



California Children and Families Commission Meeting

January 25, 2024

MEETING MINUTES

Item 1 – Opening Remarks

Chair Albright called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Katie Albright
 Elsa Jimenez
 Vivian Velasco Paz
 Shana Hazan
 Jackie Majors
 Lori Risso

Ex Officio Member Present: No one appointed at this time.

Announcements

Executive Director Jackie Thu-Huong Wong opened the meeting with a Tribal Land Acknowledgment.

Chair Albright began her remarks by expressing her gratitude to all First 5 California (F5CA) staff members and partners who accomplished a great deal in 2023. Chair Albright stated the Commission will be meeting throughout California in 2024 and will be able to see the work happening locally with children ages 0 to 5 throughout the State. Chair Albright mentioned that due to timing, logistics, and a full agenda, a site visit was not possible and expressed her gratitude to the Refugee Enhancement Development Association for considering hosting the meeting. Chair Albright provided an overview of the goals for the meeting and that the order of the agenda was revised.

CLOSED SESSION

Report Out of Closed Session:

The Commission met during Closed Session. No action was taken.

Action Item 3 – Consent Calendar

MOTION/ACTION: Vice Chair Hazan moved to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Majors.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Action Item 6 – Fiscal Year 2022–23 Annual Report

Dr. Martha Dominguez, Deputy Director, Program Innovation and Evaluation Division, shared an overview of what First 5 California (F5CA) has done collectively with the Commission to advance the North Star and Audacious Goal at the state level, with local/external partners. Highlights included:

- Statewide Focus and Investments
- Results-Based Accountability
- State Highlights
- Policy Pillars and Wins
- County Expenditures and Result Areas
- Population Served Data
- County Highlights

Discussion

Commissioner Majors asked staff if there is a way to invest in systems where the demographic numbers are inaccurate or incomplete and if there is room for growth in that area. Dr. Dominguez responded that staff will look at options for partners to submit data and give them the opportunity to be able to categorize or self-identify as they desire. Commissioner Majors requested clarification on the unknown category in the language demographic. Dr. Dominguez stated this is an area that can be improved upon and to understand why the “unknowns” don't want to report or if it's the data collection process. In addition, it was noted that there were a handful of counties that did not meet the submission deadline, after several staff reminders and extensions, and the data set was not complete. It was also noted that this is not unusual.

Vice Chair Hazan stated in the area surrounding theory of change and results-based accountability framework principles, that there were some things that were unclear and asked if there are examples of how it's being used that might be more useful than how the information was shared. She suggested consolidating some of the information that was repetitive. Vice Chair Hazan expressed there seemed to be an emphasis on Asian Pacific Islanders (API) in the media update and asked if there are any other pilot learning populations. Dr. Dominguez stated F5CA is focused on key populations and that it's not monolithic because of the language, but also the engagement looks very different than doing multi-cultural, English, or traditional media and there is more intentionality on techniques to engage API. Also based on the data provided by counties, AAPI languages were second largest number of languages served after Spanish. In addition, it was shared that in-language Spanish media was an integral part of the media campaign from the inception.

Chair Albright stated for next year's Annual Report demographics, she would like to see a column representing California's total population to really understand who's being served and who's being reached, and to address concerns around the "unknown" data.

Public Comment

Nina Machado, First 5 Amador: Ms. Machado shared Amador participates in the Imagination Library and their most populous numbers are through that program. Ms. Machado stated the Imagination Library doesn't collect demographic data. Ms. Machado shared 70% of the age eligible children are participating, but there is no data on percentages of what language the books are in.

Heidi Mendenhall, First 5 Tehama: Ms. Mendenhall shared information on IMPACT and local demographics.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Majors moved to approve First 5 California's Fiscal Year 2022–2023 Annual Report and its submission to the Governor, the Legislature, and county commissions, as required by statute. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Risso.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Action Item 7 – Smoking Cessation

Kristin Torres, Interim Education Administrator, provided an overview of the Smoking Cessation program, including F5CA's statutory requirement and evidence-based educational approaches.

Highlights included:

- The need for smoking cessation
- Data related to women and new mother smokers
- Update on Kick-it California (KIC), formerly known as the California Smokers' Helpline
- Current funding and population reach
- Demographics identifying First 5 clients vs. non-First 5 clients
- How KIC is funded
- How F5CA funds are expended
- KIC funding recommendations

Discussion

Commissioner Majors questioned if there were programs for specific demographic groups that tobacco companies target. Dr. Dominguez responded one of the recommendations is to leverage communication efforts with digital and social media to reach specific at-risk demographic groups. Dr. Dominguez stated F5CA's aim is to be more intentional in partnerships, unify with other state agencies, and collectively leverage resources to be more successful.

Vice Chair Hazan asked what would be different if F5CA decreased the investment by \$1 million dollars over the 3-year period and how F5CA arrived at the \$2.5 million request. Dr. Dominguez stated KIC has a disproportionate billing process for funders and that F5CA clients compose of approximately 12.5%. She further stated the funding by each agency is proportional to the population served and that based on F5CA's population served through December 2023 with six months left on the current contract, \$2.5 million aligns with an estimated number of people to be served from FY 2024–27.

Commissioner Jimenez asked what the total amount of all funders is projected to be over the next 3 years. Representatives from the California Department of Public Health and Center for Disease Control projected the total funding amount to be approximately \$10 million and the total of all 3 funders is projected to be \$12.5 million.

Public Comment

None.

MOTION/ACTION: Vice Chair Hazan moved to approve up to \$2.5 million from the Education, and Research and Development accounts for three years to fund a new smoking cessation contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jimenez.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Action Item 5 – Election of 2024 Commission Vice Chair

Chair Albright and staff recognized and thanked Vice Chair Hazan for her service on the Commission as Vice Chair in 2023. Chair Albright opened the floor to nominations for the Vice Chair position for 2024. Commissioner Jimenez nominated Commissioner Hazan. There were no other nominations.

Public Comment

None.

MOTION/ACTION: Commissioner Risso moved the nomination of Commissioner Hazan to serve as Vice Chair for the First 5 California Children and Families Commission through January 2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Majors.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Action Item 5 – Advisory Committee Assignments

Jaime Hastings, Administration and Governance Director, provided a brief background on the information item presented at the December 14, 2023, Commission meeting. Staff submitted two options for consideration based on the election of the Vice Chair. With the election of the Vice Chair, F5CA staff recommended Option 1 Advisory Committee assignments.

Discussion

Chair Albright shared the recommended Advisory Committee assignments are based on a survey indicating areas of interest by each Commissioner. Chair Albright stated the assignments are based on prior experiences and Commissioner focus areas.

Public Comment

None.

MOTION/ACTION: Vice Chair Hazan moved to approve the assignment of Commissioners to the current standing committees as described in the January 2024 Commission Advisory Committee descriptions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jimenez.

Executive: Chair Albright and Vice Chair Hazan

Public Education and Outreach: Vice Chair Hazan and Commissioner Majors

Fiscal: Commissioner Jimenez and Commissioner Risso

Program and Evaluation: Commissioner Majors and Commissioner Risso

Public Policy: Chair Albright and Commissioner Paz

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Information Item 4 – Financial Update

Marcia Thomas, Director of Fiscal Services, provided an update on F5CA's financial status, including the Financial Plan and Fund Condition Summary.

Discussion

Vice Chair Hazan stated in in the next 5 to 6 years, there is approximately a \$2 million a year decrease and asked if F5CA expects to see a leveling off by FY 2028–29. Director Wong explained there is a leveling off year over year and the next 5 years to account for the flavor ban, which may help close the gap. Vice Chair Hazan asked why the projected interest is unchanged across FYs 2024–25 through 2027–28. Ms. Thomas responded F5CA doesn't know what the interest rate is going to be at the time of investment, and it fluctuates immeasurably, and the interest is an average placeholder.

Public Comment

None.

Item 2 – Public Comment

None.

Item 1 – Opening Remarks Continued

Partner Presentation

Director Wong introduced Julie Gallelo, Executive Director, First 5 Sacramento. Ms. Gallelo shared a PowerPoint presentation of the greater Sacramento region counties and what makes them unique and diverse. Ms. Gallelo also highlighted the individual strengths of each county. She specifically referenced the Refugee Family Support program and the incredible partnership and successes between the counties and the funded partners of the program. Janice LeRoux, Executive Director, Placer; and Ms. Kathy Guerrero, Executive Director, El Dorado, also shared some of the positive outcomes and collective strategies in the Sacramento region.

Usama Khalil, Founder, Refugee Enrichment and Development Association (REDA) shared a detailed PowerPoint presentation that included:

- Initial and new challenges for refugees
- Short-term and long-term needs
- REDA's Mission
- REDA Social Services, education, and youth programs
- F5CA and First 5 Sacramento regional counties funding achievements

Mr. Khalil thanked the Commission for the invitation and opportunity to share REDA's mission and impact, and the funding provided.

Discussion

Vice Chair Hazan questioned if there was any federal advocacy paired with the work Sacramento counties are doing and if First 5 is serving asylum seekers or only those who have been identified as refugees. Mr. Khalil stated REDA serves everyone; however, with the First 5 program, it is solely refugees. Ms. Gallelo shared the counties do have to turn away people due to the narrowly prescribed audience eligible for the funding. Ms. Gallelo stated she hopes the Commission will take into consideration the momentum that has been built and the success of the program to provide additional funding.

Courtney Armstrong, Director of Government Affairs, First 5 Association

Ms. Armstrong shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting:

- The urgency facing the First 5 network due to declining revenue
- The impact on California children and families
- Testimonials from local First 5s surrounding declining revenue
- Request Commission for partnership to identify and implement solutions for both short-term and long-term sustainability

Fabiola González, Executive Director, First 5 Fresno

Ms. González emphasized and reiterated the request for the Commission to partner, allocate, advocate, and collaborate as the First 5 Network looks forward to the future.

Discussion

Commissioner Majors expressed her appreciation for the Association sharing the different impacts on families and children. Commissioner Majors stated the Commission struggles at times with the distribution and equity of funds and is hopeful there may be other ways to grow revenue.

Vice Chair Hazan asked how the Commission and First 5s can collaborate and partner further to generate alternative sources of revenue and/or to be creative with leveraging existing revenue.

Commissioner Jimenez asked staff to consider what paths are available to engage in direct conversations with First 5 Association staff and to be more intentional and proactive to ensure services continue at the current level.

Public Comment

Ofelia Medina, Senior Policy Strategist, First 5 Los Angeles. Ms. Medina acknowledged the direct partnership/collaboration efforts with F5CA and highlighted a few of the initiatives. Ms. Medina shared First 5 Los Angeles will continue to work with First 5 to explore opportunities and provide population level resources for young children.

Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, Executive Director, First 5 California

Director Wong thanked the Association for their presentation and reiterated the importance of collaboration and discussion surrounding sustainability. Director Wong shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting:

- Status of Investments
- Program Updates
- Personnel Updates

Discussion

None.

Public Comment

None.

Item 8 – Small Population County Funding Augmentation (SPCFA)

Dr. Martha Dominguez shared an update on the SPCFA program. Content included:

- Declining Birthrates in California
- 0–5 Population Rates and Demographics in Small Counties
- Past and Current Funding
- 13 out of 21 County Funding Execution Rate
- Small Counties Utilizing Leverage Braided Funding and Partnerships
- County Specific Funding/Program Highlights
- Funding Assessment
- Oversight and Support
- Funding Assessment Recommendations

John Simms, Consultant, First 5 Association, also provided a PowerPoint presentation on the SPCFA program. Content included:

- Historical Background and Facts
- Current Funding Cycle and Eligibility
- Augmentation Philosophy Changes
- Oversight/Administrative Obligations
- Geographic Challenges
- Augmentation Funding Comparison
- Testimonials from local First 5s
- Improvement Recommendations
- Shift in Augmentation Funding

Mr. Simms referenced a letter sent to F5CA in November 2023 and asked if the Association could expect a response to the letter.

Discussion

Vice Chair Hazan questioned if the shift to different reporting requirements was a decision made by the Commission. Director Wong responded it was her understanding that legal counsel advised F5CA not to provide allocations without deliverables to be in compliance with the State Commission's statutory authority. Commissioner Majors shared there was a robust conversation around reporting requirements. Mr. Simms added in 2021, it was represented as the State Controller's Office was forcing a change in the program. Mr. Simms stated the Association asked for a copy of the directive and never received it. Chair Albright stated there is more research that needs to be done around this topic.

Item 9 – Fatherhood Initiative (Moved to May 23, 2024 Commission Meeting)

Item 10 – Adjournment

Chair Albright adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is May 23, 2024.