

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

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
May 22, 2019 (Approved June 26, 2019)

Current Commissioners Present

Bruce Gibson	SLO County Board of Supervisors
Penny Borenstein, M.D.	SLO County Public Health Department
James Brescia	SLO County Office of Education
Devin Drake	Department of Social Services
James Forester, DDS	Medical Representative (Central Coast Dental Society)
Mark Haas	Children's Services Network
Janet Murphy	Community at Large
Melinda Sokolowski	Child Care Planning Council
Bob Watt	Community at Large

Commissioners Absent/Excused -- None

Staff Present

Commission staff: Wendy Wendt, Jason Wells, Sarah Montes Reinhart
Commission Evaluator: Tom Keifer
Commission Counsel: Natalie Frye-Laacke

Call to Order

Chair Gibson called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

ITEM 1 –Chair Comments

Chair Gibson introduced First 5's newest staff member, Sarah Montes Reinhart, who will be serving as Special Projects Administrator on the MHSA 3 by 3 Project.

He noted the absence of Communications and Outreach Officer Misty Livengood, who is out of state for a family graduation.

He reminded all present of the upcoming Blues Baseball game on June 1st, with First 5 as the evening Foul Ball sponsor. Free tickets were distributed to all interested Commissioners.

ITEM 2 - Public Comment – Items not on the agenda

None

ITEM 3 – Commissioner Comments/Announcements

None

ITEM 4 - Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the March 27, 2019 Minutes
- b. Approval of the FY 2018-19 3rd Quarterly Financial Report

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Drake made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watt and passed unanimously.

ITEM 5 – Presentation: SLO County Child Care Planning Council Needs Assessment

Sally Rogow (CAPSLO Planning Department) and Shana Paulson (Child Care Resource Connection) presented a summary of the Child Care Needs Assessment recently published as part of the Local Child Care Planning Council’s mandate to “plan for child care and developmental services based on the needs of families in the local community.” The presentation touched on key issues related to accessibility, affordability, and quality within the local child care landscape, and highlighted significant challenges associated with local cost of living both contribute to making child care unaffordable for many families while at the same time squeezing potential child care professionals out of the pipeline due to a history of low wages. Ms. Rogow highlighted a survey designed and administered in partnership with Cal Poly that examined the experience of working parents’ need for childcare.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Sokolowski expressed concern about a notable decline in the early childhood educator workforce, which in turn is forcing centers to close classrooms due to unfilled teaching positions.

Commissioner Gibson commented on the complicated set of challenges associated with affordable childcare, and pointed to changes over the past 40 to 50 years where now two-parent working families is the norm, but “we haven’t adjusted our values around childcare to meet the new norm.”

Ms. Rogow pointed out that demographers are noting that more people are putting off having children, resulting in a declining birth rate combined with an aging workforce.

Ms. Paulson suggested that if we want to be a community that attracts working families, we need to include supports for them.

Executive Director Wendy Wendt quoted a recent Harvard Business School Journal article that articulates the paradox that demand for childcare is on a steep rise as supply is on a steep decline.

Commissioner Gibson concluded the discussion by emphasizing that “affordable housing” should be tied to working families, and should also be tied to “affordable childcare.”

ITEM 6 -- Presentation: The City of San Luis Obispo and Child Care

San Luis Obispo City Manager Derek Johnson and Assistant City Manager Shelley Stanwyk presented to the Commission on the City’s strong interest in studying and acting on its role to address affordable child-care for SLO City residents, employees and businesses. This focus is emanating in part from direction being given by the San Luis Obispo City Council to consider child care as it links to Major City Goals -- particularly Housing, Transportation, and Economic Development.

Mr. Johnson and Ms. Stanwyk both bring to the conversation background in childcare, having worked for many years in city parks and recreation departments. The City of San Luis Obispo provides Sun and Fun programs for 1,200 elementary school children every year. Currently the City is not directly in the business of providing program for children 0-5, but are interested in exploring how it can facilitate expanded opportunity for families in SLO.

Mr. Johnson intends to ask the City Council for a \$20,000 budget line item to fund a study that will help create a blueprint for the City’s work to facilitate increased childcare capacity in the future. They are looking to partner with First 5 and other organizations to develop this blueprint.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Watt encouraged city staff to survey city employees of their childcare needs. “Could the city provide its own employees with on-site childcare?”

Ms. Stanwyk clarified that in part the City is looking at a solution for all families in need of childcare [including but not limited to city employees].

Mr. Johnson offered one example – the City manages a network of parks; “could we build facilities in parks, for example?”

Commissioner Brescia commented that brick and mortar is not as much the challenge in our county as staffing, pointing out that there are vacant facilities in schools that can be accessed. The long-term end-game needs to be sustainable child care workforce.

Commissioner Gibson acknowledged that public agencies indeed have a role to play, but also wants to see the private sector to show their interest. He also encouraged the City to look for best practice examples in other cities and counties in California and around the country.

Sally Rogow (CAPSLO) reminded that more people work in San Luis Obispo than reside there. She encouraged the City to anticipate planning not just for residents but also for working parents.

First 5 intern Naomi Goldman commented on the importance of including consideration of playground design that is suitable for young children as part of city planning related to childcare.

Mr. Johnson reiterated his perspective and clarified the invitation to First 5 and other expert organizations: “how does the community come together and what can the City do to participate in problem solving?”

Commissioner Gibson asked for clarity on what \$20,000 City allocation referenced above will fund.

Yvette Sanches Fuentez (CAPSLO Division Director Children Youth and Family Services) articulated that the City’s invitation represents an important step forward, with room and time and funding for the important work of planning (“something we typically lack in this work”).

Commissioner Forester reiterated the importance of working toward competitive wages for early childhood professionals. He inquired if there are options for wage subsidies.

Commissioner Gibson expressed interest in inviting participation in this work by other cities as well. He also encouraged Commissioners join First 5 staff in determining who best to manage the execution of this study.

Mr. Johnson asked the Commission to confirm a willingness for First 5 and other partners to help the city study the issue.

ITEM 7 – Staff Reports

In Misty Livengood’s absence, Executive Director Wendt and Associate Director Wells presented updates on recent and upcoming activities at First 5, including information on the upcoming Child Care Town Hall scheduled for May 29, April/May/June Hands on Heroes, and Advocacy Day events in Sacramento.

Public Comment: None

ITEM 8 – Help Me Grow Planning Update

Associate Director Jason Wells presented on a staff recommendation to move forward on an RFP for a Help Me Grow Centralized Access Point. He reported on a field trip taken recently by First 5 staff, and several community partners to tour two operational Centralized Access Point models in Yolo County and Solano County, respectively. This trip, in addition to significant research on other models and nearly two years of discussion with local partners, has prepared First 5 SLO County to develop an RFP toward launch of a 5-year demonstration project, with an anticipated annual First 5 investment of up to \$200,000 and including additional financial support from county agencies, as well as a required match.

Public Comment:

Lisa Fraser, Executive Director, Center for Family Strengthening commented on her observations during the field trip. It gave the team an idea of how other counties work. Start-ups include hiccups. It was important to recognize that it's not an easy launch for them. Perhaps we can learn from their hiccups and avoid mistakes. The other part that was intriguing was the differences between the two – we visited two contiguous counties with two very different models. Solano model uses navigators much the way we use family advocates. She expressed one concern that once a Centralized Access point is established, it is likely to create additional need for services.

Shana Paulson, CAPSLO Child Care Resource Connection mentioned that she had talked with her counterparts in Solano County, who operate the Centralized Access Point there. She saw it as a helpful model because the Centralized Access Point is able to connect easily with local childcare providers.

Commissioner Borenstein suggested another possible future funding source from the state, through the Governor's proposed ACES training funding.

Commissioner Drake expressed his view that this type of model has ancillary benefits to focus on prevention (similar to home visiting programs).

Commissioner Brescia expresses is continued concern about sustainability piece. "If you're going to get partners, there needs to be more skin in the game."

Commissioner Gibson expressed hope in finding a partner with the capacity to ultimately come up with an even match. He directed staff to ensure that the RFP is tight, with important expectations for results and performance measures.

Commissioner Sokolowski suggested creating a match requirement that increases in increments over the life of the demonstration project.

Commissioners proposed including in the RFP an expectation to reach at least a 1:1 match by year three.

ITEM 9 – Strategic Planning Timeline

Mr. Wells and Ms. Wendt provided a brief update on timeline for strategic planning, to include in-depth evaluation of current investments, continued collective of population-level data, summer focus groups with community members, and fall planning workshops with Commissioners.

ITEM 10– Annual Strategic Plan Review: Long-Range Financial Plan (First Reading)

In the interest of time, Ms. Wendt invited Commissioners to contact staff prior to the June 26 meeting if they had any questions or suggested changes to the Long-Range Financial Plan.

Public Comment: None

ITEM 11 – FY 2019-20 Draft Administrative Budget

In the interest of time, Ms. Wendt invited Commissioners to contact staff prior to the June 26 meeting if they had any questions or suggested changes to the Long-Range Financial Plan.

Commissioner Watt clarified that planned tech upgrades are in fact incorporated into the administrative budget.

Public Comment: None

Bob: Make sure that tech upgrades are incorporated into the budget.

ITEM 12 – Executive Director Performance Review (CLOSED SESSION)

ITEM 13 - Adjourn

5:52 p.m.