

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, March 2, 2010, 5:30 PM Multi-Purpose Room 2101 Courage Drive, Fairfield, CA

Attendance

Commissioners: Debbie Gossell, Chair; Dan Ayala, Vice-Chair; Dee Alarcón, Stephan Betz, Dana Dean, Sheryl Fairchild, Elaine Norinsky, Linda Seifert, Norma Thigpen.

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 5:32 PM by Chairperson Gossell.

I. Greetings, Introductions, Public Comment

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Commissioner Gossell presented Kim Alexander-Yarbor, former County Counsel for First 5 Solano, with a plaque of appreciation for her dedicated work for the Commission. Ms. Alexander-Yarbor commented that it was a pleasure to work for the Commission for the past four years.

II. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for March 2, 2010

Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for March 2, 2010.

Commissioner Seifert moved to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Approve Minutes of the January 12, 2010 and February 5, 2010 Commission Meetings

Motion: Approve Minutes of the January 12, 2010 and February 5, 2010 Commission Meetings.

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

Commissioner Dean arrived at the meeting.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Christina Arrostituto, Executive Director, made a presentation on "First 5 Futures" and discussed ways for First 5 Solano to sustain its community investments as tobacco tax funds decline. She reviewed the comprehensive process the Commission has used in the past to establish and update its strategic plan. She outlined the Commission's current initiatives and how each is tied directly to the strategic plan, and the progress First 5 grantees have made in their work with children ages 0-5 in Solano County.

Commissioner Seifert commented that the First 5 Futures plans need to be worked on not only through staff, but also through a separate ad-hoc or sub-committee. More community partners would need to be brought in. She would very much like to be involved in any committee or structure to help with this program. She requested that staff come back in April with a plan to move First 5 Futures forward.

Commissioner Gossell informed the Commissioners that if any others were interested in joining this committee also, to please contact her.

V. FY2010/11 Budget

Motion: Consider approval of the First 5 Solano FY2010/11 Proposed Budget.

Discussion: Michele Harris, Deputy Director, presented the proposed FY2010/11 budget and the timeline for coordinating the Commission's approved budget with the County budget process. Since the Commission is in the middle of a funding cycle, there are few changes from last year.

Ms. Arrostuto asked the Commission to acknowledge Ms. Harris for her excellent and diligent work on the budget and management of finances. She also thanked Denise Winters, Accounting Clerk II for First 5 Solano, for her contributions to the budget process.

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

VI. Committee Meetings

A. Community Engagement Committee

1. Motion: Consider approval of an allocation of up to \$5,000 for California State Prison Solano (CSP Solano) for materials and supplies for a children's area in the family visiting room (Source of Funds: FY2009/10 Discretionary Fund).

Discussion: Commissioner Betz reviewed this item. He explained that these funds would help renovate the children's visiting room at CSP Solano into a child-friendly area. The current room is very bare and stark. The funds would also purchase items that would help parents bond with their children, like blocks, play mats and books. Staff originally proposed an allocation of \$3,000 for this purpose, but the Committee felt the need is so great that they are recommending a \$5,000 allocation.

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

Commissioner Fairchild arrived at the meeting.

B. Internal Systems Committee

1. Motion: Consider approval of an allocation of up to \$12,000 to the Solano Community Foundation to conduct 18 trainings/workshops for non-profit directors and staff (Source of Funding: Organizational Support Fund).

Discussion: Commissioner Thigpen reviewed this item. She explained that the trainings that would be provided through this series of workshops are trainings that the grantees have asked for in the past. Solano Community Foundation (SCF) has organized this effort at an extremely low cost to community service providers (a one-time \$25 registration fee guarantees two slots for the entire workshop series). Since First 5 Solano would become a major underwriter of this series with this allocation, SCF agreed to do specific outreach to 0-5 providers and to give priority registration to 0-5 providers.

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

Commissioner Thigpen explained that there is slightly over \$2,000 left in the co-sponsorship fund for the current fiscal year. Funding would not be replenished until July 1, 2010.

C. Program Committee

1. Motion: Consider approval of an allocation of up to \$13,000 annually for FY2010/11 and FY2011/12 (total \$26,000 over 2 years) to continue funding for a 0.2 FTE Family Development Specialist for Rio Vista CARE Family Resource Center. (Source of funding: Discretionary Fund).

Discussion: Commissioner Fairchild reviewed this item. When the Commission established its FY2007-2012 funding cycle, it approved an additional allocation for this item for the first three years of the five-year funding cycle, also from Discretionary Funds. This additional allocation would continue the same level of service through the end of the current funding cycle.

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

2. Motion: Consider approval of an allocation of up to \$255,076 to Solano County Health and Social Services for the Integrated Family Support Initiative Child Welfare Services Social Worker and Public Health Nurse. (Total allocation increase from \$332,735 to \$578,811--\$124,101 in FY2010/11 and \$130,975 in FY2011/12). Source of funding: to be determined (Discretionary Fund or Community Stability Fund).

Commissioners Betz and Thigpen recused themselves from the discussion and vote on this item and left the room.

Discussion: Commissioner Fairchild reviewed this item and the background behind the funding of these positions. She explained that the Program Committee had an extensive discussion on the item and is satisfied that the funding should be approved. However, as to a source of funding (Discretionary or CSF), the Committee directed that this question be brought to the full Commission, with the recommendation that the Commission first conduct an overall policy discussion on the use of these funds before identifying a funding source.

Ms. Arrostuto explained that approving the funding and designating where the funding would come from are two different items. By approving this motion, the Commission would approve the funding, but not the funding source. The funding source could be decided at the April or June Commission meeting after an overall policy discussion on the purposes and uses of the Discretionary and Community Stability Funds.

Commissioner Dean asked whether this allocation would be considered "supplantation." Ms. Arrostuto explained staff consulted with County Counsel and determined that there is no conflict with the non-supplantation guidelines the Commission approved for the Community Stability Fund (CSF) in that the positions in question are discretionary, not for any mandated program. First 5 Solano created these positions to fund and can continue them in any proportion at its discretion.

Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve the motion as written, with the advisement that a funding source will be identified prior to June 30, 2010. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners Betz and Thigpen returned to the meeting.

3. Item: Receive reports on the Discretionary Fund and Grants with Multiple Funding Sources/Community Stability Fund.

Discussion: Commissioner Fairchild explained that the Committee requested that the Commission establish clear policy decisions and guidelines for deployment of the Discretionary Fund (DF) and Community Stability Fund (CSF).

Commissioner Seifert commented that she did not believe the CSF should be utilized on a case-by-case basis, but rather that the Commission should establish clear guidelines and consider deployments in a more global way.

She also noted that there are clear guidelines for the use of the Discretionary Fund; however, the Commission has used these funds almost exclusively in ways that, while allowable under the guidelines, are not set forth as the principal uses for these funds. She believes that if this is to be the case, the DF guidelines should also be revised to reflect their uses in practice.

Commissioner Seifert further noted that she believes there should be a clear distinction between the uses for the CSF and DF. She asked to hear the thoughts of the other Commissioners.

Commissioner Betz asked if Child Start/Early Head Start could contribute more dollars to their contract, so First 5 Solano could decrease their funding to that contract. Those extra dollars could be redirected to other quality child care grants. Ms. Harris explained that First 5 Solano is not paying for the Early Head Start, the funds are paying for the wrap-around care in the afternoon.

Commissioner Betz commented that the information in the risk analysis was exactly what he needed, and commended staff. He would like to see an opportunity to talk with community partners regarding any funds they would have to put toward the increased need. He would also like to drill down into the two at-risk initiatives and identify the areas of need. At the next meeting or the meeting after, he would like to start deploying the CSF.

Venis Jones Boyd, Family Support and Quality Child Care Programs Manager for First 5 Solano, informed the Commission that the Program Committee has directed staff to bring back scopes of work and budgets for the contracts up for renewal. In those budgets, staff are going to ask grantees to identify other sources of funding and any risks to those funding sources. This will be brought to the Program Committee in May.

Commissioner Gossell explained that she would like to see the funding just allocated in item III.C.2 come from the CSF.

Commissioner Dean supported Commissioner Betz' idea of drilling down in the two high risk areas, but she is not yet ready to allocate funding.

Commissioner Alarcón agreed that the report was very helpful and commented that she also wants to look at every funding source available before allocating any funding from the CSF.

The Commission directed staff to drill down into the two areas identified as high risk (quality child care and family support services) and bring back a report in April for a policy discussion regarding CSF guidelines. At the June meeting, a report on all the funding sources that make up those services, as well as the proposed scopes of work and budgets, will come to the Commission in June.

The Commission also agreed the Discretionary Fund policy should be revised to better reflect the ways the funds have been allocated in practice, if it is the intent of the Commission to continue funding items in that way.

VII. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Alarcón informed the Commission that Solano County has a magazine called Marketplace, and the husband of Ms. Arrostuto was featured in the most recent issue. She passed around the magazine article.

Commissioner Seifert commented that Ms. Arrostuto, Sandy Person of the EDC and Dilenna Harris of the Vacaville City Council had presented the "BEST® Approach" (Business Engagement Strategy Team) report to the Board of Supervisors that morning, and it was very well received.

Commissioner Gossell urged everyone in Solano County who can afford it to donate diapers to the Family Resource Centers. They are very much needed right now. The First 5 Solano website, www.first5solano.org, has information on how to donate diapers.

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

The next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting will be held on April 6, 2010 at 5:30 PM, Dixon Senior Center, 201 S 5th Street, Dixon. Future agenda items include: Dixon Services Presentation; Public Hearing; First 5 California FY2008/09 Annual Report.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.



Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary

Approved:

April 6, 2010