

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, April 7, 2009, 5:30 PM Ulatis Community Center 1000 Ulatis Drive, Vacaville, CA

Attendance

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

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 5:39 PM by Chairperson Thigpen.

I. Greetings, Introductions, Public Comment

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves. There was no public comment.

II. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for April 7, 2009

Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for April 7, 2009

Discussion: Staff requested that on agenda item IV, the date at the end of the motion should be changed to June 30, 2010.

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

III. Approve Minutes of the March 3, 2009 Commission Meeting

Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Minutes for March 3, 2009

Discussion: Commissioner Fairchild requested that the minutes be amended on page 2, item four, to reflect her remarks on the changes that need to be made to the scope of work for the Preschool for All plan grant.

Commissioner Ayala moved to approve this motion as amended. The motion passed with five ayes and two abstentions (Commissioners Gossell and Seifert were not present at the March meeting).

IV. Vacaville Services Presentations

Mayor of Vacaville Len Augustine welcomed the Commission to Vacaville and spoke briefly on the various children's programs in Vacaville, like KidFest and Child Start. Mayor Augustine thanked the Commission for all the programs they help fund for children in their first five years.

(Commissioner Betz arrived at the meeting.)

Carrie Dittmer of the REACH program and Vacaville Youth Roundtable gave some background on the two programs. The goal of the two programs is to create strong partnerships between youth and adults in Vacaville.

(Commissioner Alarcón arrived at the meeting.)

Chief Richard Word of the Vacaville Police Department informed the Commission that Vacaville is in the top five safest communities of their size in California. Chief Word also spoke about the various programs run by the police department, including the Police Activities League, diversion program, parent education classes and mentoring programs.

Al Arevalo and Tracee Scott, from the inaugural Leadership Vacaville class, gave some background on the program and the different ways it develops leaders in the community. The class also developed the Leadership Vacaville Endowment Fund to distribute the funds the classes raise through their yearly community service projects.

Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary for First 5 Solano and member of the current Leadership Vacaville class, informed the Commission that the current class is doing an event called The Heart and Soul of Vacaville. The event will be on May 30th in Vacaville Town Square and will feature local non-profits. All profits from the event will go to non-profits that serve Vacaville.

V. Executive Director's Report

Christina Arrostuto, Executive Director of First 5 Solano, introduced Vena Ford, Deputy Director of Programs for Solano Coalition for Better Health. Ms. Ford is spearheading an effort in Solano County to expand dental services. She presented the new dental health pamphlet, which is partially funded by First 5 Solano and Solano County. The pamphlet is designed to teach parents and caregivers how important it is for children to receive early dental health care. The brochure is available in English and Spanish. If anyone would like some of the pamphlets or more information on dental health training, they can contact Ms. Ford at (707) 863-4429.

Nancy Calvo of Solano County H&SS introduced Shelli Cannon-Dekreek, the new Health Services Manager for BabyFirst Solano.

A. Motion: Consider taking a position (“support”, “oppose” or “neutral”) on Proposition 1D, “Protects Children’s Services Funding. Helps Balance State Budget”.

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reviewed the staff report and accompanying PowerPoint presentation behind this motion.

Several Commissioners and members of the public commented on how important it is to keep local control of these dollars. The community decides where the greatest needs are locally.

Commissioner Seifert moved to take a position of “oppose” to Proposition 1D. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Motion: Consider taking a position (“support”, “oppose” or “neutral”) on Proposition 1E, “Mental Health Services Funding. Temporary Reallocation. Helps Balance State Budget”.

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reviewed the staff report and accompanying PowerPoint presentation behind this motion. Commissioner Betz commented that he is in favor of taking a position of neutral to Proposition 1E. He stated that the funds that are being redirected should have gone to the counties three years ago. The state department of mental health has failed to release those funds to the counties in a timely manner. He stated that this is the state’s way of releasing those dollars to the county in a timelier manner.

The Commission discussed the different aspects of Proposition 1E and the long term effects it

would have on the First 5 Solano programs funded with these dollars.

Commissioner Seifert moved to take a position of oppose to Proposition 1E. The motion passed with eight ayes and one abstention. Commissioner Betz abstained from the vote.

VI. Committee Meetings

A. Program Committee

Motion: Consider a recommendation to deploy Cycle 1 School Readiness funds in the amount of up to \$686,422 as follows: a) Up to \$140,000 to expand Pre-kindergarten "Academies" and b) up to \$546,422 for facilities development, start-up costs and operational funding to expand the number of preschool slots in Solano County School Readiness catchment areas (Source of funding: First 5 Solano/First 5 California matching funds up to \$686,422).

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reviewed the staff report behind this motion. She explained that the urgency behind this motion is due to the upcoming election. Staff would like to get the plan approved by First 5 California and draw down the funds before the May 19 election. This way, if Proposition 1D did pass and the First 5 California funds were taken, there would be a better argument for these funds already being encumbered.

The Commission watched a video put together by Children's Network that emphasizes the importance of developing and maintaining quality child care in Solano County. The video was developed as a community involvement tool to emphasize to local businesses the importance of expanding quality child care, which results in employees being able to come to work more consistently.

Ms. Arrostuto reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on quality child care and preschool in Solano County.

The Commission discussed the different ways preschool and child care can be funded by First 5 Solano and the best use of First 5 Solano funds.

Commissioner Fairchild moved to approve the amended motion. The amended motion reads: Consider a recommendation to deploy Cycle 1 School Readiness funds in the amount of up to \$686,422 as follows: a) Up to \$215,000 to expand Pre-kindergarten "Academies", b) up to \$279,000 (\$93,000 per year) to fund 24 preschool slots at Anna Kyle school for three years and c) deploy the remaining \$192,000 for preschool slots to be determined within the school readiness catchment areas. (Source of funding: First 5 Solano/First 5 California matching funds up to \$686,422). The motion passed unanimously.

B. Internal Systems Committee

Commissioner Gossell, Chair of the Internal Systems Committee, informed the Commission that at the last Committee meeting, there was a discussion on whether or not the Co-Sponsorship funds should be used for travel expenses when events are being held outside Solano County. The Committee decided Co-Sponsorship grant funds may continue to be awarded for registration fees for out-of-county training/conferences, but funds should not be awarded for travel costs.

C. Community Engagement Committee

Motion: Consider approval of the deployment of up to \$17,830 to purchase up to 1,000 baby fans, with any funds left to be used for an informational campaign to raise awareness about the value of fans in reducing the chances of SIDS. Source of funding: FY2008/09 Discretionary Fund.

Discussion: Commissioner Betz, Chair of the Community Engagement Committee, informed the Commission that a previous Commissioner, Barbara Kondylis, had brought up the subject of these baby fans. Staff demonstrated a sample fan. The Committee recommends that the Commission deploy Discretionary Funds to purchase up to 1,000 of these fans. Such fans circulate air and have been documented to reduce the risk of SIDS.

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

VII. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Thigpen wished Robert Heard, the longtime audio person for the Commission, a happy birthday. She also informed the Commission that this week is Public Health week and the county is distributing information on the services offered.

Commissioner Gossell encouraged everyone to attend “The Heart and Soul of Vacaville” event on May 30th in Vacaville Town Square.

Commissioner Tucker informed the Commission that at the last Internal Systems Committee, a person from WIC spoke on the challenges of getting staff into hospitals to help women breastfeed beginning at birth. She requested data on this issue from staff at a future meeting.

Commissioner Seifert commented that Ms. Arrostuto is an amazing advocate for children and First 5 Solano as well as a great partner for the Solano County Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Ayala invited everyone to attend the Dixon Community Block Party on April 18th at the Women’s Improvement Park.

Commissioner Betz commented that he attended the First 5 Solano school readiness coordinator’s meeting and was impressed with the evidence-based programs and techniques that they are using at the sites. He also informed the Commission that there are now standards of competencies in early mental health for infants and toddlers available through the Infant Development Association of California. These can be used by teachers or providers and are available at www.idaofcal.org.

Commissioner Alarcón informed the Commission that SCOE has completed the application for the State Preschool grant of \$200,000. They should know in about three weeks whether they will receive the grant. If the grant is awarded, they will use the dollars to collaborate with efforts already going on with First 5 Solano.

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

The next First 5 Solano Commission meeting will be on June 2, 2009 at 5:30 PM in the Multi-Purpose Room at 2101 Courage Drive, Fairfield, CA 94533. Future agenda items include the Kindergarten Readiness Report.

Meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary
Approved: