



MINUTES December 6, 2012

Due to the fact that a quorum was not present at the proposed meeting start time, Commissioners proceeded to review informational items up until the point when a quorum was established. Members were informed that there was a delay with one of the members who was on their way, and were asked to wait until the Commissioner arrived.

Agenda Item 3 – Public Comment

Alex Cardenas, CASA Director, informed members that he is currently working on enhancing services for young children in Winterhaven and is establishing a presence with the Quechan Tribe Reservation in order to accomplish this endeavor. He points out that developing a relationship with the Quechan Tribal Council will help to better serve the children in the Winterhaven area.

Mike Castillo, Director of the Early Care and Education Program (ICOE), provided a brief update on new regulation standards for cribs. Beginning December 28, 2012, any crib used by child care centers and family child care homes must meet new and improved federal safety standards as it relates to the use of drop-side cribs. New cribs will average about \$500.00 each; it will be an economic hardship to many centers and family child care homes. The Early Care and Education Program is providing a small reimbursement grant to help out with this hardship. Mr. Rodriguez mentioned that Community Outreach Support funds sponsored by the Commission may also be an option for financial assistance with the cribs.

Agenda Item 5a – Presentations (2)

Rosie Nava-Bermudez, Director, Family Treehouse, provided information highlighting the Proposition 10 funded project – Developmental Interventions and Surveillance for Children under 5.

Marjo Mello, Director, Brawley Public Library, invited Commissioners and public members to tour the newly designed LAMBS bus. Members accompanied Ms. Mello to the front entrance of the county building where the LAMBS bus was parked, and she proceeded with her presentation of the program.

Agenda Item 6e – Administrative Report (informational items)

e. Request for Proposal (RFP) Guidelines 2013-2015 Timetable

Mr. Rodriguez described the Timetable events and reviewed the proposed dates as it relates to the upcoming Request For Proposal for a General Grant for Fiscal Year 2013-2015 (2 year cycle). Based on the previous recommendation from the Commission, the proposed RFP will be released on February 11, 2013. A Letter of Intent to Apply will be incorporated into the RFP criteria, this deadline is March 4, 2013. Final submittal of proposal deadline is March 27, 2013. Commissioners will need to make a decision on May 24th which is the "Notice of Intent to Make an Award" date; an appeals period will run subsequently. Award of proposals is set for June 6, 2013, and contracts will begin starting July 1, 2013 for the two-year funding cycle.

Commissioner Green suggested that it may be a good idea to get feedback from currently funded programs as to what works and what has not worked as it relates to their contract with the Commission. She feels Commissioners want to ensure that the programs are being offered any support they may need to make their programs successful; she is recommending an evening meeting. Brief discussion continued, Mr. Rodriguez advised that this may push the timeline and may delay the release of the RFP. Mr. Kim stated that decisions like these should be placed before the County Board of Supervisors, similar to San Diego's First 5 Commission. Brief clarification continued regarding the organizational structure of the First 5 Commissions.

g. First Quarter Progress Report FY 2012-13 Update

Commission funded projects completed services for the first quarter of fiscal year 2012-2013 on September 30, 2012. 12 grantees awarded major grants for the funding cycle in addition to 7 mini-grants submitted their progress reports for this reporting period, although extensions were provided to 6 grantees who requested more time. Thus, an extensive analysis of information submitted by the grantees is currently in progress by the Commission office. Preliminary data informs us that major projects have spent 20% of their approved budgets and mini-grant projects have spent 7% of their approved budgets.

Agenda Item 1 - Meeting of the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission

Commission Chair Karla Sigmond duly noted that a quorum was present and Commissioners proceeded to address all action items of the Agenda. Members of the public were once again invited to provide comment on issues concerning the Agenda as well as Commission business. No further comments from the public were made.

Agenda Item 2 - Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Karla Sigmond, Becky Green, Yurii Camacho, Joong Kim, Barbara Deol.
Commissioners Absent: Ray Castillo, Miguel Colon, Jr., Robin Hodgkin, James Semmes.

Agenda Item 4 - Consent Calendar Items

Commissioner Green moved to approve the consent calendar items as presented; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Deol and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. No public comment was noted.

Agenda Item 6 – Administrative Report (action items)

a. Request to Approve Final Audit Report FY 2011-2012

A final copy of the Audited Financial Statements for the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission ending June 30, 2012 as prepared by Roger Tubach, CPA, which was submitted to First 5 California and the State of California Controller's Office was provided and briefly reviewed. Commissioner Deol moved to approve the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission's Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 (ending June 30, 2012); the motion was seconded by Commissioner Green and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. No public comment was noted. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the audit was submitted prior to its deadline submittal. He further advised that Mr. Tubach agreed that the issue regarding the classification as employees or independent contractors was not a finding because he felt the Commission was in compliance. Counsel for the Commission will further review and address this issue as has been the recommendation. Mr. Tubach further provided a recommendation that the Commission implement policies in order to strengthen internal controls and operating efficiency. The policies are: 1) Capitalization Policy; 2) Compensated Absences; and 3) Whistleblower Policy. Mr. Rodriguez will follow-up on these policies; he will explore similar policies that the County of Imperial has in place although he noted that we do have a policy on compensated absences which is similar to that of the county.

b. Request to Approve First 5 Annual Report Data 2011-2012

Mr. Rodriguez reported that the 2011-2012 First 5 California Annual Report for the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission's annual activities was submitted to the Institute for Social Research, the state-wide evaluation team under contract with First 5 California. The Annual Report was submitted prior to its deadline of October 31, 2012. Commissioner Deol moved to approve the First 5 Annual Report FY 2011-2012 data for the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Camacho and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. No public comment was noted.

c. Child Signature Program Budget and Update

For auditing purposes, Mr. Rodriguez is seeking authorization to establish a new budget account for the Child Signature Program. This new program was awarded funding for a three-year period (FY 2012-2015) from First 5 California. Elizabeth Zumaya, Early Learning Specialist, will be working to assist a specific number of preschool classrooms (30) in quality improvements through assessments and training opportunities. Commissioner Green moved to approve the Child Signature Program Budget for FY 2012-13 as presented, and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho with all members in favor. No public comment was noted.

d. Request to Approve changes to the PACES Program

Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Commission allocated a budget of \$60,000 for the purpose of supporting the professional development of early care and education providers through its Professional Advancement for Childhood Educators Stipend (PACES) Program. As a result of the implementation of the Child Signature Program and to lend support to its goals, Mr. Rodriguez is recommending changes to the PACES program. In previous years, early care and education providers that met specific eligibility criteria, and completed a minimum of 9.0 semester units at an accredited institution with a "C" grade or better were awarded a \$750.00 stipend from the Commission. This year, the Child Signature Program will be working with 30 classrooms through pre-approved preschool sites. Proposed changes to the PACES program are:

- ✓ Decrease the stipend award from \$750.00 to \$500.00;
- ✓ offer 100 applications instead of 60;
- ✓ decrease the amount of required units from 9.0 to 7.0;
- ✓ open the application eligibility to all preschool sites, to include state preschool sites;
- ✓ providers must take classes to advance on the matrix or advance toward obtaining a certificate or degree.

Commissioner Green commented that decreasing the amount of units that are currently required would be a move in the wrong direction if the intent of the Commission is to assist these providers in the advancement of their careers, she further explained that professional growth courses do not lend themselves to the direction of certifications. Commissioner Deol expressed her support in favor of not decreasing the units, and felt the other changes were justified.

A motion was made by Commissioner Green to approve the changes to the Professional Advancement for Childhood Educators Stipend (PACES) Program, with the requirement of 9 units. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deol. No public comment was made and the motion passed with all members in favor.

f. Mini-Grant Application for FY 2013-2014

The general consensus of the Commission was to move forward with the release of funding mini-grants for the next fiscal year 2013-2014 with the criteria similar to that used in the last mini-grant cycle where a two-step process will be established to determine which proposals are awarded. A motion to approve the

release of a Community Development Mini-Grant for FY 2013-14 was made by Commissioner Camacho and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol. Mr. Rodriguez noted that he is recommending two changes to the previous year mini-grant guidelines; 1) to request that the Statements of Interest to Apply be submitted in typewritten format, and 2) that they be submitted to the County Purchasing office rather than the Commission office. Per the established timetable, the Community Development Mini-Grant Guidelines will be released on January 3, 2013. No further comment was noted and members voted in favor.

7. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Kim asked Commissioner Sigmond for clarification about the selection of the Strategic Planning Committee, specifically why he was not appointed to the Committee when he had made it clear that he wanted to be included. Commissioner Sigmond responded that at the previous meeting the Commission asked her to appoint 3 to 4 members, she sent out an email and made the appointments based on that response.

8. Adjournment

Commissioner Green moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Deol and approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. Meeting adjourned at 3:04 pm.