



**COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES**

March 19, 2020

Commissioners Present: Dr. Michael Gollub, Kelly Long, Stan Mantooth, Barbara Marquez-O’Neill, Dr. Cesar Morales, Dr. Carola Oliva-Olson, Bruce Stenslie

Excused Absence: Dr. Robert Levin, Barry Zimmerman

Staff Present: Petra Puls, John Anderson, Lauren Arzu, Heather Davidson, Dr. Sharon Elmensdorp, Fahim Farag, Teresa Gutierrez, Jimena Hernandez, Jennifer Johnson, Elizabeth Majestic, Sam McCoy, Nani Oesterle

Public Present: Carizma Chapman, Heather Garcia, Irene Gomez, Lilia Gurrola, Elizabeth Hardin, Erik Sternad, Noemi Valdes

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions – Chair Marquez-O’Neill

Chair Marquez-O’Neill opened the meeting at 1:02 pm and shared a quote.

2. Approval of Minutes from January 16, 2020 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to approve the minutes from the January 16, 2020 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Petra Puls provided an overview of items in the supplemental packet, noting materials were sent via email and include the revised agenda, materials for strategic planning items 9a and 9bii, and the Report from Commission Staff with attachments.

A motion was made by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, seconded by Commissioner Mantooth, 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 January 31, 2020**
6. **Ratification of Committees**

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

REGULAR AGENDA

7. **Recommendation to Ratify the Decision to Maintain Current First 5 California IMPACT 2020 Contracting Model**

Petra Puls provided a historical overview of the contracting model for First 5 California (F5CA) IMPACT funding and local implementation efforts to ensure quality rating and improvement efforts in preschool. She noted for 2020 the California Department of Education (CDE) and F5CA are unifying their application process to allow for better integration and implementation, which has long been a priority for F5VC. Each funding stream will retain specific program and fiscal requirements and targets, with F5CA priorities supporting whole child development and alternative sites that have not previously participated in QRIS efforts. Petra detailed prior F5VC high quality early education initiatives, noting QRIS was implemented by VCOE with F5VC serving as a pass through entity for IMPACT funding prior to 2017. At that time the F5VC Commission approved VCOE contracting directly with F5CA to continue IMPACT program implementation.

Petra noted for the 2020 application First 5 Commissions have a right of first refusal, and F5VC and funded partners feel there is no value added if F5VC serves as a pass through entity. As such, staff are recommending F5VC to exercise our right of first refusal and allow VCOE to apply directly for 2020 IMPACT funding and continue leading local QRIS efforts.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to continue the streamlined IMPACT contracting model and allow the Ventura County Office of Education, the county's QRIS key implementation partner to receive First 5 California IMPACT 2020 funding directly. The motion passed with Commissioner Mantooth abstaining.

8. **Report of Committees**
 - a. **Administration and Finance**

- i. **Recommendation to select CPA firm to perform auditing services, beginning with the 2019-20 fiscal year**

Jennifer reported F5VC is required by statute to conduct an annual audit, as well as a single audit if federal expenditures exceed over \$750,000 in a fiscal year. She noted the last RFP for audit services was in 2014 and gave an overview of the 2020 RFP and review committee process. Four proposals were received, with two deemed viable by the review committee due to factors such as review committee score, completeness of proposal, experience, and cost. The review committee favored Brown Armstrong, CPAs

due to their substantial experience auditing similar independent First 5s. This recommendation was presented to the Administration and Finance Committee and the committee concurs to recommend to select Brown Armstrong for an engagement of up to 5 years, subject to annual renewal, with costs of \$18,120 per year with an additional \$2,270 annually if a single audit is required. These costs are slightly less than the current auditors are charging and no annual increase is projected.

Commissioner Stenslie thanked staff for the comprehensive presentation and noted the committee considered the new model and experience of this firm and is comfortable with the recommendation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Oliva-Olson, to select Brown Armstrong, Certified Public Accountants, as the vendor to perform financial and compliance auditing services in accordance with Health and Safety Code, Section 130150, for an engagement of up to five years, subject to annual renewal, for fiscal years ending June 30, 2020 through June 30, 2024, with costs as follows: \$18,120 per year for the financial and compliance audit; and, \$2,270 per year for the Single Audit, if required to be conducted based on the level of Federal expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Progress Report

Jennifer reported that at the most recent meeting, the Committee conducted the annual investment review to determine how to invest funds beyond one-year of operating revenue. The committee determined market rates do not support longer term investments in securities given when F5VC needs to access funds. Jennifer noted the county pool and LAIF are performing similarly, and reported recent and current interest rate earnings. The committee recommends to maintain funds in the County investment pool for Fiscal Year 2020-21, as rates are similar and it is most efficient course of action. No formal action is required.

Jennifer concluded her report noting the committee recently completed the quarterly review of F5VC financial reports and will next work on the Fiscal Year 2020-21 budgets, which will be presented to the Commission in May.

9. Strategic Planning

Petra summarized recent Commission decisions to extend the current Strategic Plan by two years to allow recent investment models to be properly implemented, and recapped recent benchmarks achieved by the Commission. She asked Jennifer Johnson to present the proposed update to the Fiscal Year 2016-26 financial plan.

a. Review, Discussion and Approval of Financial Plan FY 2016-26 and of Spending Levels for Strategic Plan Extension Period FY 2021-23

Jennifer reported that the Administration and Finance Committee reviewed spending levels to determine if an annual \$5.3 million spending level for local investments is sustainable for Fiscal Year 2021-23. Updates include audited actuals from Fiscal Year 2018-19, Fiscal Year 2019-20 funds released that were allocated to contract close-out activities but not utilized, and updated Proposition 10 distribution projections. With this information, staff prepared five scenarios that were presented to the committee, with various levels of decreased revenue from Proposition 10 distributions. She noted the proposed scenario maintains a \$5.3 million annual local investment level, as well as six months of emergency

capital and a 20% (\$1 million) safety net. Jennifer noted this scenario uses an 8% overall projected rate of decline in revenues for Fiscal Year 2019-20. This rate was calculated from the month-over-month 25% decline in Proposition 10 revenues from Q1 offset by \$1.4 million received from Proposition 56 backfills. The proposed plan uses a 4% forecasted rate of decline for Fiscal Year 2021-26, which staff will monitor closely and update as needed. Jennifer noted that, with these conservative estimates for Proposition 10 revenues, there is an excess of just over \$2.2 million at the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2025-26 while a \$5.3 million annual local investment allocation is maintained. She added that if an 8% decline is realized, a spending level of \$4.8 million in Fiscal Year 2023-24 would be achievable without utilizing other funding sources or reserves.

Jennifer reported on Proposition 10 distribution updates, noting a summary is enclosed in the Report from Commission Staff. To date, \$1.75 million in local Proposition 10 distributions have been received through November 2019, in addition to the \$1.4 million from the Proposition 10 backfill received in January. Jennifer provided updates from recent CDTFA/F5CA efforts to get more information on variances in recent distributions. Variances were due to decreases in stamped sales and funds withheld by CDTFA for precautionary reasons, which total \$9 million statewide. Jennifer provided a summary of the distribution plan and amounts, noting amounts may vary when county allocations from the state's pro-rata (indirect) for general administrative services, which has not been deducted since Fiscal Year 2016-17, are calculated. CDTFA also last billed for monthly costs in July 2019. County share of pro-rata amounts owed, and CDTFA costs, will be reflected in December revenue distributions. As exact amounts are unknown, the Committee recommends maintaining the projected 8% decline for FY 2019-20.

Jennifer also reported that the recommended plan includes using unspent funds from the Place-Based Transition Pilot and funding from the F5CA IMPACT allocation, subject to approval, to extend allocations for coaching and technical support through Fiscal Year 2022-23. She added that the rising costs over time need to be considered. As such, this plan maintains a local investment level of \$5.3 million with an additional \$75,000 annually from F5CA IMPACT funds in Fiscal Year 2020-23, subject to approval. Jennifer concluded that the purpose of this recommendation is to determine an annual spending level through Fiscal Year 2025-2026 for strategic planning. This plan, as well as an updated budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 and forecast for Fiscal Year 2019/20, will be presented in May.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Long, to approve the updated Fiscal Year 2016-26 Financial Plan as proposed by staff. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Review and Discussion of Strategic Investments

i. Review of FY 2019-20 Mid-Year Progress Report

Sam McCoy noted this presentation will provide a high-level overview of funded program allocations and targets for Fiscal Year 2019-20. Preschool scholarship actuals are lower than targeted mid-year goals, with reasons detailed in a presentation to the Commission in December 2019. Sam restated factors affecting the lower than anticipated utilization of F5VC-funded preschool spaces and scholarships, and noted this investment allocation was intended as a transition strategy for FY 2019-21. As hoped, there has been an increase in CSPP funded spaces, and increased family income eligibility thresholds, resulting in lower F5VC preschool and scholarship program participation.

Sam discussed PACT participation. Service targets developed for the new standardized program assumed quarterly enrollment of new families. While new participants are prioritized for enrollment, many families want to continue program participation, which is illustrated in the actual vs. unduplicated participant numbers. Enrolling families for multiple sessions is also impacting referrals for Early ID and linkage. Returning families do not receive additional ASQ or maternal mental health screenings. Sam concluded his report by noting that Triple P and 211 programs are on pace to reach service target provisions.

ii. Review and discussion of Strategic Investments for Strategic Plan Extension Period FY 2021-23

Petra gave an overview of proposed allocations for Fiscal Year 2021-23, noting all amounts match those in the Fiscal Year 2016-26 Financial Plan presented earlier. Fiscal Year 2020-21 anticipated allocations are listed for reference. She detailed investment allocations by area, noting NfL investments will remain consistent. Preschool space investments will discontinue as intended due to increased state investments in state preschool.

Countywide strategies, including 211 and Help Me Grow, will adjust from \$365,000 in Fiscal Year 2020-21 to \$325,000 annually in Fiscal Year 2021-23. Investment strategies will be discussed in the coming months. Petra provided an overview of Program and Systems Integration Efforts and noted a small annual decrease is proposed for this allocation, as well as for Evaluation, Administration, and Equipment Replacement for Fiscal Year 2021-23.

Commissioner Long asked staff to restate the rationale for reducing preschool allocations in Fiscal Year 2021-23. Petra noted the Commission previously approved maintaining investments as a transition strategy to sustain F5VC created preschool capacity as the state increases funding and support for publicly funded preschool. Increases to income limits and eligibility for State Preschool spaces have reduced utilization of F5VC funded spaces and scholarships. Preschool space and scholarship contracts will be maintained for Fiscal Year 2020-21, and providers are convening next week to discuss potential program modifications for next year.

Commissioner Stenslie asked if funds allocated but not expended for preschool will be redirected or remain allocated to preschool. Petra reported \$1.4 million is currently committed in contracts and recommendations regarding unspent funds will be presented after the close of Fiscal Year 2019-20.

10. Discussion of First 5 Ventura County's Response to COVID-19

Petra reported staff have been properly equipped and transitioned to working remotely, with the F5VC administrative offices closed to the public as of March 17 in line with state guidelines. Staff are available to the public via email and by phone, are working with funded and strategic partners virtually, and procedures have been put in place to ensure regular business operations such as accounts payable, payroll, etc. continue without disruption.

Petra noted that most F5VC funded partners, including NfLs and preschools, have shut down direct services. F5VC staff are currently working on developing alternative scopes of work with each funded partner. F5VC is concerned about the long-term impact of funded partners not being able to provide direct services. Virtual options are also being considered for initiatives such as Take 5. Petra noted F5VC is

working with the F5 Network to understand the impact of funded partners not being able to operate on the local social safety net and more information and recommendations will be forthcoming based on those conversations.

Petra reported that employers are being allowed to provide child care based on an emergency waiver from community care licensing. Staff are assessing what that waiver allows, and the potential conversion of currently unused preschool classrooms, as well as assessing local child care needs across the county. Home based family care providers who are still open are unable to get the necessary supplies they need.

Petra noted that the State legislature is working on an emergency bill for COVID-19 resources, and passed an education budget bill to allow state funds to be distributed while schools are closed. School systems are also working quickly to continue to be able to provide meals for vulnerable children ages 0-18. F5VC is working to assess if other members of such families have the nutritional support they need, and working on opportunities to partner with schools for how to deliver items such as diapers, formula, etc. Petra reported F5VC is also working with partners to support undocumented populations and to determine how to mitigate the impact of trauma for those affected.

Petra reported F5VC is approaching decisions through the lens of equity and innovation, focusing on how to serve those in greatest need, and shift how we operate to support local families as their needs evolve. The Ventura County Funders Forum is meeting weekly via teleconference to determine how best to support those communities, as well as how best to coordinate services to avoid duplication and address gaps. Petra asked the Commission if there is any specific outcomes staff should prioritize, including the potential use of \$400,000 allocated to challenge grants for Fiscal Year 2019-20.

Commissioner Long noted many families are at home looking for activities and advised she supports the development of online resources to support and stimulate families.

Elizabeth Hardin, Interface NFL Program Manager, noted her team is assessing how to shift services to support families through case management, service coordination and online activities.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted that we need to assess what our front line service staff are seeing in terms of needs and preparedness to respond, especially as different communities may have different needs at this time. She suggested F5VC should be a convener and facilitator to ensure resources are allocated well.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill recommended assessing how to ensure access for families who may have technological limitations, especially as educational platforms move forward digitally. She would like F5VC to assess how to work with partners such as VCBH to respond to increased family stress and trauma. She added that she would be open to assessing the reallocation of challenge grant funds if it is a part of an overarching plan that leverages resources for our most vulnerable target populations.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson noted we need to determine what Trauma Informed Care resources exist locally in order to fill in the gaps.

Commissioner Mantooth offered to provide an update regarding the response from local school districts to the Commissioners and F5VC electronically.

Petra noted VCCF launched a Rapid Response Fund to support individuals, nonprofits, and small businesses who are directly affected. F5VC is sharing information through our channels and encouraging eligible individuals and businesses to apply.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill asked the Commissioners for their input regarding the potential reallocation of resources restricted for challenge grants. Commissioner Long and Commissioner Oliva-Olson expressed full support of staff recommending reallocation of resources if necessary.

11. Report from Executive Director – Petra Puls

Petra delivered highlights from her written report, noting the full report with attachments was sent via email. She noted a summary of Proposition 10 distributions is enclosed as detailed earlier and program audits for four funded partners from FY 2018-19 are currently in progress. Staff have developed a pre/post evaluation tool for PACT that will be implemented with the next cohort. Petra outlined enclosures on a recent CHDP newsletter featuring an article from Help Me Grow VC on ACEs screenings, and the F5 Association Bill Tracker, which highlights a few early learning bills sponsored by F5CA. She reported on early literacy initiatives including the Oxnard Library book bag program as well as Census outreach efforts which continue with community partners. F5VC is working with the F5AC to provide input to the ECPC on the whole child approach and systems integration efforts in the new Master Plan for Early Learning and Care. Petra detailed recent partnership opportunities with EC-LINC regarding early relational health, and CSSP regarding leveraging Medi-Cal resources. She concluded her report with an overview of enclosures and upcoming events.

12. Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Long advised residents to utilize www.vcemergency.com for updates from the County.

Commissioner Oliva-Olson thanked staff and funded partners for their diligence serving our community.

Chair Marquez-O'Neill thanked staff and funded partners for their hard work, and reiterated her opening quote regarding remaining hopeful.

13. Next Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2020, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 pm.