



MINUTES
February 13, 2014

I. Call to Order

This meeting of the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Mrs. Sigmond, Commission Chair. The meeting was held at Conference Room C/D of the County Administration Building which is located at 940 W. Main Street in El Centro, California.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Karla Sigmond
Becky Green
Chief Miguel Colon, Jr.
Supervisor Ray Castillo
Robin Hodgkin
Joong Kim
Barbara Deol

Commissioners Absent

Peggy Price
Yurii Camacho

III. Public Comment

No public comment was made at this time.

IV. Consent Calendar Items

Commissioners considered approval of the consent calendar agenda items for the meeting of February 13, 2014. Commissioner Hodgkin moved to approve the consent calendar items as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Castillo, and having noted no further discussion the motion was approved unanimously by the members present.

V. Presentation by the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission Special Programs Dept.

Staff members of the Special Programs department Dr. Galindo, Francisca Gomez and Elizabeth Zumaya provided a presentation and information about the events relevant to the School Readiness Program, the Child Signature Program, and activities related to the services they offer. The following points were highlighted:

- This year, the School Readiness program will be working with 6 elementary schools. They are: Washington Elementary School in El Centro, Finley Elementary School in Holtville, Kennedy Gardens and Mains Elementary Schools in Calexico, Seeley Elementary School in Seeley, and Westmorland Elementary School in Westmorland.
- Staff will be working with the elementary schools in order to offer a "Children Ready for Kinder Summer Transition Program." This program offers children who will be entering their respective elementary school an opportunity to attend school during the summer; targeted for children with no prior preschool experience and limited special needs. Pre and post tests are provided to the children.

- Family Health and Community Resource Fairs will be held at the elementary schools. During the last fiscal year, the average number of agencies attending ranged from 25 to 30 participants. Health screenings and oral checks were offered during the health fairs, as well as numerous resources for the families.
- School Readiness staff also offered early developmental screenings using the Ages and Stages questionnaires.
- Car/Booster seat clinics were held in collaboration with the California Highway Patrol and the Imperial County Public Health Department.
- The PACES (Professional Advancement for Childcare Educators Stipend) Program was opened this year to family child care providers, Federal funded preschool centers, state funded centers and privately owned centers. The child care providers from the preschool classrooms working in collaboration with the Child Signature Program received application priority.
- 100 PACES applications were made available to eligible childcare educators. Applications are still remaining until the end of the school year.
- The Child Signature Program is working with four preschool programs which were identified in catchment areas with an API score between 1-3.
- The Early Learning Specialist is working with 30 classrooms and is conducting readiness assessments; will provide an improvement plan and help facilitate the E4 (Early Education Effectiveness Exchange).
- The E4 program is a statewide resource designed to facilitate quality improvement in preschool centers; intensive training and technical support will be provided to classroom teachers both in English and Spanish.

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

1. **Request to Approve ICCFFC Audit Report FY 2012-2013:** The Annual Audit Report for FY 2012-2013 was submitted to the California State Controller's office and First 5 California by Roger Tubach, CPA; copies of the final report were reviewed by Commissioners and were also made available to the public. Commissioner Deol made a motion to approve the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission's Audit Report Fiscal Year 2012-2013; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Green. Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.
2. **Annual Report for FY 2012-2013:** Commissioners reviewed reports submitted to the Institute for Social Research, the statewide evaluation team retained by First 5 California to complete the statewide annual report. Mr. Rodriguez talked about the process involved in putting the data together and gave a brief summary about the demographic data, narrative and fiscal reports for services provided in FY 2012-13. Commissioner Deol made a motion to approve the reports and data submitted to First 5 California; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Green. Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.
3. **Grantee 4th Quarter Progress Reports FY 2012-13 and Grantees 1st Quarter Progress Reports for FY 2013-14:** Commissioners were given a brief summary of the Grantees Progress Reports, 4th Quarter FY 2012-13 and 1st Quarter FY 2013-14. Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Brawley Public Library had not yet submitted their 4th quarter report due to staff turnover; Commission Staff assisted the LAMBS staff draft the 1st quarter report. Discussion further continued regarding the Healthy Families America program.

4. **Mini-Grant Application for FY 2014-2015:** Commissioners discussed the idea of releasing a mini-grant funding opportunity for the upcoming fiscal year; discussion ensued regarding the application process. A total of \$150,000 has been earmarked for this funding process; applications should not exceed \$25,000 each. The Community Development Mini-Grant Step 1 of the process involves the submittal of a Statement of Interest to Apply form; this is a one page form which will provide a brief description of the intended project. Commissioners will then make a recommendation to invite applicants to submit a full application based on the Statement of Interest to Apply; Step 2 of the process is to submit the mini-grant proposal by its due date. The Timeline was briefly reviewed, the mini-grant application guidelines will be released on February 24, 2014. Commissioner Green made a motion to release a Community Development Mini-Grant funding opportunity for FY 2014-2015, approving the guidelines as presented; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin. Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.
5. **Budget Revision – Neighborhood House of Calexico:** The Children's Literacy Project which is administered by the Neighborhood House of Calexico is requesting a budget revision. They are asking to transfer 11,806 from the salary and fringe category to the liability insurance category in order to meet worker's compensation insurance expenses. Discussion continued regarding the clarification of worker's compensation as a fringe benefit rather than a separate liability expense. Commissioner Hodgkin expressed concern as to the classification of this category and its impact on the Project. Commissioner Green made a motion to approve the budget request made by the Neighborhood House of Calexico for its Children's Literacy Project; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Deol. Commissioner Colon is recommending that the worker's compensation liability be clarified and the request be brought back at a future meeting. The motion passed with 4-Favor, 0-Abstain, 2-Opposed (Hodgkin, Colon).
6. **Request to Terminate Agreement for Services of Independent Contract (No. 1314-9975) with the Imperial County Office of Education's Mini-Grant Project FY 2013-14:** Mr. Rodriguez advised that a letter was received from the Imperial County Office of Education requesting to terminate the contract entered between their agency and the Commission as part of the Community Development Mini-Grant project. These mini-grant funds were intended to create a community resource network, however, given the fact that the 211 project already provides community resources the Project administrator felt there might be duplicate services. Mr. Rodriguez noted that a reimbursement in the amount of \$4988 was due from the Imperial County Office of Education. A motion was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Castillo approving the request to terminate the contract between the Imperial County Office of Education and the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission. Having noted no further comments, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.
7. **Request to Approve new Employee Agreements:** Commissioners reviewed the proposed new Employee Agreements; Mr. Rodriguez noted that the Agreements were being forwarded and reviewed by Mr. Grillot, the Commission's attorney. This is part of the process to phase out the independent contract status and institute Commission employees. The start date was changed to reflect the date the Commission ratifies the contracts. Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the changes made by legal Counsel and noted the highlights:
 - Two types of contracts were identified: exempt and non-exempt employees. Non-exempt employees would accumulate comp time paid at 1.5 depending on classification.
 - Counsel recommends a two-year contract because Commission may opt to adopt various policies as it establishes this new process and moves forward; a two-year contract facilitates this adjustment.

- Counsel recommends that the Cost of Living adjustment should be that which is accepted by the State of California.
- The insurance benefit should be similar to that which is afforded under the Affordable Care Act; still to be defined. Discussion continued as to whether “small employer” or individual plans are available. Further clarification on this benefit will be made at a later time.
- The tuition benefit is similar to that which the county provides to county employees. The rate was approved for an increased this year by the County Board of Supervisors, up to \$2,250.

A motion to approve the new Employee Agreements was made by Commissioner Deol and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Castillo. Discussion ensued regarding the issue of the Cost of Living Adjustment. Commissioners Hodgkin and Green feel this language should be changed to reflect that the Commission will decide whether or not to approve the COLA adjustment rather than this being an “automatic” action. The consensus of the Commission was to review this policy and also to discuss increase to salary merits also taking into account budgetary projections. The recommendation is to amend the contract language to state under Section 4 A. “The Commission shall annually review the Employee’s salary, and consider whether to make an adjustment in compensation, including but not limited to cost-of-living adjustments. All and any action to increases to Employee’s salary including to a cost-of-living as defined by Government Code shall be done in a Regular Meeting of the Commission.” Having noted no further comments, the motion to approve the Employee Agreements to include the amended revision was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.

8. **Request to Approve Authorization to Contract for Payroll Services:** Mr. Rodriguez explained that in order to ensure that employment tax liability is collected and paid, and to ensure proper controls related to employee payroll are met the recommendation is being made to contract for payroll services. Three agencies were identified, no RFP is required. The general consensus of the Commission was to contract with the local agency, Allied Business Services. The rate for payroll services will be approximately \$80 per month. Commissioner Castillo made a motion to approve the contract for payroll services with Allied Business Services, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin. Having noted no further comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.
9. **Request to Open Imperial County Children and Families First Commission Payroll Account:** Mr. Rodriguez explained that as part of the process of moving forward with employee contracts, it will be necessary to open a payroll checking account that will only be used to cover employees’ payroll. This account will be identified as being for the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission, and checks issued under this account will be generated by the agency contracted by the Commission for payroll services. The signatories on this account will be the Chairperson and co-chair; only 1 signature (either or) will be required. Mr. Rodriguez explained that he is proposing to open the account with one of the local banks, either Union Bank, Wells Fargo or First Imperial Credit Union; and he is also working with the County Auditor’s staff in preparation for this transition. After brief discussion and clarification, Commissioner Castillo made a motion approving that the Commission open a checking account for business related to employees’ payroll; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin. Having noted no further comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present and Mr. Rodriguez was given authorization to proceed with the transition.
10. **Funding Priorities for 2015-2017 Request For Proposal Cycle:** Following recommendations from the previous year to the Commission’s Strategic Plan, Mr. Rodriguez is suggesting that Commissioners begin

discussing funding priorities and move forward with identifying specific result areas or initiatives that the Commission particularly wants to focus on. The general consensus of the Commission was to first conduct a survey and then form a committee to address the Strategic Plan.

11. Request to Approve Schedule of Meetings for 2014: Commissioners reviewed the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2014 and talked about moving the meeting time to 3:30 rather than 1:15. Commissioner Castillo made a motion approving the Schedule of Meetings 2014 with the time amended to 3:30 pm; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Deol. Having noted no further comment, the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.

12. Commission Updates: Mr. Rodriguez provided the following update:

- 1) Commission staff has begun the first phase of the early care and education workforce study; family child care providers and preschool center staff will be assessed. A sample of the Center Director Survey and the Family Child Care Provider Survey was included in the packet.
- 2) The Commission has a new website look; the website was created by staff and will be exclusively managed by staff.
- 3) First 5 State Commission Director, Ms. Maben, has canceled her visit to the Imperial Valley for the time being.

VII. Commissioner Comments

Supervisor Castillo invited everyone to attend the State of the County address which is being held in the evening at the Rodney Auditorium in Calexico beginning at 6:30 pm. Commissioner Hodgkin urged everyone to get their flu shots; although the rates in the State of California are decreasing, Imperial County rates are not.

VIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Green moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Castillo and approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. Meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm. Next meeting is scheduled on April 3, 2014.