

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, April 5, 2011, 5:00 PM 675 Texas Street, MP Rooms 1600-1610, Fairfield, CA

Attendance

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

Staff/Public: Commission staff and approximately 25 members of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 5:03 PM by Chairperson Ayala. The Commissioners had a roll call vote, with Commissioners Betz, Seifert, Speck, Norinsky, Gossell, Thigpen, Fairchild and Ayala present.

I. Adjourn to Closed Session

The Commission adjourned to a closed session.

Commissioner Dean joined the closed session at 5:20pm.

II. Reconvene

The Commission reconvened at 5:52 PM.

Carrie Scarlata, County Counsel for First 5 Solano, reported that the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Solano County BOS to pursue litigation challenging AB99. The Commission also delegated authority to the Executive Director (Christina Arrostuto) to sign any agreements necessary to pursue such litigation.

Commissioner Seifert moved for an emergency motion to add a motion to the agenda as new item IV A. The proposed emergency motion was:

Allocate up to \$100,000 for the purpose of challenging AB99 (source of funding FY2010/11 discretionary fund).

The motion to add an emergency motion to the agenda passed unanimously with a 9-0-0 vote. This emergency motion would be agenda item IV A.

III. Public Comment

Carol Pruett, Office Manager for the Dixon Chamber of Commerce, commented that in March 2011, Commissioner Ayala had received the Dixon Citizen of the Year award. Ms. Pruett presented Commissioner Ayala with a framed article from The Reporter recognizing his achievement. Commissioner Ayala commented that he was surprised to receive the award, as he hadn't known that someone had nominated him. He thanked Ms. Pruett and the Bryan Braker funeral home staff.

IV. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for April 5, 2011

Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for April 5, 2011.

The agenda was amended to add item IV.A.

Commissioner Dean moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Motion: Allocate up to \$100,000 for the purpose of challenging AB99 (source of funding FY2010/11 discretionary fund).

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

V. Approve Minutes of the March 1, 2011 Commission Meeting

Motion: Approve Minutes of the March 1, 2011 Commission Meeting.

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

VI. FY2011/12 – FY2014/15 Budget Contingencies

A. Motion: Consider reductions in the FY2011/12 Budget from \$9,100,803 to \$7,903,321 and reducing or eliminating programs, services and supports as outlined in the staff report, to maximize funding available for future years.

Discussion: Ms. Arrostituto reviewed the PowerPoint presentation for the FY2011/12 proposed budget. She explained that the (approximate) \$8.8 million First 5 Solano might owe to the state as of AB99 would not be available to the Commission during any period of dispute, or might have to be forwarded to state. Therefore, staff brought forward scenarios for FY2011/12 and into the next funding cycle for the Commission's discussion and possible action. Ms. Arrostituto presented the Commission with five possible scenarios for the FY2011/12 budget, with varied levels of funding.

Commissioner Dean asked staff for a rough estimate on a ten percent reduction in the budget. She commented that she somewhat felt that it might not be worthwhile to try to hold on to the First 5 Solano reserve funds, since the state might come back next year and try to sweep the funds again.

Commissioner Seifert asked staff if the currently funded programs would end once this funding cycle ended, or if they were able to sustain their programs after this cycle was over. She asked if there was a way for them to maintain their programs once the First 5 funding ended. She commented that a closer look at all the programs was needed.

Commissioner Thigpen asked if any grantees could withstand a budget reduction and still maintain their programs.

Commissioner Fairchild commented that it seemed unfair to ask grantees and stakeholders for a response that night on how cuts would affect their programs, as grantees hadn't had time to analyze their programs. She commented that community input was needed before any budget decision should be made.

Jewel Fink of Planned Parenthood Shasta-Diablo commented that she agreed with Commissioner Fairchild, that grantees be asked to prepare analyses at a later date. The Adolescent Family Life Program had already been cut, and Cal-Learn was also being cut.

Kim Thomas of Children's Network commented that Children's Network had lost some subsidized child care funding, as well as some funding for the child care infrastructure. She also commented that the family resource centers had other funding sources cut, and were expected to serve more clients with less funding.

Nancy Calvo of Solano County Health & Social Services commented that there had been multiple cuts to services for adolescents, families and children already.

Grayland Hilt of Child Start, Inc. commented that with the lack of ARRA funding for the next fiscal year, over 100 children that were currently receiving services would go unserved. He asked for more time to respond to the questions and information the Commission had requested.

Jane Johnson of Child Haven commented that the amount of trauma seen in children had risen drastically due to the loss of other community services. Cuts had come from government contracts as well as lower donations from the community. She also commented that First 5 is a huge support for children in the county.

Debbi Davis of Children's Nurturing Project commented that the service referrals they had received were more serious than before.

Commissioner Gossell commented that in her work at a local elementary school, she saw severely traumatized children also.

Kay Bosick of Youth and Family Services commented that the funding First 5 provided for their agency was integral to providing services to parents as well as children. Even a small funding cut to the First 5-funded programs could result in the programs not being able to run.

Commissioner Dean commented that one idea was to deploy funding for future years to grantees at that time, with the understanding that the grantees would shepherd the resources as First 5 Solano would have if the threat to sweep funding hadn't come up. This would prevent the state from sweeping reserves in the future.

Commissioner Betz commented that one option might be to approach the business community and ask them to help with the reduced funding.

Commissioner Speck moved to develop more scenarios to reduce the FY2011/12 budget, with the amount of the reduction to be determined.

Commissioner Seifert commented that this motion was intended to confirm that the Commission would not "stay the course", but that FY2011/12 budget reductions would be made. If the motion passed, the next motion / discussion would be how to reduce the FY2011/12 budget.

Commissioner Fairchild commented that she was uncomfortable with the blanket decision to reduce the budget without really talking about what that meant. She did not support reducing the grants budget, but would support looking at items in Scenario 2 for reduction.

Commissioner Thigpen commented that she agreed with Commissioner Fairchild.

Commissioners suggested providing additional funds for basic needs, considering that the recession continues to increase the numbers of families needing these types of services.

Commissioner Speck moved to approve the amended motion: As a result of AB99, the Commission is moving to reopen the FY2011/12 Budget, in a manner to be determined. The motion passed with seven ayes and two nos.

The Commission directed staff to bring back information on each initiative, including the amount of each grant, the target audience, the amounts of funding leveraged, the numbers of

people served, the purpose of those initiatives and information on the sustainability of the programs. The Commission asked grantees and staff to gather information and present to the Commission information on how the proposed budget scenario reductions would impact their programs, how they address basic needs / priority services and how they would reduce their programs if needed.

- B. Motion: Consider Long Term Financial Plan revision options for budget contingency planning for FY2011/12 – FY2014/15, to establish a stable grant funding level for those fiscal years.**

[The Commission did not act on this motion.]

The Commission took a short break.

Commissioner Gossell departed the meeting.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Program Committee

- 1. Motion: Consider approval of an allocation of \$217,000 to fully fund the Dixon Unified School District (DUSD) School Readiness (SR) program for one additional year (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012) (Source of funds: \$117,000 from 2007-2012 Program Investment Plan and \$100,000 from FY2011/12 Discretionary Fund)**

Discussion: Commissioner Fairchild gave some background information for this item.

Lynn Hoffman, School Readiness Program Manager for First 5 Solano, commented that DUSD SR started up one year before the other programs, which put them out of sync with the other SR contracts. DUSD SR served as a model for the other SR programs.

Commissioner Seifert commented that she supported the DUSD SR program, but with the previous discussions that night regarding cutting funding, voting to add in funds from the Discretionary Fund was a difficult decision.

Commissioner Dean commented that she supported funding this program at the \$217,000 or the \$117,000 level.

Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve this motion. The motion passed with five ayes and three nos.

Commissioners Betz, Seifert and Speck commented that they would have supported funding this program at the \$117,000 level.

Commissioner Dean departed the meeting.

B. Internal Systems Committee

- 1. Motion: Consider approval of deployment of up to \$10,000 from the Organizational Support Fund to provide up to 20 color scanners to local community based agencies to scan documents in support of families applying online using the Benefits CALWIN online tool**

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

C. Community Engagement Committee (no meeting)

VIII. Executive Director's Report

- A. ***Motion: Consider approval of deployment of up to \$7,000 for a business challenge grant, matched by the William and Patricia Martindale Charitable Remainder Trust and Mayor of the City of Vallejo, to the Solano County Library Foundation for the Solano Reach Out and Read program (Source of funds: Business Challenge Grants allocation).***

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reviewed her Executive Director's report pertaining to this item. The two other agencies would be donating \$7,000 each, which will give the program \$21,000 for the books. This would provide approximately 5,000 books.

Dilenna Harris, Executive Director of the Solano County Library Foundation, commented that the relationships the Commission had built with the business community were integral in leveraging these funds for the Reach Out and Read program. Two other businesses she had spoken to were also interested in this program.

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

- B. ***Motion: Consider reserving May 3, 2011 for a First 5 Solano Commission meeting to further address budget contingencies and/or developments at the state and/or county level that have the potential to impact First 5 Solano grants/operations.***

Commissioner Seifert moved to approve the motion as amended: Consider setting the date of May 10, 2011 for a First 5 Solano Commission meeting to further address budget contingencies and/or developments at the state and/or county level that have the potential to impact First 5 Solano grants/operations. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Public Hearing: First 5 CA FY2009/10 Annual Report

Motion: Conduct the required public hearing on, and consider acceptance of, the First 5 California Children and Families Commission's FY2009/10 Annual Report, pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 130150.

Discussion: Cherelyn Ellington, Community Programs Manager for First 5 Solano, reviewed the First 5 CA FY2009/10 annual report.

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

X. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Ayala thanked the Commission for letting the Dixon Chamber of Commerce come in for the special recognition.

Commissioner Seifert thanked staff for all the dedicated and thoughtful work put into the budget scenarios presented that night.

Commissioner Speck commented that the Commission seemed to be in the situation of choosing the least harmful options for the community when looking at reducing funding.

Commissioner Fairchild thanked staff for thinking through the difficult budget scenarios. She also commented that she had gone to a Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families planning meeting for the 2011 conference, which would be held in San Francisco in September. Ms.

Arrostuto had been instrumental in bringing the conference to the West Coast.

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

The Commission will have a special meeting on May 10, 2011 at the County Events Center, 601 Texas Street, Fairfield. The next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting will be held on June 7 2011 at 5:00 PM, County Events Center, 601 Texas Street, Fairfield. Future agenda items include: Budget Scenarios; Strategic Planning.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.


Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary

Approved: *May 10, 2011*