

# First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

## Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 5:30 PM Solano County Health and Social Services Center 2101 Courage Dr., Multi-Purpose Room, Fairfield, CA

### Attendance

Commissioners: Dr. Sharon Tucker, Chair; Norma Thigpen, Vice-Chair; Dan Ayala; Stephan Betz; Sheryl Fairchild; Debbie Gossell; Barbara Kondylis and Dr. Elaine Norinsky

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

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at: 5:30 PM by Chairperson Tucker.

### I. Greetings, Introductions and Public Comment

Lynn Guest, School Readiness Coordinator for First 5 Solano, introduced Gordon Battles III and Javier Gonzalez, two of First 5 Solano's new AmeriCorps members, to the Commission.

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

Patrick Duterte, Director of Solano County Health and Social Services, introduced Michael Opredek, the new Mental Health Director for H&SS. Mr. Opredek informed the Commission that he is looking forward to collaborating with the First 5 Commission.

### II. Consent Items

***Commissioner Betz moved to approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for January 8, 2008. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Commissioner Kondylis moved to approve the Minutes of the December 4, 2007 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.***

### III. Rescheduled Consent Items

There were no rescheduled consent items.

### IV. Introduction of 2008 Officers; Appointment of Committee Chairs

Commissioner Tucker introduced herself as the new Chair and Norma Thigpen as the new Vice-Chair of the Commission for 2008.

***Commissioner Betz moved to approve the Program Committee Members for 2008 as follows: Chair: Commissioner Kondylis; Members: Commissioners Fairchild and Norinsky. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Commissioner Kondylis moved to approve the Community Engagement Committee Members for 2008 as follows: Chair: Commissioner Betz; Members: Commissioners Ayala (and Gossell as available). The motion passed unanimously.***

**Commissioner Betz moved to approve the Internal Systems Committee Members for 2008 as follows: Chair: Commissioner Thigpen; Members: Commissioners Alarcón and Tucker. The motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner Tucker presented Commissioner Betz with a plaque to thank him for his outstanding and dedicated work as the 2007 First 5 Solano Commission Chair.

Commissioner Tucker presented Robert Heard, the audio specialist, and John Madrosen, the video specialist, with certificates of appreciation for all of their hard work during the First 5 Solano Commission meetings. Taping and broadcasting First 5 Commission meetings on local public access television channels across the County is a significant element of the Commission's community engagement efforts and helps ensure public access to the First 5 Solano Commission's deliberations and decisions.

## **V. Review First 5 Solano Strategic Plan**

Steven LaFrance of LaFrance Associates presented the FY2006/07 First 5 Solano Annual Report to the Community/2008 Calendar to the Commission. The report/calendar, along with the Family Survey, was sent out to 5,000 families in Solano County with children ages zero to five. The Family Survey will provide information to help measure progress towards achieving the Commission's goals as outlined in its Strategic Plan.

Mr. LaFrance informed the Commission that the current strategic plan framework is both measurable and clear and it has no redundancies or ambiguities. Access to transportation is a significant barrier for Solano County families, and is measured in the Evaluation Framework.

Commissioner Gossell commented that she did like the calendar and requested that, next year, the month of May include the listing of National Speech and Hearing Awareness Month. Commissioner Betz commended Mr. LaFrance and others who worked on the calendar for connecting the snapshots with the goals and accomplishments. Commissioner Fairchild thanked Mr. LaFrance for bringing together all the pieces of the work of the First 5 Solano Commission. Commissioner Tucker commented that she was thrilled with the calendar and report.

## **VI. FY2008/09 State Budget Update**

Mr. Duterte presented excerpts from the proposed FY2008/09 state budget and outlined potential impacts to Solano County Health and Social Services. Governor Schwarzenegger has declared a fiscal emergency for the state of California and asked all state departments to cut ten percent from their mid-year budgets. Mr. Duterte informed the Commission that Solano County is better off than most other counties in California. The Board of Supervisors has made it a priority to save money during good times to help the county through the bad times.

The Commission discussed different aspects of the proposed budget and its' effects on First 5 Solano's community partners. Commissioner Kondylis asked Mr. Duterte to have Linda Orrante, Deputy Director for Health and Social Services, email the Foster Care report that Ms. Orrante produces for the H&SS Subcommittee to First 5 staff for distribution to the Commission.

Mr. Duterte paused to acknowledge Robert Lawton, the Deputy County Administrator for Health and Social Services (and First 5 Solano) and thank him for being a great partner. Mr. Lawton is leaving Solano County to become the Calaveras County Administrator.

Commissioner Tucker thanked Mr. Lawton for being a great liaison to the First 5 Solano Commission. Mr. Lawton commended the First 5 Solano Commission for being an exceptionally well-run organization and Ms. Arrostituto for being a key part of the First 5 Solano success. Ms.

Arrostuto presented Mr. Lawton with a certificate of appreciation for his exceptional and dedicated service to First 5 Solano.

Commissioner Tucker asked Ms. Arrostuto to bring some talking points regarding the budget shortfall to the next Commission meeting and to put this on the agenda as a discussion item. Ms. Arrostuto also offered to bring a legislative update.

## VII. Working Families Initiative Presentation

Venis Jones Boyd, Contract and Program Specialist for First 5 Solano, introduced John Williams and Aimee Durfee of the United Way and Rhonda Smith of the Children's Network, all of whom work on the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! program in Solano County. Mr. Williams, Ms. Durfee and Ms. Smith reviewed the details and successes of the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! program. This program brought in \$892,000 in tax refunds for Solano County alone in 2006. They are hoping to raise that number to \$1 million this year. The program is currently looking for volunteers to staff the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites in Solano County. If community members need information on VITA sites, they can call (800) 358-8832.

Commissioner Tucker asked staff to bring back a recommendation on how the First 5 Solano Commission can help support this program.

## VIII. Committee Meetings

### A. Program Committee

1. A. ***Commissioner Norinsky moved to approve the recommendations of the Solano Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Collaborative for deployment of allocated ECMH funds, as outlined in the staff report, in concept; but delay implementation while continuing to pursue a joint funding opportunity with Solano Health and Social Services Department (H&SS) using Mental Health Services Act-Prevention and Early Intervention (MHSA-PEI) funding.***

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto informed the Commission that the ECMH Collaborative name is being changed to Early Childhood Developmental Health (ECDH) Collaborative. Ms. Arrostuto also gave the Commission some background on the development of the Collaborative.

Debbi Davis, Executive Director of Children's Nurturing Project and head of the ECDH Collaborative, reviewed the different types of funding the Collaborative has reviewed. An ad hoc work group has been formed to develop funding streams for this Collaborative. Ms. Davis also reviewed the portion of her report in the Commission packet regarding how the current funding is allocated.

Commissioner Thigpen, Chair of the Program Committee, commented that the Program Committee had a very good discussion regarding this item at their last meeting. The committee does want to wait and see if the collaboration with MHSa will be possible.

***The motion passed unanimously.***

1. B. ***Commissioner Kondylis moved to approve the recommendation to continue the \$50,000 annual funding for ECMH collaborative efforts throughout the FY2007/12 funding cycle, over and above the existing program grants allocation for early childhood mental health with administrative rather than program funding.***

Discussion: Commissioner Betz inquired as to whether the \$50,000 would go to the ECDH Collaborative Coordinator. Ms. Arrostuto informed the Commission that this money would be

used toward collaborative support, and would not come out of the current allocations. Staff would develop funding recommendations for the Commission on how to best deploy the money.

***The motion passed unanimously with the contingency that the phrase “with administrative rather than program funding” be removed from the motion.***

Staff were directed to bring back funding source recommendations to the Commission at a future date.

## B. Internal Systems Committee

***1. Commissioner Kondylis moved to approve a revision to the Conflict of Interest Code to include the Deputy Director in the list of designated positions required to submit a statement of financial interests.***

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto informed the Commission that the law changed last year. Deputy Directors are now required to complete a Form 700 annually.

***The motion passed unanimously.***

***2. Commissioner Kondylis moved to approve a net increase of \$50,468 to the FY2007/08 budget to support the following four items: A) the addition of one Full-Time Equivalent (1 FTE) Contract and Program Specialist (Community Engagement/Public Affairs); B) adjust for CARES increased state match funding; C) increase the co-sponsorship of conferences and grantwriting fund; and D) increase the county assigned IT budget. Source of Funding: Contingency Funds.***

Discussion: Michele Harris, Deputy Director for First 5 Solano, reviewed the staff report regarding this motion.

Commissioner Kondylis commented was not in favor of increasing the amount of funds in the Co-Sponsorship fund without more information. She requested that before considering an increase, the Commission develop parameters on what should be funded and what should not.

Commissioner Betz informed the Commission that his understanding was that the fund should not support the same annual events over multiple years. However, he agreed with the idea of having the Commission set priorities for the next year and look at the ongoing requests for funding.

Ms. Harris suggested looking at the current criteria for the fund, including criteria for agencies who have applied for the same event more than once.

***The motion passed unanimously with the contingency that the dollars allocated for the Co-Sponsorship fund may be allocated but not spent without approval of the Commission.***

Staff were directed to bring back a report to the Commission on past recipients and results of Co-Sponsorship funds.

## IX. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Ayala asked for the date of the First 5 state conference. Ms. Arrostuto informed the Commission that the conference will be May 21 through May 23 in Anaheim CA.

Commissioner Gossell informed the Commission that she was contacted by Maria Rosa Serrano, the School Readiness Coordinator for Markham in Vacaville. She was invited to do speech and language screenings in May for the school. A Spanish interpreter will be provided to help her.

Commissioner Thigpen announced that on February 5<sup>th</sup>, the Solano Coalition for Better Health is having their third annual Champions for Health African Americans event. It will be at the Ulatis center in Vacaville.

## **X. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Arrostuto encouraged the Commissioners to attend the 2008 Children's Summit in Pleasant Hill on January 29. The focus this year is on the economic benefits of investing in early childhood.

Also, Kim Thomas, Executive Director for Children's Network, was accepted by Stanford Executive Development Program for Non-Profit Leaders. First 5 is sponsoring her attendance at this program.

Ms. Arrostuto invited all the Commissioners to attend the Results Fair for First 5 Solano, which will be on April 24, 2008. All the grantees, staff and evaluation team are planning a great event.

The partnership First 5 Solano is developing with Westfield Mall is expanding. First 5 will have a booth at the "Feeling Great in 2008" event on February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the mall in Fairfield.

First 5 Solano, along with many other community partners, is hosting the second Positive Parenting Workshop at the Solano County Office of Education on February 9, 2008. Parents and child care providers from across the county have been invited to attend this event.

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

The next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be held on **March 4, 2008 at 5:30 PM, Health and Human Services Center, Multipurpose Room, 2101 Courage Drive, Fairfield.** Future agenda items include: FY2008/09 Proposed Budget for First 5 Solano and Evaluation Report.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Heather Devaney, Administrative Secretary  
Approved: