



**SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES**

September 24, 2020

Commissioners Present: Dr. Robert Levin, Kelly Long, Stan Mantooth, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Dr. Cesar Morales, Bruce Stenslie

Excused Absence: Dr. Michael Gollub, Barry Zimmerman

Staff Present: Petra Puls, John Anderson, Lauren Arzu, Fahim Farag, Jennifer Johnson, Sam McCoy, Nani Oesterle

Public Present: Elizabeth Hardin, Andrew Huizar, Mabel Munoz, Chris Sears

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marquez-O'Neill opened the meeting at 11:05 a.m., reminded attendees how to participate via public comment, and shared a quote.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Mantooth, to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2020 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Chair Marquez-O'Neill provided an overview of regular and supplemental packet items, noting materials were sent via email and are posted on the F5VC website.

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

4. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Recommendation to Rollover Prior Year Unspent Results Based Accountability Funds

Sam McCoy reported due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person services ceased in March 2020 and efforts were redirected to adapting PACT and family support services to a new virtual format. As such, planned evaluation activities, including the analysis of existing data and new parent survey, were postponed. Sam noted at the end of FY 2019-20 the Results Based Accountability (RBA) cost center had \$69,000 in unutilized funds, primarily due to the unanticipated impact of COVID-19. He added a new evaluation strategy and report framework is to be developed in FY 2020-21 to support the FY 2020-22 Strategic Plan.

Sam noted the staff recommendation is to rollover \$40,000 in unspent FY 2019-20 RBA funds to FY 2020-21, for data collection and evaluation activities. As there are sufficient prior year unspent funds, no new allocation is needed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mantooh, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to authorize the rollover of \$40,000 in FY 2019-20 unspent funds from the Results Based Accountability (RBA) cost center for evaluation services and activities to be completed in FY 2020-21. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Recommendation to Modify Existing Preschool Contracts for Fiscal Year 2020-21

Petra Puls noted that the majority of preschools closed due to COVID-19 in spring 2020. While many have reopened recently, the majority of F5VC funded spaces are embedded in California State Preschool Program (CSPP) classes on school campuses that have not been permitted to reopen for in-person services. She reported that many of the F5VC funded classes are providing services via virtual platforms such as Zoom, giving packets to work on at home, etc. F5VC staff have reviewed the CDE's CSPP guidance released earlier this month and recommend that the Commission consider a flexible implementation of preschool in FY 2020-21.

Under this modified model, F5VC preschool contractors who are closed due to a public health order and continue to incur operating costs would be able to deliver a virtual distance learning model, or a hybrid model that offers a combination of in-person and distance learning, in addition to regular in-person programming. The recommendation will help to ensure preschools retain capacity and learning losses are prevented as much as possible.

Commissioner Long and Commissioner Mantooh commented they hope preschools can open as soon as possible.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Mantooh, to adopt a revised implementation model for Preschool for FY 2020-21. Under the new model, First 5 Ventura County preschool contractors would be able to deliver a virtual distance learning model, a hybrid model, or regular in-person programming dependent upon Covid-19 related circumstances. The motion passed with Commissioner Stenslie abstaining.

7. Report from Executive Director

Petra Puls delivered highlights from her written report, starting with staffing updates. Elizabeth Majestic has concluded her two year term with F5VC as the Pritzker Fellow and Lauren Arzu has been promoted to the new Director of Human Resources and Operations position. Petra reported that the Local Planning Council will be selecting a new Commissioner from their membership, and staff are hopeful the new Commissioner will be able to join the October meeting. F5VC staff are working on the FY 2019-20 audit. The audit report will be delivered at the October Commission meeting.

Petra also updated the Commission on local initiatives, reporting Neighborhoods for Learning are providing virtual programs and returning to the traditional PACT cohort model, with more than 200 families enrolled. Since many families don't have access to basic supplies, staff are creating material kits to make it easy for families to participate in activities. Help Me Grow staff have been highly involved in supporting ACEs screenings through ACEs Aware with the Landon Pediatric Foundation.

Petra updated the Commission on the Community Investment Loan Fund, which is implemented by EDC to provide low interest loans for preschool providers. Three of the four sites with loans are now open. F5VC staff are currently working with EDC to determine whether to convert the loan to interest-only payments until the provider can reopen.

Petra noted the data collection for the ECE workforce study, which the Commission approved investing in, was delayed due to the pandemic. The survey has been modified to reflect the impact on COVID-19 on childcare providers. However, data would not be available until late 2021 and therefore not helpful in responding to the current situation. Petra added that with current uncertainties it does not seem prudent to invest \$50,000 in this study. Instead, F5VC will partner with VCOE and CDR to develop a survey that can produce results more quickly to understand COVID-19 related challenges for childcare.

Petra directed the Commission to an excerpt in the written report regarding concerns raised about the lack of equity in the QRIS system. F5CA is launching a listening tour to better understand the concerns, how QRIS is being implemented, and how it may not meet the needs of certain providers.

F5VC held five distribution events throughout the county to distribute diapers, PPE, and cleaning supplies to childcare providers. The final shipment of supplies from F5CA, which will be distributed through partner agencies, was received last week. Providers were grateful to receive the emergency supplies, funded by F5CA, and F5VC will continue to support the needs of childcare providers.

Petra reported that staff released a Request for Proposals for evaluation consultation, due September 25, to help us develop an evaluation framework and strategy to better understand what is working and where we need to improve. She also updated the Commission on recent advocacy efforts, including outreach efforts at the end of the current legislative session related to the Vape Tax, Paid Family Leave, and Medical proposals. F5VC staff have also been supporting the 2020 Census by working to ensure that "hard to count" populations, especially children 5 and under, are included.

Petra reported that the Funders Forum continues to meet bi-weekly and outlined recent topics. She also noted that the Parent Leadership Network has had nine virtual meetings since April and are beginning a six-week Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) training.

Petra concluded her report with regional and national updates. F5CA is sponsoring a book distribution partnership, with F5VC to receive up to 6,000 books to be distributed through MICOP, libraries, Food Share, NfLs, etc. She also highlighted the F5AC Policy Committee, which she serves on, recently had an opportunity to offer input on the CSAC policy platform and advocate to focus on the whole-child, whole-family approach and build stronger early childhood allies.

Commissioner Long commented that she serves on the CSAC Board and CSAC is recognizing the importance of education and the early years as they impact County government even though counties don't oversee education.

Commissioner Mantooth noted he hopes to preserve the quality aspect of QRIS while addressing the concerns about lack of equity.

8. Performance Review of Employee (Govt. Code, Section 54957)

The Commission entered closed session at 11:42 a.m. to discuss the performance evaluation of the Executive Director.

The Commission returned to open session at 12:30 p.m.

9. Discussion and consideration of updates to Executive Director's Objectives and Performance Goals for FY 2020-21

Chair Marquez-O'Neill reported that the Commission requests one additional performance goal to be added - to have the next performance review completed by the end of the 2020-21 Fiscal Year to align with budgeting. She added the Commission approved a 5% increase to the Executive Director's compensation, retroactive to July 1, 2020, with all other compensation remaining the same. The updated performance goals will be presented for Commission approval at the October 2020 Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mantooth, and seconded by Commissioner Levin, to approve the Executive Director's compensation for FY 2020-21. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Long thanked Petra and F5VC staff for their innovative thinking and dedication to support families in this time.

Commissioner Levin expressed thanks to all the F5VC staff for their hard work, noting that during closed session, Petra thanked her staff and commented that it is the F5VC team that makes her look good.

11. Next Meeting

Thursday, October 22, 2020, via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.