

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

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
May 29, 2024 (APPROVED June 26, 2024)

Current Commissioners Present

James Brescia	SLO County Office of Education
Penny Borenstein	SLO County Public Health Department
Linda Belch	Department of Social Services
Patty Clarkson	Early Care and Education Child Care Planning Council
Dawn Ortiz-Legg	SLO County Board of Supervisors
James Tedford	Medical Representative (AAP Chapter 2)
Alison Ventura	Community at Large
Bob Watt	Community at Large

Commissioners Absent/Excused --

Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia Community at Large

Staff Present

Commission staff: Wendy Wendt, Jason Wells, Misty Livengood
Commission Counsel: Daniel Cheung

Call to Order

Chair Borenstein called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

ITEM 1 - Public Comment – Items not on the agenda

None.

ITEM 2 – Commissioner Comments/Announcements

Commissioners Borenstein and Ortiz-Legg commended Commissioner Belch on her new position as Director of Adult and Homeless Services at County Department of Social Services. She added a word of welcome anticipating Nancy Kuster as the new First 5 Commissioner (starting July 2024) who will represent DSS in her new role as DSS Director of Children and Youth Services.

Commissioner Brescia provided an update on Ticket to Teach, the ECE apprenticeship initiative based out of the County Office of Education. The program currently has 25 registered participants for early childhood education. 20 of those (80%) have moved on as new hires to

journey worker status which means their wages are higher. And 15 of those are new hires by partner employers such as the Trust Automation ECE Center.

Commissioner Clarkson updated that the Public Sector Collaborative Child Care Study team is finishing up a Facilities Assessment with Pendulum Dependent Care Solutions (principal Fran McIntyre).

Commissioner Borenstein commented on the Governor's May Revise Budget. She explained that as it stands, the budget has pretty destructive recommendations that would negatively impact County Public Health. For example, there are hits to CalWorks Home Visiting, a potential significant loss of future of Public Health funding that would reduce or eliminate elements of Health Equity and Health Promotion staffing and programs.

ITEM 3 - Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the March 27, 2024 Minutes
- b. Approval of the FY 2023-24 Third Quarterly Financial Report
- c. Approval of Evaluation Contract Amendment

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ventura and passed unanimously.

ITEM 4 – Staff Reports

Communications and Outreach Coordinator Misty Livengood provided the following updates:

- The Governor's May Budget Revise is disheartening in its proposed cuts to various investments in early childhood. First 5 Association asks are not included in the budget proposal (e.g. \$100 million First 5 Stabilization Fund, 0-5 Continuous Medi-Cal Eligibility). The Prenatal-3 Working Group proposal is currently in Committee.
- Month of the Child events in April were well-attended. First 5 attended and/or sponsored many of the events. Examples: Children's Day in the Plaza, San Miguel Dia Del Niño, Shandon Resource Fair, CAPSLO Mobile Health Unit launch)
- First 5 staff attended the SLO Thrive Home Visiting Collaborative Forum: "Improving Health Outcomes for Children and Adults Impacted by Poverty" with keynote speaker and facilitator Dr. Donna Beegle.
- Immigrant Resource Hub strategic planning through SLO County UndocuSupport is wrapping up (Ms. Livengood and Ms. Wendt have been engaged in the process). A draft proposal for implementation is anticipated for later this summer.
- Updates on South County Learning Pods and Help Me Grow "Play with Me" parent engagement.
- First 5 summer sponsorships include various community concerts-in-the-park series, and Blues Baseball.

First 5 Executive Director Wendy Wendt provided the following updates:

- Additional proposed state budget cuts to be aware of in the May Revise – CalWorks Home Visiting, child care supports.
- The County Public Health Department Community Health Improvement Plan is complete. Several objectives align with the First 5 Strategic Plan (e.g. all-ages SAFE System of Care, supports for new parents within the Mental Health/Substance Use priority area).
- The six-county Uplift Coalition anticipates rolling out up to \$14 million in funds to support equity initiatives related to regional economic health.
- Examples of other regional conversations that First 5 is a part of: County Department of Social Services community review session (in June), CenCal Steering Committee (Associate Director Jason Wells presented at the May meeting), Community Schools Planning/Implementation Grants in Paso Robles, San Miguel, Shandon school districts.
- Diringer and Associates will be launching a countywide assessment of immigrant populations, building off of the recent Mixteco Indigenous Community Survey. The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County is the core funder, with additional support already secured from MUST Charities and the Diversity Coalition. Ms. Wendt informed Commissioners that First 5 Advocacy funds in the amount of \$4,900 will be added to the funding portfolio for the Needs Assessment.
- Commissioner Watt's final meeting will be June 26. The Ad Hoc Nominating Committee will be interviewing candidates and forwarding a nominee for Commission confirmation at the June meeting.
- A search process for a new Special Projects Coordinator (last held by Kris Roudebush) will commence in the coming weeks.
- Ms. Wendt added gratitude and well wishes to Commissioner Belch on her final meeting of her tenure on the Commission.

Public Comment: None

ITEM 5 -- Program Contract Approvals: CAPSLO (Help Me Grow) and the LINK (Early Childhood Family Advocates)

Mr. Wells presented on this item. Two contracts are being recommended for Commissioner approval, each for two fiscal years. The CAPSLO Help Me Grow total two-year budget is for \$400,000. LINK Early Childhood Family Advocacy 2-year budget is \$200,000. The Help Me Grow scope is a continuation of objectives and services under the current contract. The LINK contract includes an updated scope of work that articulates integration of the Early Childhood Family Advocate within the county SAFE System of Care.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to approve the CAPSLO Help Me Grow Contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tedford and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to approve the LINK Early Childhood Family Advocate Contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ventura and passed 7:0 (Commissioner Watt recused).

Mr. Wells provided additional updates on other program investments slated for future development/review/approval. A total of approximately \$500,000 remains available to allocation to program investment in FY2024-25.

- SLO Chamber of Commerce Family Friendly Workplaces Program contract is pending. Staff is hoping to bring a contract draft for Commission Review/Approval at the June 26, 2024 meeting.
- Over summer 2024, Staff plans to develop and release Requests for Proposals in two priority areas of the new Strategic Plan: Parent/Child Groups (North County focus) and Early Care and Education.
- Ongoing discussion with SAFE System of Care collaborators is anticipated, with a potential strategic partnership to build on the LINK investment to help ensure SAFE service reach across all ages and regions of the county, including children prenatal to five and their families.
- Help Me Grow Steering Committee will be invited to form a subgroup to help First 5 determine appropriate mechanism to renew its investments in support for families with mild-moderate delays.

Commissioner Borenstein asked for clarification on the use of “strategic partnerships” vs. competitive bids for contracts, and in general First 5’s procurement policy. Ms. Wendt described the established policy’s funding levels and required approvals. Within the policy is also language articulating the option to propose a waiver of competition when the Executive Director determines it is “impracticable or impossible” to secure competition. For investments of over \$25,000, the waiver must first be approved by the Commission. Strategic Partnerships such as the SAFE System of Care in which a limited group of agencies has a longstanding partnership and First 5 has an opportunity to support the partnership’s work would potentially fall under this waiver of competition definition.

ITEM 6 – Review and Approve First 5 SLO County Strategic Plan 2024-28

Ms. Wendt provided a brief review of the 18-month strategic planning process that has led to the Strategic Plan draft. Community members, commissioners, staff, evaluation team members and a graphic designer contributed to the final product.

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg commended the clear attention to county-wide needs and investment plans, spread across the region.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to approve the 2024-28 Strategic Plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ventura and passed unanimously.

ITEM 7 – Strategic Plan Review: Long-Range Financial Plan (First Reading)

Ms. Wendt provided an overview of the annual Financial Plan update. Today is the first reading, with approval scheduled for June 2024.

She highlighted key revenue and expenditure assumptions across an eight-year time horizon (upcoming 4-year strategic plan plus one additional four-year cycle). She reminded the Commission of the continuing and anticipated future of Proposition 10 revenue decline, a reality which shapes the assumptions within the long-range plan draft.

Ms. Wendt reminded the Commission that the annual administrative budget and program allocations in the Administrative Budget (see Item 8) and anticipated program investment plans are built from the Long-Range Financial Plan.

Discussion:

Commissioner Brescia offered the following recommendations regarding the draft long-range financial plan, as well as Commission direction on fiscal and investment planning overall.

- Consider projecting out a maximum of 3 to 5 years.
- Use a more realistic Interest assumption. The current draft (1%) is much more conservative than the three-year Treasury Yield (between 3-4%).
- With direction/approval from the Commission, develop procurement/contracting policies that more assertively recognize revenue decline realities. One example would be to establish declining investment commitments that match Prop 10 revenue decline.
- Focus on funding partnerships vs. “buying tasks.” Ensure that First 5 funding is always part of a larger effort – e.g. matched/leveraged.

Commissioner Borenstein suggested consideration of contracting overall portfolio of funded projects, and also requiring funded partners to reapply for consideration.

Mr. Wells clarified that all contracts being developed or already approved for the next Strategic Planning period are a maximum of two-years with no guarantee of funding in the 3rd and 4th year of the next Planning period.

Ms. Wendt pointed out that the long-range plan does include tapering of program expenditures to match the anticipated decline of revenues. There is always a challenge between recognizing the need to contract investments and being responsive to emerging community needs with new investment programs.

Commissioner Brescia reminded Commissioners that it is the Commission’s responsibility to provide direction on long-term fiscal strategy. Ms. Wendt proposed creation of an ad hoc committee as a way to build capacity on the Commission for this work, with an assignment to develop and bring agenda topics/material to the Commission for deliberation and decision-making.

Legal counsel Daniel Cheung supported the creation of a subcommittee, and also clarified that legally the Commission is only bound by decisions on contracts and the annual budget.

Ms. Wendt will work with Commissioner Brescia and Commissioner Borenstein to further develop this work, and to potentially mobilize an ad-hoc committee.

Public Comment: None

ITEM 8 – FY 2024-25 Draft Administrative Budget

Ms. Wendt introduced the draft Administrative Budget for FY 2024-25 (total \$707,777). This is the first reading, and the final budget will be presented for Commission approval at its June 2024 meeting. The administrative budget is close to level-funded from the FY2023-24 year (\$704,063). She highlighted several updates:

- *Salary increases per Commission action May 2022 (3% merit based)*
- *Most other expense categories are level funded, with the exception of the following:*
 - *Memberships: Increases match increases in annual fees for Chambers and F5 Association*
 - *Professional Services: Decrease due to elimination of categories not utilized in prior year (e.g. bookkeeping)*
 - *Registration and Training: Reflects higher rates based on prior year expenses*
 - *Office Rent: 3% increase per lease agreement with Walter Brothers*
 - *Special Department Expense: Based on prior year cost increase for promotion*
 - *Travel Expenses: Increase to account for anticipated uptick in in-person meetings both in-county and to other regions*

Public Comment: None.

ITEM 9 – Presentation: Shared Services Alliance

Shana Paulson and Mariela Rodriguez from CAPSLO Child Care Resource Connection (CCRC) provided an update on the Shared Services Alliance, a pilot initiative funded through First 5 California. This two-year project (extended into a third year) focuses on helping local child care businesses to reinforce the “Iron Triangle” – 1) full enrollment, 2) full fee collections, and 3) Per-child costs covered by revenue. A cohort of local child care operators participate in a collaborative cohort. A majority have been in operation for four or more years. The participating businesses collectively serve a total of nearly 250 children. 48% of the children speak a language other than English in the home.

CAPSLO staff, outside consultants and participants work together on a range of capacity-building efforts. Examples include automated software, business coaching, access to affordable insurance, network building and peer support. A total of 82 business services events have been held on a topics ranging from marketing to bookkeeping to billing. Resources and events were available either in person and/or virtually.

CAPSLO staff were intentional about listening to the needs of participants and tailoring supports accordingly.

Ms. Wendt inquired “what now” as the First 5 CA funding sunsets June 30, 2024. Ms. Paulson responded that CCRC staff will continue to be a resource to providers in whatever way they can.

Ms. Paulson and Rodriguez emphasized the value of the pilot initiative to help providers make intentional business decisions and to recognize their value as professionals.

Public Comment: None.

ITEM 9 – Future Agenda Items

- FASD Presentation
- Fiscal Priorities/Sustainability (connected with creation of a possible fiscal priorities/sustainability committee)

Public Comment: None.

ITEM 10 – Adjourn at 5:15 p.m.