

**FIRST 5 SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION**

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES (APPROVED 3/23/16)

January 27, 2016

Current Commissioners Present

Bruce Gibson	SLO County Board of Supervisors (Chair)
Penny Borenstein, M.D.	SLO County Public Health Department
Lee Collins	Department of Social Services
James Forester, DDS	Medical Representative (Central Coast Dental Society)
Janet Murphy	Community at Large
Tracy Schiro	Children's Services Network
Bob Watt	Community at Large

Commissioners Absent/Excused

James Brescia	SLO County Office of Education
Melinda Sokolowski	Child Care Planning Council

Staff Present

First 5 staff: Wendy Wendt, Jason Wells, Misty Livengood
Commission Evaluator: Tom Keifer
Commission Counsel: Ray Biering

Call to Order

Chair Gibson called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

ITEM 1 - Chair Comments

- County Board of Supervisors have contributed \$2,050 to the 2016 Hands-on Heroes/Champions of Youth Award Dinner
- Mary Squellati, Site Supervisor at the Oceano Family Resource Center, is the 2016 Ken Talley Award for her service on behalf South County youth, including her leadership on the South County Youth Coalition. Program Officer Jason Wells added praise on her engagement with First 5 initiatives and partners.

ITEM 2 - Commissioner Comments and Announcements

- Commissioner Forester – The Board of Supervisors meeting on February 2, 2016 includes a Proclamation marking February as Children's Oral Health Month.

ITEM 3 - Public Comment

None

ITEM 4 - Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the December 9, 2015 Minutes
- b. Approval of FY15-16 Q2 Financial Report

Public Comment: None

VOTE: Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Borenstein and passed unanimously.

ITEM 5 – Presentation/Approval: 2015 Outcome Evaluation

Jason Wells introduced the agenda item. The annual Outcome Evaluation is a robust exercise that takes a detailed look at each of First 5 SLO County's funded programs. It is different from the Annual Report, a compilation of raw data required submitted annually to First 5 California.

Evaluator Thomas Keifer presented on the history, framework, and potential for enhancement to local evaluation.

- The annual evaluation is built around the Strategic Plan. With the crafting of a new 2016+ Strategic Plan, First 5 SLO County is in a position to craft new evaluation design and presentation approaches.
- Early in its history, First 5 CA took an active role with local First 5's to define and support local evaluation design and implementation. Over time, the state stepped away from local evaluation planning. Now local First 5s are required to submit annual data sets that inform First 5 CA's state-level Annual Report. Meanwhile, local agencies are freed up to craft local evaluations that fit our local language and needs.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Collins posed a question regarding Beginnings Plus evaluation results documenting OB/GYN prenatal screenings for substance use during pregnancy. The evaluation report describes disproportionate screening of pregnant mothers who are low-income and women of color. The concern here is that if they are overrepresented in screening, then they are overrepresented in the CWS system. It is a systemic practice that disproportionately harms women of color/low-income.

Mr. Keifer pointed out that the First 5 Perinatal Substance Abuse Prevention Initiative in part was meant to build toward universal screening of all pregnant women. It has not made enough of a dent.

Commissioner Borenstein commented that this is a question of societal norm change. Abuse of alcohol and other drugs is “equal opportunity” among all socio-economic groups and ethnicities. This is an issue at the level of OB practice. There are two approaches – convince or mandate doctors to conduct universal screening. The latter voluntary approach hasn’t worked. Maybe it’s time to advocate for legislative change.

Commissioner Gibson commented on the skewed sample that has resulted from selective screening practice. If we are funding the 4Ps + tool, are we getting what we’re investing in?

Commissioner Watt added a question about the intent of Beginnings Plus. What was the intent? Reach middle/upper income women?

Commissioner Borenstein responded that First 5 funding for the Perinatal Substance Abuse Prevention Initiative helped build a stronger infrastructure to address the issue and that is now becoming embedded in County Public Health’s next 5-year plan for Maternal Child and Adolescent Health.

Commissioner Collins shifted back to the overall evaluation design. He observed that there are some areas where we can claim to have made a difference. In other areas, it becomes more difficult, especially when there are other variables at play. In many of the programs, the outcomes aren’t as easily found. With the Post-Partum Depression program for example, we measured encounters, literature, etc. But what is not clear is whether it made any difference.

Executive Director Wendt recommended making some course corrections to FY15-16 program evaluation activities as appropriate and feasible, and to develop more comprehensive changes to evaluation approach as part of the 2016+ Strategic Plan and beginning with FY16-17.

Commissioner Borenstein urged immediate action to improve on our evaluation approach to more fully describe the impact of First 5 SLO County’s investments.

Mr. Wells proposed a reconvening of the Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee. We also need to determine how to match investment in evaluation activities with investment in the programs we are evaluating.

Discussion ensued regarding the value of evaluation as documentation of best practice and/or ways to improve practice.

Commissioner Collins provided an example: With Post-Partum Depression, are there elements of best practice that are not in place (e.g. the warm line doesn’t exist in the middle of the night when mom needs the help)?

Mr. Collins posed another question regarding Georgia Brown School Readiness. He noted that implementation of Literatura activities was below target because of a lapse in staffing.

Mr. Wells explained that staffing turnover is an occasional and unavoidable challenge of many First 5 programs; First 5 staff is always actively engaged with Partner programs to help manage these transitions.

Commissioner Collins noted a math error. Evaluator Keifer will make the correction in the final copy.

Ms. Wendt confirmed that the Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee will reconvene. In the past this group has included Commissioners Gibson and Borenstein, and former Commissioner Kern.

Public Comment:

Sue Melvin, Community Action Partnership, was on the Beginnings Team. She expressed hope that its work continues.

VOTE: Commissioner Borenstein made a motion to approve the 2015 Outcome Evaluation with corrections noted and to proceed with new directions as discussed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murphy and passed unanimously.

ITEM 6 – Presentation/Approval: Talk. Read.Sing. Public Awareness Campaign

Outreach and Communications Officer Misty Livengood presented a proposal for a \$30,000 kick-off local public awareness campaign that reinforces and builds on the state-level Talk.Read.Sing. campaign.

• Paid TV/KSBY: 3mos. Air Rotation + Digital	= \$8,000.00
• Billboard(s): 1 Large/3 mos.	= \$7,250.00
• Bus Ads: 4 Queen-Sized, Curbside	= \$4,400.00
• Movie Theater Ads: 3 mos. Rotation (Galaxy Atascadero & NCM Arroyo Grande)	= \$4,450.00
• Blues Baseball: Sponsorship Package	= \$3,175.00
• Miscellaneous Marketing Materials	= \$2,725.00
	+
Total Investment	= \$30,000.00

Ms. Wendt clarified that the proposed Talk.Read.Sing. campaign would be funded with unallocated funds designated in 2011-15 Strategic Plan for Community Education and Coordination projects.

Commissioners expressed overall support for the proposal, and added several implementation suggestions. Examples included:

- Movie ads at additional theaters beyond Atascadero and Arroyo Grande (e.g. Sunset Drive-In)
- Include Talk Read Sing materials in DSS visiting rooms

- The cornerstones of the message campaign are well designed. Now the important work is in building the “ground game” – i.e. how can families/providers/community actively build a “talk-read-sing” tradition with our youngest children?

Questions posed included:

- How to measure? Ms. Livengood responded that developing evaluation metrics is part of start-up design. Commissioner Murphy suggested word use in children as a measure to consider.
- Are campaign materials available in English and Spanish? Ms. Livengood affirmed that many are.

Public Comment:

Sue Melvin, CAPSLO, praised the campaign. She also expressed concern about the current culture of disengagement that she observes in many parents in the era of cell phones.

Jan Bauder, Transitional kindergarten teacher at Cambria Grammar School observed that parents are hungry to do things with their kids

[Name undetermined] From CASA commented on the example of books in doctors’ offices. She suggested contacting publishers or others for donated books to build a supply in these types of settings.

VOTE: Commissioner Murphy moved to approve initial funding in the amount of \$30,000 for the first phase of First 5 San Luis Obispo County’s customized Talk.Read.Sing. Public Awareness Campaign. Commissioner Forester seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor. Motion passed.

ITEM 7 – Director’s Report

Executive Director Wendy Wendt updated the Commission on various projects and information regarding First 5 SLO County:

- QRIS Phase II Application has been submitted; budget totals \$1,880,848 over five years.
- Month of the Child planning is underway. Hands-on-Heroes nominations are due February 12.
- There is a full spring calendar of state-wide activities related to First 5, including F5 Association, Advocacy Day, QRIS state consortium and annual Water Cooler Conference
- First 5 SLO County has been featured in several publications around the state for its work on the Children’s Bill of Rights and *Raising of America* screenings.
- First 5 outreach calendar is filling up: we are involved with events such as Winter Wonderland in Atascadero, and Health for the Community hosted by Dignity Health.

Commissioner Collins expressed appreciation to the staff for their hard work.

Public Comment: NONE

ITEM 8 – Strategic Planning Discussion Continued

Planning New Programs

Mr. Wells presented a draft timeline for launching new program investment areas including in the 2016+ Strategic Plan (Home Visiting, Parent Peer Support/Education Groups, Developmental Screening and Referral).

Ongoing through Spring 2016	Assess needs
	Collect Data- Meetings with key stakeholders
Spring-Summer 2016	Develop plan for support and or new programming
Summer-Fall 2016	Seek consensus and approve plan
	RFP (if needed)
Oct & Dec 2016 Meetings	Approve Contracts
January 2017	Implement Programs

Advocacy

Ms. Wendt introduced the discussion with a “why/who/what/how” presentation on advocacy.

Commissioners contributed thoughts on the important/focus of advocacy in the context of First 5. First they addressed the question of “*why advocate*”?

- Programs are looking to us to be the voice for children. They can’t speak for themselves. It’s time for us to spread the word.
- It is about sphere of influence and control. Control is funding. Influence is the voice piece. If we don’t have money to invest in programs, then we can also be a voice piece. The ultimate legacy is that with the creation of First 5, the state and local communities took on early childhood and ran with it.
- There is a shift the paradigm and a broader understanding that investment in early childhood is a good “bang for the buck.”
- We can learn from the experience of public health: All major advances in health come about through social norm change.
- First 5 statewide has moved out of its infancy into a more mature role

“*What to advocate for?*” Commissioners offered the following input:

Commissioner Watt: Increase funding supports for early childhood.

Commissioner Collins: Poverty, including support for increase in minimum wage and other strategies to build families toward self-sufficiency.

Commissioner Murphy: Overall focus on social-emotional health/learning; Talk-Read-Sing is an example of advocacy-at-work.

Public Comment: Joel Diring, Diring and Associates. [Equitable access should be an embedded focus; every advocacy effort should align somewhere]

Commissioner Gibson: Some of our ideas are specific, some are global. Rely on the Commissioner work groups to help define/winnow down priorities for advocacy.

“Who is responsible for defining/prioritizing/conducting advocacy work?” Advocacy Committee? Contractors supporting pieces of advocacy work with staff? Staff? Some combination?

We need a written document of our policy platform. This then provides staff/Commissioners direction on what advocacy activities to pursue. We should not put in place an additional ad hoc committee.

Could we proposed that the County Policy Platform include language in alignment with First 5 policy goals?

Include contract language related to advocacy and First 5 core values.

Consider hosting a candidates’ forum on topics related to early childhood.

Concluding comments:

Commissioner Collins expressed enthusiasm for themes/approaches being put forward. First 5 does not rely on the Board of Supervisors or other entities. This gives us the ability to offer an independent voice.

Commissioner Gibson reminded that at some point First 5 will get push-back on an issue.

Commissioner Schiro urged against hiring contractors to conduct advocacy work. She suggested hiring or contracting out for other of staff’s administrative functions to free them up for more advocacy work.

Public Comment

Joel: Look at where First 5 can we have an impact locally, at the state, nationally. It is a good and comprehensive list

ITEM 9 – Adjournment: 6:30 p.m.