First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission

Minutes of Meeting – Tuesday, June 5, 2012, 5:30PM
601 Texas Street, Conference Room B, Fairfield, CA

Attendance

Commissioners: Dana Dean (Chair), Dan Ayala, Jay Speck, Linda Seifert, Norma Thigpen, Elaine Norinsky were present when the meeting was called to order.

Staff/Public: Commission staff and 9 members of the public were present.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30PM by Chair Dean.

I. Public Comment

No public comment

II. Consent Calendar

A. Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for June 5, 2012
B. Approve the minutes of the April 3, 2012 Commission Meeting
C. Approve the minutes of the May 1, 2012 Special Commission Meeting

Motion: Approve the Commission Meeting Agenda for June 5, 2012, approve the minutes of the April 3, 2012 Commission Meeting, approve the minutes of the May 1, 2012 special Commission Meeting.

Moved: Commissioner Ayala

Vote: 6-0-0

III. Agenda Item III: Funding Cycle

A. RFP #2012-01/Prenatal Services

Motion: III. A. 1. Approve additional funding of up to $72,802 ($31,913 for FY2012/13, $20,479 for FY2013/14 and $20,410 for FY2014/15) to Solano County Health and Social Services Department to fund indirect costs in excess of 15% for Prenatal Services (Source of funding: 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan)

Commissioner Thigpen recused herself from Agenda Items III. A.1 and III. A.2, citing a conflict of interest, stating she is an employee of Solano County Health and Social Services, and left the room.

Discussion: Staff presented the item, noting that Health & Social Services is able to draw down significant funds from the Federal Government. Health & Social Services, along with their partners will be moving to the evidence-based Healthy Families America program, which is one of the two or three models on the list with the Federal Government for federal home visiting dollars. Solano County will be in a good position to apply for those dollars when California is allocated funds, and these funds could sustain services beyond the term that First 5 can fund them.

Commissioner Speck questioned why they require 22% administrative costs compared to other agencies, is it typical across all their programs, and is it unique to us? Ms. Arrostuto answered

that she believes that it is typical for H&SS. This Department's costs are established with complicated state, federal and local formulas and regulations over which the Department itself has little control. Typical costs include space, information technology and overhead for staffing. Commissioner Dean questioned the exception to the 15% rule and wants to be clear that if the Commission is creating an exception to the rule, we are clear as to what the exception is.

Commissioner Dean expressed concern that First 5 is creating a "two-tiered" system for programs that are within the county infrastructure versus programs that are outside the county infrastructure. Ms. Arrostuto commented that, both times staff have recommended an exception, it has been for a public agency. She agreed that it could be viewed as "two-tiered," however no non-public agency has ever been able to justify excess administrative costs in terms of the return on investment for leveraged dollars and/or access to state and federal systems. In this case staff recommended the exception because the leveraged dollars that can be generated by the public agency far exceed the additional investment

Revised Motion: III. A. 1. Approve additional funding of up to $72,802 ($31,913 for FY2012/13, $20,479 for FY2013/14 and $20,410 for FY2014/15) to Solano County Health and Social Services Department to fund indirect costs in excess of 15% for Prenatal Services and staff bring back at a later date the 15% policy for Commission review

Moved: Commissioner Seifert

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion: III. A. 2. Approve an extension of the MOU between First 5 Solano and Solano County Health and Social Services from July 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012, in the amount of $246,305 for BabyFirst Solano Prenatal Services (Source of funding: 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan) – Deputy Director

Discussion: Staff recommend extending the current agreement with H&SS for 90 days as contract negotiations have proven to be complex, and staff from both agencies need additional time to work out the details of the new agreement, which includes new services. The extension includes language that will terminate the extension once the new contract is approved.

Moved: Commissioner Seifert

Vote: 5-0-0

Commissioner Thigpen returned to meeting.

Commissioner Betz arrived at 5:47.

B. Motion: Approve an increase to the FY2012/13 Budget by $168,045 to fully fund First 5 Solano staffing needs (Source of funding: Long Term Financial Plan)

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto presented this item, stating that she had been premature in setting First 5 staffing levels for FY2012/13 strictly based on the level of funding of the grants budget. First 5 has lost two clerical positions and are down to one remaining, which increased the workload of all staff, but most notably for contract and program specialists, who now must take up the accounting duties formerly performed by the Accounting Clerk. In addition, the actual awards of funding for the 2012-2015 Funding Cycle has resulting in about the same number of contracts to manage, although the budget is smaller.

Commissioner Dean stated that at the Systems and Policy Committee meeting the team voted to recommend that the Commission approve this request, not only can we afford it, we have to afford it.

Moved: Commissioner Ayala

Vote: 7-0-0

Commissioner Seifert left the meeting at 5:51pm.

C. RFP #2012-03/Parent Education Services – recommendations of the Program and Community Engagement Committee:

Discussion: Commissioner Thigpen reported that the Program Committee is recommending three items, essentially recommending funding for all of the responses to the RFP that were received.

Ms. Arrostuto presented background information, noting that the Children's Nurturing Project/ Dixon Family Services applicants are offering the Nurturing Parent Program, an evidence-based program that is county-wide and offered in Spanish, targeted to high risk parents and which will include home visits to help ensure parents complete this relatively rigorous curriculum. This application also included a component to train additional NPP trainers in the community, specifically Family Resource Center staff that can offer NPP in home visits. While the services are county-wide, fewer numbers of parents are served due to the length (12-16 weeks) of the program.

The SPACE (Solano Parent and Child Education)) parent education program (Fairfield-Suisun USD/Adult School & Child Haven) has a mix of some evidence-based, some promising practice and some on-line courses, shorter curriculums that can be offered to much larger numbers of parents. While parents are recruited from across the county by partnering with the FRCs, the programs are offered only in Fairfield. This program also features a component that will reach hundreds of parents in one-time contacts as they register their children for kindergarten, which, if successful, could be expanded with additional funding in future years.

The third program, "Art for Kids," is recommended for one year only, with the possibility of recommending funding in future years. This program teaches parents how arts activities enhance and support child development, and includes funding to purchase art supplies for parents and children to use at home. It will take place in Vallejo and Benicia and targets high-risk parents. It would be the only arts program funded by the Commission.

Commissioner Speck reported a comment from the Program Committee: "In the Committee meeting we reached an 'aha' moment realizing that, while the Commission wants evidence-based programs, reaching many families and a program that is offered county-wide, all of these criteria are hard to meet with the level of funding that was allocated." The Committee concluded that the Commission should consider itself in a transition period in moving toward evidence-based services, and the conflict between the levels of services that can be funded with quality may have made it difficult for applicants in this cycle.

Commissioner Dean noted that the Committee's specific recommendation was to fund CNP/DFS with the allocated Parent Education funds, and was additionally recommended that the SPACE program and Art for Kids be funded beyond that allocation with other funds. She noted that staff recommendation regarding including transportation within the award for the SPACE program, and stated that in her view, providing transportation support within the funds awarded must be a condition of funding. She asked about the amount of the augmentation for Dixon Family Services [to accommodate home-visiting for parents at risk of dropping out of the program. Ms. Arrostuto reported that the amount is $12,519 over the three-year funding cycle.

Commissioner Betz comment for SPACE is he would like to fund one year of the SPACE program and ask staff to measure the outcomes at the end of the year and give a report back to decide on funding for FY13/14 and FY14/15. He noted this is the same as the recommendation

for Art for Kids. Ms. Arrostuto noted that it would be very difficult to have any meaningful outcome information with only one year of funding, and that the program is a start-up that will not likely begin until September, therefore the only outcome data that can be anticipated by the time the next budget will be approved (March 2013) is for a few months.

Motion: III. C. 1. Approve award of funding of up to $312,519 ($104,173 for FY2012/13, $104,173 for FY2013/14 and $104,173 for FY2014/15) for Parent Education services to Children's Nurturing Project/Dixon Family Services (Source of funding: 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan, with additional funding the Long Term Financial Plan)

Moved: Commissioner Ayala
Vote: 6-0-0

Motion III.C.2. Consider approval of additional award of funding of up to $9,638 for FY2012/13 for Parent Education Services to Art for Kids/Bonnie Weidel (via fiscal agent to be identified and engaged) (Source of funding: Discretionary Fund)

Note: This award is contingent on acquiring an approved fiscal agent for the program.

Moved: Commissioner Betz
Vote: 6-0-0

Motion: III.C.3. 3. Consider approval of additional award of funding of up to $100,000 ($100,000 for FY2012/13) for Parent Education Services to SPACE/Fairfield-Suisun Adult School/Child Haven. This program will be considered in the FY2013/14 budget process for continued funding in FY2013/14 and FY2014/15 based on outcomes achieved. (Source of funding: Long Term Financial Plan)

Moved: Commissioner Speck
Vote: 6-0-0

Commissioner Betz left meeting at 6:41.

D. Motion: Approve additional funding for the First 5 Solano Child Signature Program of up to $42,000 for the period July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2015 to allow for 4 additional classrooms (Source of funding: Long Term Financial Plan) – ED's Report

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reported that First 5 California issued an errata version of the CSP application on May 8, with the most significant change being the increase number of allowable classrooms from a flat 30 to a range of 30 – 34. First 5 Solano submitted a request for approval of 34 classrooms, but are not sure if they will all qualify. In the event that any over 30 are approved by First 5 California, staff are recommending additional local funding of up to $10,500 per classroom (a maximum of $42,000 over the funding period). Commissioner Dean asked where the additional classrooms will be located. Ms. Arrostuto responded that they are in the Travis AFB area, and that there will be no change in the cities that the classrooms are representing.

Moved; Commissioner Speck
Vote: 5-0-0

E. Motion: RFP #2012-05/Evaluation Services – Approve award of funding of up to $291,000 for the period July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2015 to Applied Survey Research for evaluation services (Source of funding: 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan) – ED's Report

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reported the results of the Request for Qualifications had resulted in the recommendation of award of funding to Applied Services Research for evaluation services. This firm is well-known, with excellent references, and the team that will serve Solano is highly-qualified. ASR has worked with our First 5 in the past (developing and carrying out its highly-successful 'Results Fair") and is currently contracted as the Evaluator for First 5 Contra Costa.

Moved: Commissioner Thigpen
Vote: 5-0-0

F. Receive an update on Organizational Development processes for awarding Coordination/Collaboration funding and analyzing case management needs/ recommending system supports for First 5 grantees – Community Programs Manager/ ED's Report

Discussion: Ms. Arrostuto reported that Dr. Lori Allio has been engaged to take our community through a process of identifying the levels of coordination and collaboration that are needed. She anticipates concluding the process by the end of July, with recommendations for deploying Coordination/Collaboration funds in August.

In addition, consultant Amanda Hopping-Winn has been engaged to analyze and recommend case management/data analysis needs. She has been tasked with reviewing and analyzing several different systems that are low- or no-cost, based on information gathered from staff and grantees as to their case management and support needs. Recommendations will be based on efficiency and effectiveness of services, cost, ease of use and ability to both meet individual program reporting/case management needs and ability to increase the Commission's ability to integrate information about its funded services.

Ms. Arrostuto apologized that the scheduled recommendation of additional award of funding for the Children's Network is not ready, and said that she expects to have that recommendation by the August Commission meeting.

IV. Committee Reports

Systems and Policy Committee: Chair Dean gave the report and stated that the minutes reflect the meeting information.

Program and Community Engagement Committee: Commissioner Thigpen gave the report that reflected the items that have been voted on in this Commission meeting, and approved**.**

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V. Executive Director's Report

Report was given during item III.

VI. Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Thigpen let the Commission, staff and the public know that she is retiring from Solano County Health and Social Services Department in July, and has therefore resigned from the Commission effective June 30, 2012. Commissioners commented that Commissioner Thigpen will be greatly missed, and wished her well.

Commissioner Ayala thanked Cookie Powell for inviting him to be a part of the Dixon Block Party in April 2012.

Commissioner Dean asked Commissioner Thigpen to join the Commission as their honorary guest at the August Commission meeting.

VII. Future Agenda Items, Meeting time/Date/Location

The next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 14, 2012 at 5:30 PM, 601 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533. Future agenda items include Committee Reports; FY2012-2015 Funding Cycle Update; Proposed Amended 2012-2015 Program Investment Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 in honor of Heather Bonser-Bishop, a consultant who was selected and funded by First 5 Solano to spearhead the successful award of the federal grant to Solano Coalition for Better Health in 2011. Ms. Bonser-Bishop recently died in a tragic accident during her vacation. Ms. Lynn Hoffman, who worked closely with Ms. Bonser-Bishop, gave a moving and heartfelt account of Ms. Bonser-Bishop's great contributions to her family and her community throughout her life and career.

Denise Winters, Office Assistant III

Approved:_____