



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

June 27, 2019

Commissioners Present: Dr. Michael Gollub, Stan Mantooth, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Dr. Carola Oliva-Olson, Bruce Stenslie, Barry Zimmerman

Excused Absence: Dr. Robert Levin, Kelly Long, Dr. Cesar Morales

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Lauren Arzu, Heather Davidson, Fahim Farag, Jimena Hernandez, Jennifer Johnson, Elizabeth Majestic, Nani Oesterle

Public Present: Cyntia Andres, Sharon Elmensdorp, Heather Garcia, Hilcia Garcia, Lilia Gurrola, Salene Halez, Andrew Huizar, Frances Kurowski, Erik Sternad, Danielle Thomas, Arledy Trejo, Alicia Villicana, Samantha Wilson

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marquez-O'Neill opened the meeting at 1:02 and shared quotes from Kelly Juban regarding kindness.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 23, 2019 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Gollub to approve the minutes from the May 23, 2019 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Petra Puls provided an overview of the supplemental packet, noting additional items include presentation handouts for agenda items 6 and 9 as well as the Report from Commission Staff, item 10.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mantooth, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County Financial Reports as of April 30, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Gollub, seconded by Commissioner Mantooth, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. Review of First 5 Ventura County FY 2015-2020 Strategic Plan in compliance with Health and Safety Code Section 130140

Chair Marquez-O'Neill introduced Petra Puls to provide a comprehensive review of the current strategies, investments, and outcomes. Petra noted she will be referencing the 2015-20 Strategic Plan and the accompanying presentation, and that F5VC is required by statute to review the Strategic Plan annually to determine if any updates are necessary. She noted that F5VC is charged with administering Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in Ventura County. More than \$195 million has been invested locally over the past 20 years with the goal of addressing gaps in services and building a system of care for children and families. The cornerstone of F5VC's investment is the nationally recognized Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs) initiative. She noted additional countywide services, including oral health prevention and treatment, developmental screenings, services for Mixteco families, preschool spaces and quality enhancements, and 2-1-1, are layered on top of NfLs. Over the years investments in some initiatives, such as preschool, have shifted as sustainable state funding has been secured for local programs.

Petra summarized the data analysis and review that informed the current Strategic Plan and restated the goals identified at that time: engage parents and community, focus on prevention, leverage resources, support sustainable investments, and minimize administrative costs. She added the data analysis also identified that significant challenges still exist, such as poverty, lack of access to preschool or child care, third grade reading level proficiency, and rates of reported neglect or abuse among the infant/toddler population. She noted that F5VC guiding principles, listed on page 6 of the plan, drive all programmatic decisions and strategic investments, such as prioritizing strong community engagement and shifting to upstream investments to increase impact and reduce need for more costly interventions later on, investing where resources do not elsewhere exist, and leveraging resources whenever possible. Petra recapped F5VC's strategic priorities: children are healthy; children enter school ready to learn; parents have the knowledge and resources they need; and communities are engaged in supporting and prioritizing children. The Strategic Plan recognizes the need for collaboration with countywide partners to achieve such outcomes.

Petra reported on strategic investments of \$11 million in years 1-3 of the Strategic Plan and the change in funding levels to \$6.5 million in years 4 and 5 due to the planned depletion of the Sustainability Fund. She added \$5.3 million is allocated annually for Fiscal Years 2021-26 in the F5VC long-range financial plan, which falls outside of the current Strategic Plan. Petra noted the Strategic Plan called for a shift in investments to maintain outcomes for children and families and highlighted the work of the

Commission to achieve this objective. She detailed examples of changes in investments to emphasize capacity building and systems change rather than direct services, such as maintaining investments in preschool while working to secure sustainable state funding, and supporting providers and partners to conduct developmental screenings rather than directly funding screenings. F5VC also works with partners to secure other funding sources to support programs throughout the County. She added investments in the NfL system will change from the current nearly \$7 million to \$2.9 million annually in Fiscal Years 2019-21.

Petra summarized Commission actions over the prior year to ensure children and families will be best served moving forward, including determining strategic priorities, allocations, and services for Fiscal Years 2019-21, adopting a new NfL implementation model and allocation formula, selecting a new implementation partner, engaging in key transition activities such as change management training for funded partner and internal staff, dedicated public outreach efforts, developing a standardized PACT Pilot program and new preschool implementation model, and selecting a new preschool scholarship program contractor. F5VC also accomplished various capacity and systems change efforts such as developing donation and advocacy policies, implementing a parent leader network, and participating in national efforts such as CSSP's EC-LINC and the Pritzker Children's Initiative.

Petra detailed evaluation framework and outcomes on pages 14 and 15, and noted the need to redesign the framework as we shift investments. Petra introduced Elizabeth Majestic to present the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT) framework and how it might be applied locally. Elizabeth noted Ventura County is one of 29 communities receiving funding from the Pritzker Family Foundation to be part of a national early childhood collaborative and added 40 states have applied for and received funding to implement NCIT framework. She provided an overview of the outcomes framework and noted the overall focus is on equity to ensure more children are on track to be ready for Kindergarten. She noted outcomes fall into three general focus areas: healthy beginnings, supported families, and high-quality care and learning, and added indicators for outcomes have been identified. She added F5VC is using the corresponding data guidebook to evaluate each indicator for inclusion in F5VC evaluation criteria. She also detailed the prenatal-three foundational systems - data systems, coordinated planning and financing, political will and engagement, continuous quality improvement, intake and referral, and a well-trained workforce - which together work to achieve specific outcomes for children and families. Elizabeth concluded this framework provides a good foundation to build out evaluation criteria moving forward which can be applied for years to come.

Petra thanked Elizabeth and noted the current strategic plan goes through 2020 but implementation of the plan lags one year behind, with efforts implemented under the current plan continuing through 2021. Petra reported that no changes or updates to the 2015-20 Strategic Plan are advised at this time. She added a new Strategic Plan needs to be developed in Fiscal Year 2019-20 for implementation in 2021 and invited Commissioners to provide feedback to guide that process which will commence in fall 2019.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted frameworks should be research based but we still have to enhance and adapt it to include all prior F5VC efforts and learnings to reflect local needs and priorities. Elizabeth confirmed F5VC will adopt and adapt any framework to tailor it to local programs and noted many indicators will be tailored to specific local characteristics.

Commissioner Mantooth noted that necessity is forcing First 5's statewide to refine and target our approach and thanked F5VC for capitalizing on this opportunity to build deeper partnerships and increase collaborative efforts.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson advised as research shows the first three years are a foundation for all healthy development, upstream investments should be focused on the prenatal to age three population.

7. Recommendation to rollover grant funding for the Pay for Success Preschool Feasibility Study Project

Petra Puls reported F5VC received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to implement a Pay For Success (PFS) feasibility pilot study, in partnership with the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE), for the past two years to determine if such a model would be viable for local preschool investments. She noted the grant contract is scheduled to conclude as of June 30, 2019 but due to contracting delays there are \$105,000 in unspent funds. The DOE has granted an extension which would allow additional time to fully carry out the scope of work and research alternative PFS models. Petra stated that as there is not budget authority for Fiscal Year 2019-20 this recommendation is to rollover up to \$105,000 from Fiscal Year 2018-19 to 2019-20, noting a revised budget is included for reference. She added as these funds were budgeted in Fiscal Year 2018-19 but not expended, no new allocation is needed.

Commissioner Mantooth asked if without an extension the \$105,000 would revert to the DOE, Petra confirmed. Commissioner Mantooth asked about the viability of a PFS model in a public school system and if grant funds can be used for other purposes. Petra noted we are required to use grant funds for this study and while it is unlikely our current preschool investments would be viable for a PFS model in public school systems, additional time would allow F5VC and VCOE to evaluate data shortcomings and research alternatives for PFS viability moving forward, such as part-day vs full-day preschool. She added F5VC and VCOE will also work with funded partners to further develop alternative models.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson asked if data collection efforts will be impacted by the new student ID number system. Petra noted while new state leadership has allocated funding for a comprehensive data system to track outcomes from pre-k through university, further details are unknown. Commissioner Mantooth added the proposed \$10 million allocation would not be sufficient for building such a system and noted the state is looking at Ventura County's efforts to implement preschool identification for tracking. Petra noted while many districts in the County issue student IDs there are limitations to tracking children who are enrolled in non-district preschools such as Head Start or children who transfer school districts. She added the PFS pilot looked at data from the Oxnard School District and looking at data from other districts may help determine if similar challenges exist.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mantooth, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to rollover up to \$105,000 in grant funds from Fiscal Year 2018-19 to Fiscal Year 2019-20 to complete the Pay for Success preschool feasibility study. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Recommendation to Increase Fiscal Year 2019-21 Contract with Child Development Resources, Inc. for the Preschool Scholarship Program

Nani Oesterle noted this recommendation is for two modifications to the preschool scholarship program previously approved by the Commission: increasing the maximum scholarship amount per child, and expanding the areas where scholarships are offered. Nani summarized prior Commission actions to approve contracting with Child Development Resources, Inc. (CDR) for implementation of a scholarship program in Moorpark, Ojai Valley, and Simi Valley for Fiscal Year 2019-21, as well as continuing to contract with preschool providers. She noted one preschool program in Port Hueneme is not receiving continued First 5 funding for 40 preschool spaces. F5VC staff have contacted CDR and confirmed they have capacity to administer an additional 40 scholarships in that community.

Nani reported preschool scholarships for Fiscal Year 2019-20 are currently budgeted at \$120 per month per family, with costs per family projected at \$500-\$600 for a five day program. F5VC staff are recommending to increase the maximum scholarship amount to \$240/month per family as funds are available in the total allocation for preschool initiatives. Nani concluded this recommendation is to increase the maximum scholarship amount per child and to update the areas where scholarships are offered, which will increase the total contract with CDR by \$251,950 per year for a total contract amount not to exceed \$800,000 for Fiscal Year 2019-21. She added no new allocation of funds is required as funds are available within the total preschool initiative allocation.

Commissioner Mantooth asked if most scholarships issued are at maximum amount. Nani noted it is hard to project as implementation is not yet underway and F5VC/CDR are unsure if families will seek five day programs or two/three day per week programs. She added we are prioritizing families with lower income levels who do not qualify for CSPP funded programs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, seconded by Commissioner Zimmerman, to authorize the Executive Director to increase the Fiscal Year 2019-21 contract with Child Development Resources, Inc. by \$251,950 per year for two years to provide scholarships for families in Port Hueneme/South Oxnard and to adjust the per-child scholarship amount, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$800,000 for July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Update and Discussion of Implementing Fiscal Year 2019-21 Strategic Investments

Elizabeth Majestic noted this update will focus on implementation progress and workforce development strategies. She acknowledged Interface staff present and asked each to introduce themselves. Elizabeth detailed the 13 secured locations throughout the County and noted negotiations are almost complete for a 14th location. She also summarized outreach and orientation strategies for families and partners, including open houses planned at each location when facilities open and orientation days for local families. Classes will begin in most locations on August 28 with classes offered two days per week at each location.

Elizabeth outlined communication strategies and efforts, noting all communications will be bilingual and multi-platform, and detailed how messaging will be tailored to printed and digital platforms. She added a new landing page will be on the ICFS website to make sure families are familiar with ICFS and F5VC, and that regular communications with partners will also be a priority to maintain and expand

relationships. She concluded her update on communications by presenting the new F5VC/ICFS NfL logo, variations, and branding guidelines.

Elizabeth outlined parent engagement strategies, including parent transition teams and new community building opportunities. She also shared feedback from recent CSSP/Pritzker meetings where F5VC was highlighted for parent engagement strategy efforts. Commissioner Mantooth noted VCOE is tasked with parent engagement and commended F5VC for starting to build a culture of engagement which will help local educators moving forward.

Elizabeth also updated the Commission on workforce development efforts to date and positions still being recruited for, noting over 66% of NfL staff are bilingual. Historically workforce development strategies were independently developed within NfLs, which created difficulty in evaluation. Moving forward workforce development strategies will be developed by F5VC and operationalized by ICFS. She noted all workforce development efforts will seek to ensure the competence and confidence of PACT teachers. Core competency strategies will be categorized as either group-based learning or coaching-based professional development, with F5VC staff promoting competencies specifically for working with 0-3 populations. Elizabeth concluded there will be ongoing knowledge and capacity assessments to drive professional development and continuous quality improvement. She introduced Heather Davidson to provide updates on training plans and core competency development.

Heather defined cross-sector core competencies as the essential knowledge, skills, and attitude needed for any professional working with young children. She noted development of such core competencies will ensure teacher effectiveness and summarized specific critical competencies which have been identified for infant-toddler professionals who work in a group setting. Heather provided an outline of the competency based training plan for PACT teachers and NfL staff, which is grounded in the areas of program implementation, early childhood development, family support, and parent education. She concluded her update with an outline of upcoming trainings to develop core competencies for NfL staff.

Elizabeth thanked Heather and noted parent feedback is also driving PACT training and lesson plans, such as emphasizing diversity and working to eliminate racial stereotypes. She added evaluation metrics being developed should be presented to the Commission in October 2019.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson thanked F5VC and ICFS staff for the dedication and level of forethought. She advised staff to look a recent resources from the NAEYC for working with families and noted the grant CSU received from the CDE is for anyone working with parents, not just teachers or professionals.

Commissioner Gollub asked for more information about trauma informed practices. Heather noted is an approach based on the awareness of how traumatic experiences impact development and how to engage and work with children who have experienced or are showing signs of trauma.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill asked if ACEs screenings will be used. Elizabeth noted F5VC is following AAP recommended screenings; and mentioned that coaching efforts for PACT teachers will be led by Jimena Hernandez. F5VC staff will report back to the Commission on implementation progress. Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted padlet.com may be a useful resource for F5VC/ICFS.

Petra thanked the commissioners for the feedback and added F5VC is meeting with VCPH and other stakeholders to advance ACEs work, including advocating for available state funds. She added Dr. Sharon Elmensdorp will be joining F5VC as of July 1, 2019 to support Help Me Grow efforts.

Elizabeth noted that programs and services can be adapted to meet the needs of participants. Heather added while we are using the Parents as Teachers template we will modify it to specific classroom dynamics.

Erik Sternad noted ICFS is proud to be launching NfL services on July 1 and commended F5VC staff and leadership for their dedication and hard work over the past few months. He added ICFS is looking forward to being able to reach much more of the at risk youth population to provide supports before more costly interventions are necessary. Erik concluded ICFS staff is working to take lessons learned over the past 20 years and reimagine how best to serve local children and families, with continued feedback from parents informing program modifications.

Commissioner Mantooth noted ICFS seems a very appropriate partner and he appreciates starting to see the outcomes of all these efforts. Commissioner Gollub added that he feels reassured about the transition to a single countywide contractor and that we will continue to serve local children and families as best we can.

10. Report from Executive Director

Petra Puls provided highlights from the June written report, noting the Fiscal Year 2019-20 budget, as approved by the Commission, has been officially adopted after review by the Board of Supervisors and Community Commission of Ventura County. She reported contracts for 11 programs have been issued, as well as contract extensions to accommodate requests for close-out funds for 4 funded partners.

Petra reported Help Me Grow continues to be a state and national leader, noting Dr. Sharon Elmensdorp and Heather Davidson recently presented on behalf of Ventura County to the American Academy of Pediatrics, chapter 2, as well as training local health educators on topics such as ASQ and PEDS to increase capacity of partners throughout the county.

Petra noted F5VC signed a letter of support for SB 142, which supports additional lactation accommodations in the workplace, and directed the Commissioners to review the enclosed copy. She also detailed continued early literacy efforts such as Storytime at The Collection in Oxnard. F5VC partners with the Oxnard library to encourage kids to sign up for their first library card, which has resulted in almost 80 new children signing up and over 13,000 books checked out by 0-5 year olds.

Petra noted the local Funders Forum recently received a PFS presentation by F5VC and ICFS, adding local funders seem excited to learn more about this model. She detailed local efforts from F5VC to ensure an accurate census count, adding the citizenship question seems likely to be excluded. Petra concluded her report outlining key investments for early childhood in the recently approved state budget and noted a press release from F5CA is included for reference.

11. Commission Member Comments

Chair Marquez-O'Neill invited all to attend MICOP's annual festival on June 30 in Oxnard Plaza Park.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson announced that the state budget also included \$5 million for CSUCI to start its early childhood lab school, and will be excited to report back.

Commissioner Mantooth noted the state budget focuses on special education funding and includes a commitment of funding for every preschool student with an IEP.

12. Next Meeting

Thursday, July 18, 2019, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44 pm.