting and encouraged Commissioners to invite them to speak at their service groups.

VI. Future Agenda Items, Meeting Time/Date/Location

Future agenda items include the proposed budget, Pre-Kindergarten Academies, and Committee reports. The Commission will meet on March 4, 2014 at 601 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA.

Meeting adjourned: 6:18 PM

Approved: 