



Imperial County Children and Families First Commission
MINUTES
Meeting of June 5, 2025

I. Call to Order

Commission Chairperson, Karla Sigmond called the June 5, 2025 Regular Meeting of First 5 Imperial to order at 3:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the First 5 Imperial, Training Center, at 1240 State Street, El Centro, CA.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Barbara Deol

Danila Vargas

Fred Miramontes

Joong Kim

Paula Llanas

Yurii Camacho

Karl Sigmond

Commissioners Absent:

John Hawk

Rebecca Green

Staff:

Julio C. Rodriguez

Fernando Valenzuela

III. Public Comment

Commissioner Sigmond asked that if there was anyone from the public that wished to make a public comment or address anything on the agenda, then that person is given the opportunity to do so. She asked anyone interested to present themselves and to feel free to address the Commission. Mr. Kelley Ranasinga addressed the Commission regarding his and his family's involvement in the City of El Centro's Stepping Stones Program, and indicated that it is on the agenda for consideration of funding today. He stated that his daughter has been active in the program for about a year, and as a result has truly blossomed, noting her delays in learning and shyness, though through support of the program's teachers she has significantly improved, and stating that the Stepping Stones Program was the hidden-jewel of the child welfare community, and is an outstanding program. He noted that the money that First 5 provides for the program is fundamental and well spent. He further recognized the collaboration with other agencies in identifying and referring children and how staff work with children with special needs as well. He reiterated his support for the Stepping Stones Project and thanked the Commission.

IV. Adoption of Minutes for the Special Meeting of May 22, 2025

A motion to approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Commission on May 22, 2025, was made by Commissioner Miramontes, seconded by Commissioner Kim, and having noted no further discussion or public comment the motion carried with all in favor.

V. Consent Calendar Items

The consent calendar items consisted of the First 5 Imperial Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and monthly financial reports for April 2025. A motion to approve the consent calendar items was made by Commissioner Kim, and seconded by Commissioner Llanas, and having noted no further discussion or public comment the motion carried with all in favor.

VI. Administrative Report (Julio C. Rodriguez, Executive Director)

1. Request to Approve the Final Award Announcement for Request for Proposal for General Grant FY 2025-2028: Commissioner Sigmond asked Mr. Rodriguez for a summary of the request. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Commission will be approving of the final award announcement for General Grant RFPs that were submitted to Commission for consideration for the FY2026-2028 funding cycle, of which at the May 22nd Special Meeting of the Commission, Commissioners approved three projects and there were two others that were pending resolution on matters that were discussed by members at that time. He noted that before any discussion of applications could occur he would have to ask Commissioners if they had any conflicts of interest to disclose. Having noted no conflicts of interest concerning the five applications under consideration, and he proceeded to inform the Commission that there were no protests submitted on behalf of any agencies with respect to the General RFP process. He stated that the main concern at this time is the two proposals that are pending resolution, and asked if Commissioners would like to move forward to discuss each applicant. Commissioner Sigmond asked if there was anyone in the audience that would want to address the Commission regarding any of the applications that were under consideration, particularly those pending resolution. She noted that the other three applications had already been approved.

Mr. Alex Cardenas, representing Court Appointed Special Advocates of Imperial County, stated that they had addressed the concerns of the Commission through a letter with plan attached and revised budget that was submitted to the First 5 office. He thanked the Commission for the opportunity to submit the changes and for providing clarity on the matter. Commissioner Sigmond thanked him and directed Mr. Rodriguez to work with Court Appointed Special Advocates to revise their scope-of-work. He asserted that that would be the case, and noted that he had forwarded the letter and plan submitted by Mr. Cardenas to Commissioners prior to the meeting in reference to what Mr. Cardenas had stated. He noted that the primary issue that was recognized in the plan is the fact that Court Appointed Special Advocates agreed that it would not be feasible to provide family literacy services through the proposal and they had included the previous services that the agency had been providing during the previous funding cycles, in addition to a budget revision that accounted for the reduction in staff time as a result of eliminating the family literacy component. Mr. Rodriguez noted that from his perspective this was something the Commission could work with and would recommend funding with the changes that were presented, and the only thing is for the Commission to work with Court Appointed Advocates, as he had suggested to Mr. Cardenas, on identifying measures that would support the impact of the project for children in the child welfare system. Commissioner Kim asked if the Commission would be working with them on fine-tuning the services that were proposed, and Mr. Rodriguez agreed.

Next, Commissioner Sigmond asked if there was anyone that would want to address the Commission on behalf of the Neighborhood House of Calexico. Ms. Cindy Alba, the Executive Director for the Neighborhood House, indicated that she would like to provide an update. She noted that staff from the Neighborhood House had set up a meeting with Commissioner Green at the Imperial Valley College's Child Development Site for June 17th and that she would provide them with some guidance related to the process relevant to operating an infant and toddler childcare center. She indicated that they would follow up with the Commission on the meeting and any other developments. Mr. Rodriguez asked if they had achieved any progress on obtaining their infant and toddler childcare license or any news from their consultant. Ms. Alba

noted that she did not have an update on that as no progress had been made. Commissioner Sigmond asked if it was possible to give them an opportunity to take care of this by the September meeting of the Commission. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the next meeting would be on September 4th and asked Ms. Alba if that period of time would be ample for them to obtain a license. She noted that they would see what help Ms. Green could provide in guiding them and that three months should be enough. Mr. Rodriguez advised her that it would have to be brought back to the Commission on September 4th if it is considered. Mr. Kim asked if Commissioner Green would be helping them to find the funds to start up. Mr. Rodriguez noted that they had contact with her and that she had indicated that there were funds available, but would not assure the Commission that she would be able to help them with that since Ms. Green was not present. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that the main objective at this point for the Neighborhood house is to figure out how to obtain the equipment necessary in order for licensing to consider them for the infant and toddler center, because that is what would be necessary before the Commission would award any funding. Commissioner Llanas asked if we would then need additional information from the Neighborhood House before making an award. Commissioner Sigmond indicated that this was correct, and she noted that this would then be resolved in September, and that the Court Appointed Special Advocates matter had been resolved.

Commissioner Miramontes then indicated that he would like to make a motion to approve funding for the four applicants that had been finalized, and that the Neighborhood House application would be noted as pending. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Camacho. Commissioner Vargas asked if the amount that we have reflected in the award announcement would then be different from the amount awarded for Court Appointed Special Advocates. Mr. Rodriguez noted that that was correct, whereas the award for that agency would change from \$170,988 to \$143,366. Commissioner Miramontes asked to confirm that the amount awarded would be \$143,366, of which Mr. Rodriguez agreed. Then Commissioner Sigmond asked if there were any more questions. With no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

2. Request to Select and Approve Community Development Mini-Grant Step 2 Applicant Awards for FY 2025-2026: Commissioner Sigmond noted that the Commission would now move to discuss the Community Development Mini-Grant applications, though noted that she would excuse herself in a few minutes due to another conflict. At this time Commissioner Deol joined the meeting. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Commission had six mini-grants under consideration for funding as part of Step 2 of the Community Development Mini-Grant process. He noted that these applicants were listed on page 35 of the packet, which included a register of applicants, though before any discussion he indicated that any conflicts of interest for Commissioners would need to be disclosed for any of the mini-grant applications under consideration. No conflicts of interest were noted, and he proceeded to introduce the six mini-grants that were under consideration where the total request was \$161,500 and that there is a recommended amount for \$146,700. He noted that staff had provided summaries for each of the grants and asked if Commission members had any questions or clarification on recommendations regarding any of the applicants. Commissioner Sigmond had a request to consider funding the City of El Centro for the full amount requested and staff can go ahead and monitor expenses because the City of El Centro has a good program and can use the funding. She noted that she felt that all of the other applications looked good and reminded the Commission that previously a motion was provided for all applicants since there were no conflicts of interest, and generally went with all

of the recommendations, though the only one that she would consider changing was the budget for the City of El Centro. Commissioner Vargas noted that the summaries had an explanation for reductions and if that would be something that we can discuss; to discuss the reductions. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Commission had funded the Stepping Stones Project during a previous funding cycle and staff was looking at what had been funded previously in addition to what had actually been expensed. In addition he noted that the expenses were not itemized and therefore it was not clear what they would be purchasing, for example if there is an equipment purchase the Commission would not want these items identified beforehand because they will be used to provide services for children 0-5 years of age and that it would be appropriate if the Commission goes with Commissioner Sigmond's recommendation than the project should also be required to itemize the materials it will be purchasing. Commissioner Llanas asked for a budget modification that identified what is being purchased. Mr. Rodriguez agreed that that would work. Commissioner Vargas agreed and thanked Mr. Rodriguez for the clarification as the recommendation was there to reduce the budget, though the specific reasons were not. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the problem was that the budget was presented in a general format, and therefore it was not clear what they would be purchasing, and that would leave it open for the agency to purchase anything that would fall within a category, thus leaving the possibility that items purchased under Equipment would be materials that may be used by children that are older, such as high school aged children, and therefore it would be prudent to approve of an itemized list prior to any expenses being made. Mr. Rodriguez noted that there was a representative from the City of El Centro there today, and he could address this. Mr. Gustavo Ibarra, from the City of El Centro, noted that they could work out an itemized budget and that should not be a problem. Mr. Rodriguez noted that that would be the best step, because the last thing the Commission wants for the City of El Centro is for items to be purchased then only to be disallowed because they are deemed as not falling within the scope of services being proposed, as providing services to children 0-5 requires specific planning and use of materials.

Commissioner Vargas then noted that there were other recommended changes regarding the amounts being awarded. Mr. Rodriguez noted that he would begin with the first applicant, the Burn Institute, where the specific amounts that were being reduced were for materials and equipment purchases. He noted that the materials purchased by the agency were generally ordered in bulk for their programs, and that the portion for Imperial County would easily be covered through the amount recommended which is \$5,000, in addition there is a recommendation to eliminate the purchase of a computer, as the local office only has one individual providing services and currently new equipment is not necessary. At this time Commissioner Sigmond noted that she would recuse herself from the meeting and asked Commissioner Deol to continue chairing the rest of the meeting, where Commissioner Deol agreed to chair the rest of the meeting. Mr. Rodriguez then reiterated that they were going over any recommendations on budget changes for applicants being considered, of which the second applicant had already been discussed, and noted that the next applicant was the Child Abuse Prevention Council, of which there were no recommendations being made to their budget. The fourth applicant, the Imperial County Office of Education, he noted that the proposal is requesting funds for training and certification for 5 early care and education specialists to be trained in the Teaching Pyramid Training model which is a social-emotional training model that helps teachers work with children that have challenging behaviors. One of the issues with the budget is that the costs were not itemized for the trainings, such as what WestEd would charge per individual, in addition to a breakdown of training materials. He also noted that the Commission had previously funded work through the Teacher Pyramid with a general grant and

some of this has already been adopted and that ICOE was using some of the data obtained from the project to justify the need for further training for preschool teachers. The Commission is therefore recommending training for up to 4 early care and education specialists, in addition to the itemization of what teaching materials would be purchased. He further emphasized that it will be important to understand if the training is only good for one-year or if the certified teachers can continue training beyond the life of the mini-grant, which would be important as ICOE could theoretically target more centers.

Next he addressed the mini-grant for IVROP, Project CARES, where he noted that the recommendation was to reduce operating supplies down to \$2,000 as this should be enough to serve 12 to 15 children, as the proposal is an extension of the general grant funded by the Commission and there is also a substantial amount for materials. The final mini-grant being considered is the Asthma Management Project through Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District. He indicated that there were no recommended changes to their budget, that the request is adequate and would be used to purchase equipment and materials. He stated that one of the recommendations is that the hospital work out a meaningful way to ensure that these materials would be used to serve children 0-5 years of age, and not older children, as this could easily happen without extra assurances from the hospital. He noted that that was the last applicant under consideration for a mini-grant award.

Commissioner Deol asked if there were any other questions or comments. Mr. Rodriguez noted that with the IVROP mini-grant there may be a concern as to why the agency is only serving 12 children through the proposal, as Commissioner Deol had previously noted. The recommendation, he stated, would be to ask the agency to serve 15 children and/or for there to be clarification for the reduction, as there may be a reason, such as employee costs related to hours served that may make it reasonable to only serve 12 children for each HIPPY home visitor. Commissioner Vargas asked if that was the minimum requirement for the HIPPY Program, to which he noted that each Home Visitor can serve up to 15 children 3 to 5 years of age, and HIPPY USA does not permit them to go above this number, namely because it is up to 30 home visits per family, which requires a lot of work, but there is no minimum number they can serve. Commissioner Miramontes noted that 30 home visits were a significant number of hours dedicated to each family, and other Commissioners agreed. Mr. Rodriguez agreed, then asked if there were any other questions. Commissioner Llanas noted that it was recommended to move forward with the amount requested for the Stepping Stones Project, and stated that she wanted to afford the other applications under consideration the same opportunity, such as the ICOE mini-grant where the budget could be revised. She also noted that she was not aware of how much money is available and whether the Commission has the ability to offer a similar award to that which was provided for the City of El Centro. Mr. Rodriguez noted that it was fair to ask that question, and that it should be considered, as the determination to award any funding for mini-grants had not been made yet, and the Stepping Stones Project is also still under consideration.

He noted that the Commission had allocated \$150,000 for the mini-grant process, of which if the Commission goes with the recommendation the total award fall slightly under that amount, which is \$143,700, and considering Commissioner Sigmond's recommendation for the Stepping Stones Project, the total award would be \$152,900, which is \$2,900 over the allocated amount. One consideration for the Commission may be to cover any additional costs for mini-grants with funds that may carry-over from the general grant process, as the total allocation was not awarded, of which approximately \$100,000 is available to offset these costs. He noted that with

the Teacher Pyramid Training Model that is a hard recommendation, namely as the Commission has provided a significant amount of training for staff over the years, and often it is not clear how these individuals that have been trained are working or continuing to offer training or coaching, and often this may be a result of staff turnover, which is a reality, though we don't know. He further noted that individuals trained through the mini-grant will be in-house certified trainers, which is related to one of the issues that needs to be addressed, that is, if they will continue training sites after the end of the grant period. Commissioner Llanas thanked Mr. Rodriguez for the explanation, and noted that she agreed with the determinations, though she only wanted to discuss the changes in light of the opportunity that was being afforded to the Stepping Stones Project.

Commissioner Deol then asked if any member would want to make a motion to approve of the mini-grant awards. Commissioners agreed to make a motion for each mini-grant under consideration separately. Miramontes moved to approve funding the Burn Institute at the recommended amount, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim. Noting no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor. Commissioner Kim moved to approve funding for the City of El Centro for the amount requested with the requirement to submit an itemized budget that would be approved by staff prior to making any expenses. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Llanas. Commissioner Kim noted that it would be important for the agency to submit the items and show accountability. Noting no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor. Next Commissioner Deol asked for a motion for the Child Abuse Prevention Council. Commissioner Miramontes moved to approve funding for the Child Abuse Prevention Council, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim. With no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor. Commissioner Deol then asked for a motion to approve the Imperial County Office of Education mini-grant. Commissioner Llanas made a motion to award the Imperial County Office of Education with the recommended amount, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim. Noting no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor. Next Commissioner Deol asked if there was a motion to approve the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program. Commissioner Kim made a motion to approve the award for the recommended amount, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Vargas. Noting no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor. Commissioner Deol then asked for a motion to approve the mini-grant award for Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District. Commissioner Camacho moved to approve the award for Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District for the recommended amount and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim. Noting no further discussion the motion passed with all in favor.

3. Request to Approve Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor for FY 2025-2026
General Mini-Grants: Commissioner Deol noted that the Commission would look at the approving contract for General and Mini-Grants for FY 2025-2026. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Commission contracts on a yearly basis with agencies that are awarded funding. He noted that the two Contracts are enclosed in the meeting packet, pages 42-80. He stated that for the mini-grant contract there are no significant changes, of which only the dates are updated to reflect the FY 2025-2026 fiscal year, and for the general grant the dates were also changed to ensure services reflect FY 2025-2026, through there is one additional change to consider. The Commission had changed the RFP to include language that would ask agencies to leverage funds and provide information or a plan on how they are doing that, and removed the requirement for a sustainability plan. Therefore the Contract reflects this change and does not require a

sustainability plan, but does ask for agencies to provide information on how they are leveraging funding to enhance or sustain what they are doing.

He further noted that there were some differences between the two contracts that are used for either mini-grants or general grants. The first difference is that the major grant requires information on how agencies will leverage funds, which is not a requirement of the mini-grant contract. The second difference is based on the requirement for an annual audit report. The general grant requires an annual audit report to be submitted at the end of each year of the funding cycle, whereas the mini-grant does not. He noted that the request is for approval of the two contracts so that the Commission can begin drafting up individual contract for either general grant or mini-grant funded agencies, of which any recommendations and budget changes that have been approved will be reflected individually for each proposal awarded for FY 2025-2026. He asked if there were any questions related to contracting or the contracts under consideration. Noting no additional questions, Commissioner Deol asked if there was a motion to approve the two contracts before the Commission. Commissioner Vargas moved to approve the request for approval to changes made to the general and mini-grant contract/agreement for services, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim.

4. Request to Approve the First 5 Imperial Budget for FY 2025-2026:

Commissioner Deol noted that the next item is the First 5 Imperial Budget for FY 2025-2026, and asked Mr. Rodriguez for a summary of the budget included in the packet. He noted that the full budgets for First 5 Imperial were provided in the packet along with a summary of the budget which is on page 20 of the packet. He noted that the summary includes a breakdown of the budget for FY 2025-2026 for First 5 Administration and Management, School Readiness, the First 5 IMPACT Program, RFP General Grants for Year 1 of the FY2025-2028 funding cycle, Community Development Mini-grants for FY 2025-2026, Community Outreach Support Grants, Professional Development Grants and the Early Childhood Education PACES Stipend. He stated that the total budget for the year is \$2,09,917.00, which does not include any encumbered amounts from the previous year, and indicated that in the column next to the Budget Amount was the same requested budget for the FY 2024-2025, and the variance between the two years. He noted that the FY 2025-2026 budget is significantly less than FY 2024-2025, which is \$191,374.75 less.

He stated that the First 5 Administration and Management component of the budget was only \$1,386.20 less than the previous year, namely due to additional increases in insurance, rents, audit costs and fees being charged by the First 5 Association. He noted that the School Readiness Program had increased by over \$20,000 due to reductions in the IMPACT Program by 10% and Home Visitation Program being eliminated for now. He noted that General RFP Grants were also lower by \$39,082, though budgeted amounts for mini-grants had increased due to the higher awards this year. Commissioner Deol asked about the significant increase to the First 5 Association, and Mr. Rodriguez had indicated that the amount had increased by over 200%. Commissioner Miramontes asked if the Commission had to be part of the Association, or what happens if the Commission does not participate. Mr. Rodriguez had indicated that the increase was more than significant, and Commissions are not required to participate, and there is at least one County that has indicated that it would not participate in the Association, and others have indicated that they may not pay the increase. He also noted that the amounts for the Community Outreach, Professional Development Grants and the PACES Stipend did not change. He also indicated that, included with the budget, was a breakdown of salaries, and those are

identified under the professional and special services category as per the County Auditor's Department. Funds for staff salaries are transferred into the payroll account through US Bank, as the County Auditor will not process our payroll. He also noted that the current budget is approximately 8% lower than the previous year and gave a brief summary of the steps for wiring money to the US Bank payroll account and how payroll is processed. Commissioner Vargas asked if what was being provided was the total budget for the coming fiscal year and if the Commission had a projected revenue. Mr. Rodrugez provided a summary of the projected revenue for the year, including revenue for the IMPACT Program, and Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenue, in addition to noting that additional funds to cover expenses will be from the Commission's fund balance or reserve funds, noting that the Commission has approximately \$5.5 million in reserve that is held due to projected drops in tobacco revenue. Commissioner Kim asked if the Commission's revenue is going to be enough? Mr. Rodriguez affirmed due to the population smoking less, tobacco reform, such as the flavors ban and other factors, Commission revenue for that year would not be enough. Commissioner Deol noted that birth rates have not changed much, and that would not impact revenue reduction as much. Commissioner Kim noted that it would be a good idea for the Commission to write grants and distribute those moneys received to other agencies like the way the federal government works with states and to look at our reserve to see how that can be used to leverage funds. Mr. Rodriguez noted that it is important to plan, and that any missteps may affect the Commission's reserve balance in a negative way, and that it would be important to update the 10-year fiscal plan for the Commission.

Commissioner Llanas asked if the budget presented was for FY 2025-2026 or for FY 2024-2025. Mr. Rodriguez noted that it was for FY 2025-2026, and that in the summary that budget is being compared to what was budgeted for FY 2024-2025 so that Commission members would see where changes have occurred in the proposed budget. She then asked if, based on revenue, the balance would be covered through the reserve balance. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that that would be the case and that currently the difference would be approximately \$120,000. Commissioner Vargas asked if there was a minimum that needed to be set aside for reserve. Mr. Rodriguez noted that there is no minimum requirement, as there is not a maximum requirement as well, though he indicated that having approximately 2 to 2.5 years in reserves is what the Commission works toward in order to ensure sustaining funding levels throughout the community. He noted that some First 5s are having issue related to their reserves and some have exhausted their reserves all together. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Kim and seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; with no further discussion the motion carried with all in favor.

5. Request for Approval of Administrative Costs Breakdown Report for FY 2025-2026:

Commissioner Deal noted that the next item was the request to approve of the Administrative Costs Breakdown for FY 2025-2026, which is related to the budget just approved.. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that on page 90 of the packet Commission members would find a copy of the Administrative Costs Breakdown for FY 2025-2026, which represents the budget that was just approved with a breakdown of all costs associated with that budget by line-item and alternatively each line item is further broken down by Administrative, Program and Evaluation Costs. He noted that this is part of the Cost Allocation Plan developed by the Commission, and includes a definition of administrative costs, and specifically states that these costs are not to exceed 15% of the total budget and would apply to the budget unless adjusted during a public

meeting by the Commission. He stated what the Commission is looking at under this scenario is an estimated administrative costs total that is 9.02% and would therefore not exceed the 15% threshold. He also indicated that expenses associated with Program Costs were estimated at approximately 81% and Evaluation Costs at 9.9%.

He noted that this report may change slightly due to the increased expenses noted for the City of El Centro, as the Commission had approved of a higher total for the mini-grant applications. He indicated that, as a result of this, Program Costs would increase slightly, and Administrative and Evaluation costs would decrease slightly as well, which would not entail a significant difference, though there would be a difference noted, and therefore the Commission can either hold off on approving of this report as it can be presented later with the changes, or approve of the report noting that there will be slight changes due to the budget changes that the Commission had approved previously. Commissioner Deol expressed that the Commission could go ahead and approve of the report at this time noting that there would be adjustments that were approved of by the Commission, and that these adjustments would not increase administrative costs. She then asked if anyone would like to make a motion to approve of the report noting the adjustments. A motion to approve of the Administrative Costs Report with the noted adjustments to the budget was made by Commissioner Miramontes and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Camacho. With no further discussion, the motion passed with all in favor.

6. Request to Approve Engagement for Services with Independent Auditor for the Annual Audit of First 5 Imperial's Financial Statements FY 2024-2025: Commissioner Deol noted that the Commission would now consider approval for engagement for services with an independent auditor to conduct the audit for FY 2024-2025. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Commission was asking for approval to move forward with this request so that the Chairperson and Director can move to sign an engagement letter with the Certified Public Accountant, Roger Tubach, who was the individual who audited the Commission's financial statements for FY 2023-2024. He noted that there were issues with the previous audit, due to a change in the agency that was originally contracted to complete the audit report, and that the review of the previous audit had just passed.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a brief summary of the audit process and guidelines generally used by the State Controllers' Office. Commissioner Deol asked if Mr. Tubach would be the auditor again for the Commission. He indicated that the Commission is asking to engage with Mr. Tubach for one more year, and work with him to ensure that the audit is complete in a timely and efficient manner, and he expressed that the implemented changes should be in effect, and then perhaps move to have a longer-term engagement, as the Commission needs to look at costs associated with the audit report and take into consideration that he is the only local auditor that does government audits.

Commissioner Deol asked what the reason was for the Commission for re-engaging with Mr. Tubach for the audit report, as she had understood that he was no longer available. Mr. Rodriguez had noted that previously, when Mr. Tubach was working with the Commission, he had indicated that he would be retiring and would not be able to continue conducting the Commission's audit report, which was a few years ago. Subsequently the Commission contract with Fechter and Co., CPAs to complete the audit report, and this agency had done so for a number of years, though due to costs associated with travel and staff shortages, Fechter and Co.

had notified the Commission that it would not be able to conduct the FY 2023-2024 audit report. Therefore, staff worked to acquire the services of a new independent auditor, and Mr. Tubach was contacted and available to help the Commission with this process. He reiterated that Mr. Tubach is the only local auditor that can perform a government audit, that Hutchingson and Bloodgood no longer provide these services, and George Woo, CPA, does not either. Therefore, the Commission's best option at this time is to work with Mr. Tubach, as he is professional and can support the requested service. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the primary objective is to complete the audit report for the Commission and submit it by the State Controllers Office's deadline, as this was not the case during the previous audit report.

Commissioner Deol noted that the Commission will then consider an approval to engage with Mr. Tubach for audit services for this fiscal year and asked members if there is a motion to approve the request. Commissioner Kim made the motion to approve engaging for services with an independent auditor to conduct the Commission's audit of financial statements for FY 2024-2025 and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes. Noting no further discussion, the motion passes with all in favor.

7. Request for Approval of the First 5 California Annual Report FY 2023-2024: Commissioner Deol noted that the next item was the approval for the First 5 California Annual Report for FY 2023-2024. Mr. Rodriguez noted that on a yearly basis First 5 County Commissioners are required to approve of the State Commission's Annual Report. He indicated that the report was included in the Packet as Attachment A, and provided a brief summary of the report that included: First 5 CA's Theory of Change, Legislative and Budget Engagement, Highlights and Supported Bills; 2024-2025 Young Children's Policy Agenda; Kit for New Parents, Medicare Campaign and Public Relations, First 5 Programs, such as IMPACT, Refugee Family Support, Fatherhood Initiative, Early Math Project, Imagination Library, and Home Visiting Regional Technical Assistance Grants, in addition to First 5 County Commission Result Areas, which is a general summary of demographic and fiscal information by program reported by 58 County Commissions under the four result areas identified by First 5 California (Improved Family Resiliency, Improved Child Development, Improved Child Health, and Improved Systems of Care), First 5 County Commission Program Highlights, that consists of a brief narrative of a program or service highlight, and a listing of Appendices that provide a breakdown of revenues by source, number of services by expenditures, result area and service type definitions, and demographic data on populations served.

He noted that that the information relevant to County Commissions is aggregated data, of which the annual report information submitted by the Commission in October is included in the report along with that of the 57 other County Commissions. He further stated that each County Commission is highlighted in the County Section, noting that the highlight for Imperial County for FY 2023-2024 was based on the family resource fairs promoted by the Commission at school readiness catchment area schools. He also indicated that the report is generally ready by April each year, though this year the report was revised and therefore it is being presented at the end of the year. Commissioner Deol asked if there was anything else in the report that highlighted Imperial, of which Mr. Rodriguez noted that the information provided was mostly aggregated, though that County Commissions are required by statute to approve of this report. Commissioner Deol then asked if there was a motion to approve of the First 5 California Annual Report. Commissioner Miramontes made a motion to approve of the First 5 California Annual

Report, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kim. With no further discussion, the motion carried with all in favor.

8. Request for Approval of the First 5 Imperial Strategic Plan: Commissioner Deol then noted that the next item was the approval of the First 5 Imperial Strategic Plan. Mr. Rodriguez then noted, that as with the annual report, County Commissions are required to approve of their Strategic Plan on a yearly basis in a public hearing. He further stated that through this approval process County Commissions may approve of any one of the following: a new Strategic Plan, a revised Strategic Plan, or a Strategic Plan with no changes. He noted that the plan that is being presented to the Commission at this time was being submitted for approval with no changes. This plan was used for the current funding cycle that was approved of previously by the Commission, and therefore no changes were recommended for the plan for FY 2024-2025.

He noted that the Strategic Plan was included in the packet as Attachment B. Commissioner Deol stated that Commission members would then be approving of the Strategic Plan, included in the packet, with no changes. She asked if there was a motion to approve of the Strategic Plan with no changes. A motion was made by Commissioner Kim to approve of the current Strategic Plan with no changes, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes. With no further questions or discussion the motion passed with all in favor.

9. First 5 Imperial Grantee 3rd Quarter FY 2024-2025 Update: Mr. Rodriguez provided an update on third quarter progress reports for First 5 Imperial. He noted that activities covered major or general grants and mini grants funded by the Commissioner for the year. He noted that commission staff are currently conducting a thorough review of 3rd quarter progress reports submitted by projects funded through the third quarter. The Commission funded 6 Major Grant Projects with a total award of \$1,025,681 and 6 Mini-Grant Projects with a total award of \$122,985 for FY 2024-2025, and that the activities provided by partner agencies fall within the First 5 Strategic Plan and offer direct services to children and families, community strengthening efforts, provider capacity building opportunities, or systems change efforts. He noted that as of April 15, 6 Major Grants had submitted the required reports, and 4 of 6 Mini-Grant funded Projects submitted the required reports and only one agency was not able to provide services, due to staffing, and the other agency had asked the Commission to terminate the contract due to its inability to complete the proposed services.

He then provided an expenditure report noting that major grants have expenses up to 66% of their approved budgets through the end of March 31, 2025, and mini-grants have expenses up to 51% through that same period. He also stated that the majority of services were provided through Child Health, at 41% of all of the services, though this does not necessarily address the intensity of services offered, such as services related to Family Strengthening, which include home instruction and other home visitation services, as well as case management. These services are generally much more intensive, that is by requiring more service contact. He indicated that, as an example, the IVROP program provided up to 30 home visits per year to families, which entail a significant amount of time and contacts. Commissioner Deol asked of the Program was a home visitation program and therefore falls under the Family Strengthening area for services. Mr. Rodriguez stated that that was certainly the case, though that project could also fall under the Early Care and Education Result Area.

He then indicated that all of the professional development services were under the Early Care and Education Result Area through the grant that was provided to the County Office of Education, which is something that the Commission will want to assess, namely why agencies are not being supported through professional development in the areas of child health or family strengthening. He then addressed a breakdown of the services provided by City, also noting that the majority of services continue to be provided in the three larger population centers in the county, which account for approximately 72% of all direct services.

He then provided a summary of expenses by agency, highlighting that in general agencies have expended approximately 66% of the total allocation, some may have expended significantly more, such as CASA of Imperial County, where as others may have spent less, such as the Imperial County Free Library, and this is primarily due to staff turnover. In addition two mini-grant programs were not expending funds due to either the inability of the agency to hire staff required to have the project ready to offer services or the agency requesting to terminate the contract due to its inability to provide the services. He then indicated that the summary report was included in the packet, beginning on page 99, and asked if there were any questions on the summary report and/or services provided by funded projects for the third quarter.

VII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Llanas reported that the Department of Social Services has recently gone through a number of changes, particularly changes in MediCal, of which she stated that services would no longer be offered to undocumented individuals, effective January 2026, and anyone who is already enrolled will continue to be enrolled. She also noted that asset limits would be in effect, where individuals eligible could not have assets over \$2,000 for single persons, and \$3,000 for a couple. She noted that it is estimated that at least 112,000 Californians will be impacted by the asset limits. In addition she noted that there would be a cap placed on hours for individuals working in the in-home supportive services program, where the cap was at 66 hours per week and now would be 50 hours per week, though this does not mean that the hours for services will be capped, but the person in need of care will have to request another provider for these hours. Ms. Llanas further noted that there would be changes that apply to foster youth as well.

Commissioner Vargas also noted that there were changes to the Public Health Department, those changes would be regarding the covered health funding, though the Department has funding covered through 2026, and the Department was able to transfer staff to other areas or supported staff needing employment as a result of changes, and fortunately staff was able to find employment in other areas. She also noted that the two individuals that were part of their Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program retired this year, though the Department was able to hire a new public health nurse, so there will be a new Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health manager and new Community Health Nurse, and both were from Pioneers Memorial Healthcare, and they both have the background in the respective areas and may be working with First 5 Programs.

VIII. Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Commissioner Miramontes motioned to adjourn, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Deol. The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 pm. With all in favor.