

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

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2023 (APPROVED December 6, 2023)

Current Commissioners Present

James Brescia, EdD (Chair)
Penny Borenstein, MD (Vice Chair)

SLO County Office of Education
SLO County Public Health Department

Linda Belch
Dawn Ortiz-Legg
Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia, EdD
Patty Clarkson, EdD
James Tedford, MD
Alison Ventura, PhD
Bob Watt

SLO County Dept. of Social Services
SLO County Board of Supervisors
Community at Large
Early Care & Ed Planning Council
Medical Representative (FAAP)
Community at Large
Community at Large

Commissioners Absent/Excused

None

Staff Present

First 5 Staff: Wendy Wendt, Jason Wells, Misty Livengood
Commission Counsel: Natalie Frye-Laacke

Call to Order

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

ITEM 1 – Commissioner Announcements and Updates

Commissioner Clarkson announced that the Early Care and Education Planning Council Annual Report is out in print.

Commissioner Tedford shared that two weeks ago the AAP Chapter 2 held a social in San Luis Obispo. There are 67 pediatricians represented in the county. Commissioner Tedford has been a member of AAP for 60 years. He conveyed how important it was that several First 5 staff and Commissioners attended the social.

Commissioner Ruvalcaba-Heredia announced the upcoming Dia de los Muertos celebration hosted by the Latino Outreach Council on October 29 at Mission Plaza.

Commissioner Borenstein distributed copies of the new Community Health Assessment brochure, and encouraged Commissioners to visit the SLO Health Counts website.

ITEM 2 - Public Comment – Items not on the agenda

Marilu Gomez, family advocate with the Paso Robles School District, partners with the LINK. She provided an update on her work with young children 0-5. She bases her mornings at Marie Bauer, and afternoons across from Georgia Brown. She works with parents, connects with services. Tuesdays is the Literatura reading hour. She has a weekly Wednesday Facebook live Talk.Read.Sing. bilingual story time. There is a plan to add an additional live reading hour at Marie Bauer. She expressed strong support for early learning and literacy as part of the First 5 strategic plan, and also parent engagement as a priority area.

ITEM 3 (ACTION ITEM) - Consent Agenda

- a. Approve September 27, 2023 minutes
- b. Approve Q1 23-24 Financial Report

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Watt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tedford and passed 7-0 (Commissioners Ortiz-Legg and Ventura arrived after the vote).

ITEM 4: Staff Reports

Misty Livengood, Communications and Outreach Officer, provided an update on the following activities:

- 25 years of First 5.
- Advocacy Day coming up in Feb 2024
- Child Care Expansion Grants
- Cougar Social Hour Oct. 18 at Cuesta College – Main and North County campuses
- Release of Indigenous Enumeration Study
- Health Access Training Project – over 100 attendees at the October 5 Immigrant Resilience Forum
- First 5 Sponsorships: Central Coast Childbirth Network Expo; Milk Donor Drive
- Pictures and summary of activities at South County Youth Coalition Parent Pods

Wendy Wendt, Executive Director, reported on the following:

- Trip to Fresno (October 19-20)
 - Participated in regional Community Health Worker Discussion (also attended by Angel Ranger from Center for Family Strengthening/Promotores Collaborative)
 - Presented on local First 5 activities at First 5 CA Commission Meeting
 - Attended First 5 Association Board Meeting

Public Comment: None

ITEM 5 (ACTION ITEM): Commission Review, Accept FY2022-23 Annual External Audit

Ms. Wendt introduced this item. First 5 SLO County has contracted for a fourth year with Moss Levy Hartzheim (MLH). A three-person team from MLH was on-site at First 5 for 1 ½ days. Firm partner Alex Hom attended the Commission meeting to make a brief report and answer questions. Ms. Wendt shared that the audit included no compliance findings and no internal controls findings. She briefly summarized the agency's financial position at the end of FY 2022-23.

Mr. Hom concurred with Ms. Wendt's summary, and commented that the audit process was straightforward and clean. He commended Ms. Wendt and her staff for their thoroughness, helpfulness and overall accuracy.

No Discussion.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to accept the External Audit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Borenstein. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 6 (ACTION ITEM): Commission Review and Approval of FY2022-23 Annual Report to First 5 California

Compliance exercise every year. Wendy does financials, Jason does program data.

Comment on duplication issue – duplicate sliding scale.

AR-1 is Revenue/Expenditure Section

AR-2 is Demographic Worksheet

AR-3 is County Evaluation Summary plus County Highlights

Note: Typo in Demographic Worksheet that was sent out over the weekend. Jason showed the correction.

Mr. Wells outlined programmatic and fiscal data to be submitted to First 5 CA by October 31, 2023 in compliance with state Annual Report requirements, and in alignment with the annual audit report. He emphasized that the report exercise gives us a chance to celebrate the work of the staff, families, children in our community. In addition, our numbers contribute to a state report, part of telling a statewide story.

He noted that the annual report information contributed to First 5 CA through this process is somewhat distinct from the evaluation work being performed by the local consultant team (Becca Carsel et al).

Mr. Wells also summarized the County Highlights narrative submitted to First 5 CA as part of the report. Topics include the disaster relief funding related to flooding and storm damage, Health Access Training Project workshops on trauma-informed care, home visiting lunch-and-learns, the Pediatric Town Hall, and the Family Friendly Workplaces program.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Borenstein made a motion to approve First 5 SLO County's FY2022-23 State Annual Report submission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watt and passed unanimously.

ITEM 7: Pendulum Dependent Care Solutions – Approval of Contract Amendment

Executive Director Wendy Wendt and Patty Clarkson introduced this item. This contract is part of the multi-year Public Sector Collaborative Child Care Study, and extends the work of Pendulum Dependent Care Solutions and its principal, Fran McIntyre, to include a facilities feasibility assessment for potential joint-venture child care center/s to serve public sector employees. Ms. McIntyre's assessment will include financial modeling and a footprint to take to the participating agencies to decide where resources are most needed.

The four agencies – County of San Luis Obispo, City of San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly and San Luis Coastal Unified School District – originally directed a total of \$80,000 to First 5 to administer study activities. To date, \$50,000 of this amount has been expended through previous contracts, including \$21,500 to Pendulum Dependent Care Solutions for a four-agency employee survey and analysis. The action recommended today is to amend the contract by \$30,000 in conjunction with the facility feasibility assessment.

Ms. McIntyre introduced herself and expressed anticipation to continue the work with the collaborative partners and First 5. She is working on a similar project with CSU Channel Islands.

Discussion:

Commissioner Belch asked for clarification re: the scope – is architectural conceptual design a subcontract inside Fran's contract? Answer – as needed.

Commissioner Watt -- What is leadership's commitment? What other communities are involved. Answer: All partners listed above are very committed. For now these are the only communities involved in this specific project, though it serves as an example for others.

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg commented that the overall landscape has changed, the need is up and budgets are down. She encouraged consideration of creative use of existing resources other than money. For example, is it possible for public agencies to donate land?

Public Comment: NONE

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg made a motion to approve a Contract Amendment with Pendulum Dependent Care Solutions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ventura and passed unanimously. (Clarkson abstained)

ITEM 8: Strategic Planning Discussion: Resource Allocation Part 1

Ms. Wendt introduced this item, including a review of the planning timeline and progress to date. She thanked the Strategic Planning Working Group for their involvement and leadership. She reminded Commissioners of the critical budgeting timeframe for First 5 funded organizations. Following presentation and discussion, staff seeks Commission direction regarding the possibility of moving forward on a first round of proposed continuing investments as aligned with the First 5 Theory of Change, and related strategic planning priorities/ goals/outcomes that were established in prior meetings.

Associate Director Jason Wells presented a proposed three-category slate of program investments for consideration within the next strategic plan: 1) to continue; 2) to table pending additional research/future discussion and 3) to sunset. He emphasized that this work takes into account the realities of declining tobacco tax revenue statewide, coupled the obligation to take a fresh look at all current investments in the context of the new strategic plan framework. Ms. Wendt added that the long range financial plan includes a \$200,000 annual drop in program revenue available for contracts compared to the current strategic plan.

Discussion:

Commissioner Borenstein commented that level funding is effectively declining funding for individual programs in the face of inflation and rising personnel costs.

Commissioner Brescia reminded of the importance of decision making that accounts for equity, leveraging of other funds, and sustainability.

Commissioners Watt and Borenstein commented that sustainability and leveraging are more feasible for some programs than for others.

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg concurred that it is good to keep sustainability in mind and to focus on results – what are First 5 funded partners achieving/accomplishing?

Mr. Wells pointed out that there is a shift in thinking within philanthropy and First 5s statewide from “funding a service” to “investing in an organization” or “investing in systemic change.”

Commissioners Ortiz-Legg and Tedford had questions regarding the specific contributions/value of several current funded programs.

Commissioner Brescia requested more information from staff and the Committee before engaging in further deliberation – including program summaries, description of First 5 funding as a portion of other investments in current programs.

Commissioner Ruvalcaba Heredia added a request for statistics on populations reached by programs with First 5 funding.

Commissioner Ventura requested that Commissioners have on hand detail on the established goals/outcomes as related to proposed program investments.

Ms. Wendt and Mr. Wells expressed appreciation for the request for more detailed information, and pledged to provide materials in advance of the December meeting.

Ms. Wendt presented the draft “Guiding Values” document for Commissioner review and consensus. No changes or edits were proposed.

Public Comment:

Marilyn Gomez, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District, emphasized the importance of preschool access for families with income eligibility challenges.

Lisa Fraser, Center for Family Strengthening/LINK, requested the Commission be mindful of North County where family support services are particularly needed. Currently First 5 helps fund 1.5 family advocates who focus on early childhood. What would be the plan to fund that north-county family advocate if LINK funding sunsets? Parent Connection is working with HMG north county site to provide parent education (Similar to South County Youth Coalition). She appreciates the robust conversation.

ITEM 9: Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Brescia reiterated staff direction to bring back to the Commission prior to the December meeting more detailed description of the organizations and programs being proposed, information related to leveraging and sustainability, and information on who is receiving services and where in the county.

ITEM 10: Adjourn
(5:20 p.m.)