



MINUTES
May 28, 2015

I. Call to Order

This meeting of the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission was called to order at 3:55 p.m. by Mrs. Sigmond, Commission Chair. The meeting was held at the CalWorks Office Conference Room which is located at 2895 S. 4th Street in El Centro, California.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Yurii Camacho
Chief Miguel Colon, Jr.
Barbara Deol
Robin Hodgkin
Joong Kim
Karla Sigmond

Commissioners Absent

Ray Castillo
Becky Green
Peggy Price

III. Public Comment

Wendy Prewett, Project Coordinator for Project Nenes (Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program) announced that they will be holding a graduation ceremony for 75 children who have completed the 30-week training sessions; all members were invited to attend the ceremony on June 17th at Kennedy Middle School starting at 5:00 p.m.

IV. Consent Calendar Items

Commissioners considered approval of the consent calendar agenda items for the meeting of May 28, 2015. A motion approving the consent calendar items as presented was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Colon. Noting no further comments, the motion was approved with all in favor.

V. Administrative Report

Conflicts of Interests Disclosure:

Counselor Jacob Grillot provided a summary of the Commission's Conflict of Interest Policy, and he further suggested that Commissioner's having a conflict should recuse themselves from discussion and voting, and should physically leave the room. The following disclosures were made:

- Commissioner Hodgkin – Imperial County Public Health Department.
- Commissioner Deol – March of Dimes Foundation (not a financial conflict but sits on Advisory Committee).
- Commissioner Sigmond – El Centro Elementary School District.

Protest/Appeals Process:

Mr. Rodriguez proceeded to summarize the Protest/Appeals Process. He further explained that formal letters of protest will be accepted within the dates of June 1st through June 5th (no later than 4:00 pm). Determinations are to be made at the next Commission meeting which is scheduled for June 11th, at which time only one representative may address Commissioners.

RFP Proposal Rankings:

Rankings of the proposals were submitted individually by all Commissioners and the results were then tabulated and provided in 4 different format sheets. The sheets were prepared: 1) in alphabetical order; 2) from highest ranked to lowest ranked; 3) from highest ranked to lowest ranked without changes to original budgets (9 proposals); and 4) from highest ranked to lowest ranked with recommended budget changes (12 proposals).

Mr. Rodriguez noted that he reviewed all proposals and is recommending budget reductions where necessary for all proposals. Most of the changes are consistent with budget cuts that were made during the last grant funding cycle. He is suggesting that Commissioners can further modify the budgets, either to increase components or decrease them. \$1.5 million in funding was originally designated for this general grant, however, he is recommending the approval of up to \$1,570,605 so that additional projects may be included in the funding pool.

Commissioners acknowledged that two proposals which were reviewed and scored by the independent evaluation team, listed as numbers 8-Imagine School of Imperial Valley and number 16-Quechan Indian Tribe, did not meet the minimum scoring requirement (70 plus points) in order to be considered for funding by Commissioners. According to the general grant guidelines, these proposals were disqualified for not meeting the minimum points requirement; it was noted that this was the first time these organizations submitted a proposal for grant funding to the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission.

Having had disqualified two proposals, Commissioners proceeded to review the 16 remaining proposals. It was duly noted at this time that Commissioner Camacho joined the meeting in progress and proceeded to disclose that she had no conflicts of interest.

Commissioner Hodgkin stepped out of the meeting room at this time.

#12. Imperial County Public Health Department – First Five: Healthy Children Healthy Lives Project

A motion was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Kim to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with 1 abstention (R.Hodgkin).

Commissioner Hodgkin rejoined the Commission meeting at this time.

#13. Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program – Project Nenes

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with all in favor.

#6. El Centro Regional Medical Center – Imperial Valley Child Asthma Program

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with all in favor.

#1. Brawley Public Library – Literacy and Mobile Book Services (LAMBS) Project

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with all in favor.

#7. El Centro Regional Medical Center – Healthy Beginnings Bridges for Newborns and Families Project
A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Commissioner Colon recommended that the Project 's budget should actually be increased. Motion carried with all in favor.

#17. San Diego State University Research Foundation – Together We're Better
A motion was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Mr. Rodriguez explained that budget cuts were made due to high administrative salaries. Motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Deol stepped out of the meeting room at this time.

#14. March of Dimes Foundation – Healthy Babies Are Worth the Wait
A motion was made by Commissioner Camacho and it was seconded by Commissioner Colon to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Discussion ensued regarding concerns with the future sustainability of the project and the issue of systems change. Concern was made regarding prematurity rates in the county not being as high and the issue of interconception care, not in line with Commission strategies. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that the Project concentrate its efforts on strategies that focus on hospitals and clinics, and quality of care to support adopting 10 Steps to Baby Friendly. Since there was a previous issue with low participation rates and in addition an issue with staffing, the Project should consider partnering with other agencies that may already provide similar services. Motion carried with 1 abstention (B.Deol).

Commissioner Hodgkin stated that at a future meeting she would like to review and discuss the Commission's marketing policy, campaigning events by organizations funded by the Commission, and setting parameters.

Commissioner Deol rejoined the Commission meeting at this time.

At this time, Commissioner Colon stated that he served as a Casa advocate in a previous county and based on his experience as a Casa advocate he believes that Casa volunteers are not trained to counsel or deal with the emotional needs of the children. He feels that the Casa children would be better served if they are handled by Case Workers and Psychologists, not volunteers. He is recommending against funding the Casa advocacy Project based on the fact that they may be out of their scope.

#4. CASA of Imperial County - Safe, Healthy, Educational and Nurturing Environment (SHEANE) Project
A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Sigmond to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Long discussion continued regarding the SHEANE Project, Commissioners Kim and Sigmond expressed their support of the services provided by the Casa advocates, they feel the Casa volunteers fill a gap that is not addressed by other agencies and because of that children are able to benefit. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that they cut the position of the Developmental Coordinator and other budget cuts as well. Commissioner Hodgkin stated that Casa works well in coordinating services for the children when there are other competing interests involved; although questioned whether volunteers are properly trained. Motion carried with 1 opposed (M.Colon).

#10. Imperial County Office of Education – Headstart Quality Preschool Project
A motion was made by Commissioner Hodgkin and it was seconded by Commissioner Kim to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that the DRDP and ECRS

training components be cut out from the budget because it is assumed that the agency is already providing these types of trainings, the proposal did not clearly address this issue. Motion carried with all in favor.

#11. Imperial County Office of Education – Early Intervention and Inclusion Preschool

A motion was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes and based on the fact that the agency will need to assume future sustainability of the Project beyond this funding term (2 years). Discussion ensued regarding the long-term funding of the project, the child-per-teacher ratio, and reductions to the budget. When the original proposal was presented it was under the assumption that the agency needed seed money to begin services, and after establishing the program they would assume the financial obligation of continuing services. The Commission has funded this program over 10 years, and based on the ratio of cost per child, this is a very costly program to run. The program serves 16 children at a rate of \$15,000 per child. Motion carried with all in favor.

#16. Neighborhood House of Calexico – NHC Literacy Project

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Sigmond stepped out of the meeting room at this time, and Commissioner Deol continued to chair the meeting.

#5. El Centro Elementary School District – FACT Center Strengthening Early Emotional Development

A motion was made by Commission Colon who stated that the SHEANE Project could not carry out its services without the approval of the FACT Center Project and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho to approve the proposal with the recommended budget changes. Motion carried with 1 abstention (K.Sigmond).

Commissioner Sigmond rejoined the Commission meeting at this time.

Mr. Rodriguez once again informed Commissioners that thus far \$1,570,605 has been approved for grant funding, exceeding the \$1.5 previously earmarked. The additional grant money (difference of \$70,605) consists of unused fund balances remaining from the previous funding cycle. Commissioners expressed their concern regarding grant funding and decreases based on the funding trend in cigarette tax monies.

Discussion continued regarding the remaining applications:

- ✓ Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council Part E for Everyone proposal did not score well with the evaluation team, singular aspects of the staffing plan were unclear, potential liability concerns, and an ambitious timeline were further issues. Ms. Yvette Garcia was present to address questions regarding the Project.
- ✓ Burn Institute Safe Families Initiative although submitted a good proposal, did not address the Commission's Strategic Plan as it should have and as a result received a low score.
- ✓ Regents of UCSD Family Farm Smart focus population and data components were unclear, and scored low with the evaluation team.
- ✓ Brawley Public Library LEARN proposal scored very low with the evaluation team.

At this time a motion was made by Commissioner Sigmond and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho recognizing that due to a lack of limited funds designated for this RFP grant cycle, Applications 9, 3, 18 and 2 will not be considered for funding. Motion carried with 1 abstention (M.Colon).

VI. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Colon noted that the City of Imperial was recently named the 2nd Safest City in California; he commented that this achievement was realized by several agencies working in collaboration within Imperial city limits.

VII. Adjournment

A motion adjourning the Commission meeting was made by Commissioner Hodgkin and it was seconded by Commissioner Colon. Having noted no further comments and by unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2015.