



MINUTES September 8, 2011

1. Call to Order

This meeting of the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission was called to order at 1:15 p.m. by Mrs. Sigmond, Commission Chair. The meeting was held at the County Administration Building, Conference Room C, located at 940 W. Main Street in El Centro, California.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Karla Sigmond, Chair
James Semmes
Joong Kim
Yurii Camacho
Supervisor Ray Castillo

Commissioners Absent

Miguel Colón, Jr.
Becky Green
Barbara Deol
Robin Hodgkin
Supervisor Mike Kelley

3. Public Comment

No public comment was noted at this time.

4. Presentations (This is Agenda Item 5)

- * Court Appointed Special Advocates: Alex Cardenas, CASA Director, gave a presentation regarding the CASA SHEANE Project. The goal of the Project is to address the needs of children ages 0 to 5 entering foster care due to abuse and neglect through advocacy and other services that work toward establishing permanency and assuring that children receive health and developmental evaluations followed by treatment. Mr. Cardenas discussed the role of the CASA SHEANE Volunteers as well as their typical duties. He further added that the SHEANE Project is unique in that for the first time, as a result of the partnership between CASA and the Juvenile Court, abuse and neglected children are now proactively receiving a developmental screening; their goal is to provide developmental screenings to 90% of the children 0-5 who enter the foster care system through CASA. Mr. Cardenas noted that they have formed a working collaborative with the Family Treehouse for the provision of the developmental screenings.
- * ICOE Early Intervention for Children with Special Needs Project: Tasha Juneau, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher with the Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE), provided a brief summary of the Early Intervention for Children with Special Needs Preschool Project which is currently funded by the Commission. Ms. Juneau explained that their Preschool program supports children who have been identified with a special need or who may be at-risk and are not eligible for other specialized preschool programs due to income criteria or other factors. The Preschool serves a total of 16 children throughout the school year; 8 in the morning and 8 in the afternoon session. They provide the children access to a wide range of learning opportunities and activities within a small group setting utilizing a research-based

curriculum with a strong focus on preschool inclusion which works to include these children with special needs with their typically developing peers. The goal of the program is to prepare the children so that they may enter a general education Kindergarten classroom or a Special Education Kindergarten classroom.

5. **Consent Calendar Items** (This is Agenda Item 4; a Quorum was established at this time)

The Commission considered approval of the consent agenda items. Commissioner Semmes moved that the Commission approve the consent calendar items as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Camacho; the motion was approved by a unanimous vote of the members present.

6. **Administrative Report**

6A. **Administrative Costs Report FY 2010-2011**: Julio Rodriguez, Executive Director, provided a summary of the Administrative Costs Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 and requested Commission approval to accept and approve the report; the administrative costs represented 8.01% of all expenses for the fiscal year. Based on the policy adopted by the Commission, the administrative costs did not exceed the limit set of no more than 15%. Without factoring in prior year encumbrances, administrative costs were 9.67%; program costs were 82.28% and evaluation costs were 8.04%. A motion was made by Commissioner Semmes and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho to approve the Administrative Costs Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011. No further discussion ensued and the motion was approved with all members voting in favor.

6B. **Assembly Bill (AB) 99 Update**: Mr. Rodriguez provided an update on AB 99:

- * A hearing was held on August 30th in Fresno with respect to the lawsuit filed by multiple County Commissions challenging AB99, where attorneys representing Orange, Fresno and Los Angeles Counties presented on behalf of those filing the lawsuit.
- * Attorneys for County Commissions essentially based their arguments on the fact that AB 99 does not further the Children and Families Act of 1998, and is not consistent with the Act. Therefore violates the state constitutionality for making changes to voter initiatives in that AB 99 was not ratified through a voter-approved initiative and only by a vote of the two-thirds of the State Legislature. Litigation also focused on the basis that AB 99 is inconsistent with the intention of voters, which has to place an emphasis on local decision making; that unspent money would remain in a county trust fund to be used for future funding decisions.
- * Arguments presented by the Attorney General's Office were not as lengthy, and essentially argued that AB99 was consistent with Proposition 10 in that revenue will target children 0-5, it will be dedicated to health and human services, and ensure that children in all counties receive services. The issue of supplantation of funds is also being disputed; the Attorney General felt that the bill does not contradict the non-supplantation provision related to Proposition 10.
- * The judge has 90 days to reach a decision and indicated that she would use the full 90 days to issue a decision due to a lack of resources. Furthermore, it is anticipated that an appeal process will follow. It was noted that the judge only directed a few questions to the defendant, the Attorney General's Office, during the hearing regarding where the funds will be allocated and the issue of local control.

6C. **Discussion to Consider Community Development Mini-Grant Application**: Mr. Rodriguez is seeking direction from the Commission as to whether they should develop a mini-grant application process. The issue of providing alternate forms of funding to the community, as well as to the early care and education community and/or focusing on meeting basic needs had been raised in previous meeting discussions. Mr.

Rodriguez further advised that the timeline to develop a mini-grant application cycle in line with funding for July 2012 should be in place by December 2011, if that is the direction the Commission wishes to take. Further discussion ensued regarding the need to support local preschool centers; alternate methods of funding were proposed. Another avenue of funding which was discussed was the Community Outreach Application; this method would ensure funds to applicants in a shorter time. A motion was made by Commissioner Semmes and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho to establish guidelines with the intent to fund utilizing the Community Outreach Application. Discussion ensued as to setting a funding amount (increase), limitations/non-limitations to the applying preschools, establishing guidelines and criteria for funding through the Community Outreach Application. Upon further discussion, the motion was approved with all members voting in favor. Direction was given to staff to prepare guidelines and bring back for further review and approval.

Commissioners also wished to explore the possibility of establishing a mini-grant funding cycle; further discussion continued regarding the impact of AB99 and the Commission's Long Term Financial Plan. A motion was made by Commissioner Semmes and seconded by Commissioner Camacho to bring back the issue of establishing mini-grant funding; the motion was approved with all members voting in favor.

- 6D. **Annual Audit Report Fiscal Year 2010-2011:** Mr. Rodriguez advised that the Annual Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 is due to First 5 California and the State Controller's office by November 1, 2011. The audit report, which will be conducted by Hutchinson and Bloodgood, will include new changes that will be addressed by our auditor which includes GASB 54, SAS No. 117 in addition to requirements for specific expenditures related to the Commission. Mr. Rodriguez further advised that he entered into an Agreement with Hutchinson and Bloodgood committing to an additional year for the purpose of conducting the Commission's audit ending June 30, 2011. The fees for this service will not exceed \$9,000.00; the amount meets the guideline limitations as per the Contract and Procurement Policy which authorizes the Director to enter into a contract agreement on behalf of the Commission. A bidding process will go into effect next year for the purpose of securing an agency who will conduct the Commission's audit.
- 6E. **Professional Advancement for Childcare Educators Stipend:** The deadline for submission of the applications for the PACES Stipend was August 31st. Mr. Rodriguez reported that 66 childcare providers received the Stipend. Furthermore, over the course of five years, the Commission has paid out \$219,000.00 in Stipend awards to early childcare providers. Mr. Rodriguez further advised that they may consider taking a different course for awarding the funds to childcare providers; he discussed the possibility of offering a scholarship award. The Director will be meeting with college representatives in order to assess the possibility of agreeing to develop a scholarship for students enrolled in the ECE program attending Imperial Valley College.
- 6F. **Grantees 4th Quarter Progress Reports for FY 2010-2011:** Commissioners reviewed and discussed the summary of Grantees 4th Quarter Progress Reports. Mr. Rodriguez noted that this data may change due to the fact that a few Grantees requested extensions for submittal of their 4th quarter reports.
- * Through the end of the 4th quarter major grant projects are reporting to have expensed \$1,937,995 or 92% of the \$2,097,961.00 awarded for fiscal year 2010-2011.
 - * Direct services reflected 25% of services related to family functioning; 17% to early care and education; and 57.2% to child health.
 - * A total of 22,142 participants were served through direct services. 49.9% were children 0-5 years, 39.8% were parents/guardians, and 10.3% were other family members.

- * Community strengthening activities included 125 community events that reached up to 24,718 individuals. This total number of participants represented a duplication of services; for example, if 2-4 funded agencies participated in the same event and provided resources to the same families.
- * Similar to the community strengthening focus, there was some duplication of services among services provided to healthcare professionals and early care and education providers. Funded projects impacted 2,733 professionals under this focus.
- * Service contacts are high and reflect duplicate counts of children and their families, professionals and caregivers served; again, due to circumstances where more than one funded agency participated in the same event.

6G. Annual Progress Report for FY 2010-2011: Commissioners were informed that staff is currently working on assembling data and reports from Grantees relevant to developing the Annual Report for submittal to the First 5 California Commission. Submittal of the report is done through a web-based system; minor changes to the reporting has to do with fiscal reporting and School Readiness reporting.

6H. FY 2011-2012 Funded Projects Update: Commissioners were provided with a report detailing the proposed activities that will be realized by funded Grantees for Fiscal Year 2011-12; also included was a brochure which summarizes the funded Grantees.

7. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Sigmond acknowledged Supervisor Castillo for his attendance and input; she further expressed her appreciation to all Commissioners for their time and effort. At this time Mr. Rodriguez announced that he would be seeking candidacy for Board Member of the El Centro Elementary School District; his decision to run for candidacy was made after consulting with Mr. Grillot and establishing that there would be no conflict of interest to do so with respect to the fact that Commissioner Sigmond is an employee of the El Centro Elementary School District.

8. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for October 8, 2011. Commissioner Semmes moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Camacho and approved by a unanimous vote of the members present. Meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.