



MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING May 25, 2017

I. Call to Order

This Special Meeting of First 5 Imperial was called to order at 3:36 p.m. by Karla Sigmond, Commission Chair. The meeting was held at the Imperial County Administration Building Meeting Room C/D which is located at 940 W. Main Street in El Centro, California, whereby a quorum was established.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Yurii Camacho (arrived after roll call)
Ray Castillo
Barbara Deol (arrived after roll call)
Becky Green
Robin Hodgkin
Joong Kim (arrived after roll call)
Peggy Price
Karla Sigmond, Chairperson

Commissioners Absent:

(None)

Staff:

Julio C. Rodriguez, Director
Bea Duran
Christian Hernandez

Guests:

Kendall Swanson, Attorney

III. Public Comment

Ms. Wendy Prewett, Project Coordinator for Project Nenes of the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program, extended Commissioners an invitation to the annual Preschool Graduation End-of-the-Year event on June 13th starting at 5 p.m. at the Kennedy Middle School Multi-purpose Room. The event will celebrate the graduation of 83 children who completed the 30-week HIPPY Program; it is anticipated that over 300 parents and families will be in attendance.

IV. Adoption of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 6, 2017 was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Castillo and having noted no further discussion or public comment the motion carried with all in favor.

V. Consent Calendar Items

A motion to approve the Consent Calendar Items as presented was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Green and having noted no further discussion or public comment the motion carried with all in favor.

VI. Final Evaluation RFP for General Grant FY 2017-2019 (Notice of Intent to Make Award)

At this time, Mr. Rodriguez introduced Ms. Kendall Swanson who is an attorney representing Carrier and Hudson and who was asked to speak on the conflict of interest policy.

Ms. Swanson briefly reviewed the general laws regarding the conflict of interest policy. She stated that, in California, generally the law prohibits any transactions in which a public official has a financial interest. The critical piece which is set forth in Government Code Section 87100 which states "No public official at any level of state or local government shall make, participate in making or in any way attempt to use his official position to influence a governmental decision in which he knows or has reason to know he has a financial interest." Ms. Swanson stated that consistent with that law, the Commission's procedure is run very efficiently. Commissioners have identified and disclosed conflicts with proposals that are being considered; the practice has been that the Commissioner with the conflict leaves the room during the deliberations and during any vote.

Commissioner Price asked for clarification with an agency who provides services to foster children and her agency oversees. Upon further clarification, Ms. Swanson advised that there doesn't seem to be a direct financial conflict, and she is able to participate.

Having clarified conflicts of interest, Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Commission will decide today on what proposals will be receiving funding, at what level of funding, and proceed with the notice of intent to make an award. It has been the Commission's past practice to review each proposal individually, and to decide whether to go either with the recommended funding amount or the requested funding amount. He also pointed out that all proposals that scored 70 points or more are eligible for funding consideration. Mr. Rodriguez reminded Commissioners that there are additional funds available; fund balances from the Mini-Grant and unspent funds from the March of Dimes Project that was terminated.

Commissioners all received copies of the Protest Proceedings in case there are protests presented. Mr. Rodriguez noted that this is the same policy as used in the previous funding cycle, only the time and dates were changed.

At this time, Commissioners referenced the documents that contained rankings (4); and the summary of proposals with recommendations provided by the Executive Director.

Imperial County Office of Education – Quality Start Project: The recommended funding amount is \$126,970 which was reduced from the original request of \$245,658. This Project is proposing to train child care professionals; the intent is to hire two trainers and a Supervisor. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the reduction in the funding includes not funding the Supervisor position because he feels that the organization already has the capacity to provide supervision to the new hires. He also stated that the Commission through its Quality Start Program already provides this type of training and has received funds from First 5 California and CDE for this purpose, thus avoiding a duplication of services. Funds are already determined for this type of training to childcare professionals through the Commission's Quality Start Program. There was also an issue concerning the QRIS ratings; the agency will need to work with the Commission hand-in-hand to achieve. If funded, the Commission will need to partner with the agency in order to provide trainings in addition to an assessment of the trainings needed due to the fact that this agency has already received funding from the Commission

specifically to receive specialized trainings. Commissioner Green added that she would like to see that the two new hires be specialized in early childhood education.

A motion to award the Imperial County Office of Education Quality Start Program was made by Commissioner Hodgkin and it was seconded by Commissioner Green. Direction was given to the Executive Director to implement the recommended changes as discussed. Motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the Imperial County Office of Education Quality Start Program at the recommended amount of \$126,970 was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Imperial County (CASA) – SHEANE Project: Mr. Rodriguez explained that the scope of work is consistent with the previous funding cycles except that the workload will be significantly less. He noted that the Social Services Department will be processing the developmental screenings whereas CASA had in other years established partnerships with other agencies to perform the screenings. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the liability insurance was reduced to reflect the percentage of caseload for children 0 to 5 that the Project will be maintaining. The Commission will also support the Project with training and staff development.

A motion to award the Court Appointed Special Advocates of Imperial County SHEANE Project with the proposed recommendations was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Camacho, and the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the Court Appointed Special Advocates of Imperial County SHEANE Project at the recommended amount of \$86,333 was made by Commissioner Castillo, seconded by Commissioner Camacho, and the motion carried will all in favor.

At this time, Commissioner Castillo and Commissioner Hodgkin stepped out of the room.

Imperial County Public Health – Healthy Children/Healthy Lives Project: Mr. Rodriguez explained that the Project's scope of work is consistent with the previous funding cycles. He is recommending a reduction in salary and fringe to reflect the same amount of staff as in previous years.

Direction was given to the Executive Director to discuss the changes with the Project and to implement the recommended changes as discussed.

A motion to award the Imperial County Public Health – Healthy Children/Healthy Lives Project was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Kim, and the motion carried.

A motion to fund the Imperial County Public Health – Healthy Children/Healthy Lives Project at the recommended amount of \$212,816 was made by Commissioner Kim, seconded by Commissioner Camacho, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Hodgkin stepped back into the room.

El Centro Regional Medical Center – Early Asthma Education Project: Various concerns were raised during discussion of this Project; Mr. Rodriguez explained that the Project has changed significantly

from prior years. The El Centro Regional Medical Center Asthma Education Project will be partnering with the Asthma Linkages Program. Because of that, the Director/Educator of the program will only be working at a 75 percent level; although the two other staff will be working at the same level. The Project has indicated that it will reduce the number of children it will service from 120 to 100. The Project will only be working within the communities of Calexico, Heber, El Centro, Imperial and Holtville, and it was noted that the Project does not intend to work in the north end. The Project has also indicated that it will no longer provide professional healthcare trainings.

Commissioner Hodgkin explained that the Asthma Linkages Program was designed to target children aged 4 up to 18 years. In addition to that, the type of intervention they are meant to provide is very different from the one proposed by ECRMC Asthma Education Program. The Asthma Linkages Program has nothing to do with inpatient services. She clarified that there should be no issue with supplantation.

Commissioner Green expressed that she has a problem with the Project not serving the northend; she stated she could not approve if the services are not offered countywide. Discussion continued regarding partnerships among both local hospitals and the Clinicas. The Commission insists that the Project should also work on re-establishing collaborations with the other local health care agencies.

After further discussion, it was the general consensus of the Commission that the Project should continue implementing the same scope of work as it has done over the past 8 years. There was no issue with the reduction of children nor the fact that they are not providing medical provider trainings. The Commission is strongly recommending that the Project re-establish collaboration with Pioneers Memorial Hospital and Clinicas.

A motion to award the El Centro Regional Medical Center – Early Asthma Education Project with the recommended changes was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Hodgkin. Direction was given to the Executive Director to discuss the changes with the Project and to implement the recommended changes as discussed. The motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the El Centro Regional Medical Center Early Asthma Education Program at the recommended amount of \$155,937 provided that the recommendations to the scope of work be implemented and that the Executive Director negotiate the scope of work to include countywide services, ensuring that Pioneers Memorial Hospital and Clinicas are included. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Green, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Sigmond stepped out of the room and Commissioner Price chaired the meeting at this time.

El Centro Elementary School District – Three Be’s Project: Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the services the Project is proposing. He noted that the service is similar to the case management offered during the previous cycle; however, this time around they wish to include a parent component, Parent Café. The recommended changes for this Project would be that the Project consider using the HUI family component which includes a curriculum that addresses children 0-5. The HUI family component provides professional development support, and offers free resources to parents. The program works with parent mentors so that they can provide advocacy for families. The recommendation for reduced funding includes a decrease in equipment purchases, a decrease in occupancy and an adjustment to indirect costs.

Commissioner Green asked whether the Project is aware of the HUI parent program, and whether the Project will consider using that component rather than the Parent Café. Mr. Rodriguez responded that at this time it is only a recommendation and he would have to meet with the agency to discuss it.

A motion to award the El Centro Elementary School District Three Be's Project with the recommended changes was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Kim, and the motion carried.

A motion to fund the El Centro Elementary School District Three Be's Project at the recommended amount of \$151,971 was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Mr. Kim, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Sigmond returned and continued chairing the meeting.

El Centro Regional Medical Center – Healthy Beginnings Project: Mr. Rodriguez is recommending a scope of work that ensures that the Project will implement the 10 Steps to Baby-Friendly hospital; this is a mandated policy that should be in place by the year 2020. He further noted that there is a recommendation to not fund the hiring of a lactation consultant and a promotora/outreach specialist for this Project. He explained that the El Centro Regional Medical Center already employs a lactation consultant, and the promotora/outreach specialist position based on previous funding cycles was not successful on following-up with families for various reasons.

A motion to award the El Centro Regional Medical Center Healthy Beginnings Project was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho. Discussion followed at this time.

Commissioner Green stated that she feels that because the Project has been funded in previous years to meet this same goal, the Project should be able to move forward and complete all 10 steps within the first year. Commissioner Hodgkin agrees with the requirement; discussion continued regarding reasons the Project has issues in meeting this systems change effort.

Commissioner Deol responded that based on her experience in trying to achieve the 10 Steps, she feels the biggest barriers come not from the nursing staff but from higher levels, in keeping with Pediatrician's orders. She expressed that hospital administrators need to focus on enforcing policy and procedure, and further stated that this is a slow process to implement.

At this time, Commissioner Kim amended his motion to include that the Project implement a systems-change effort and to implement the 8 of the 10 Steps within Year 1, in addition to the other recommended changes. Seconded by Commissioner Camacho, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the El Centro Regional Medical Center Healthy Beginnings Project at the recommended amount of \$74,629 was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Camacho, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Proceeding forward, Mr. Rodriguez pointed out that Commissioner Castillo was not in the meeting room at this time.

Imperial County Free Library – Raise a Reader Project: Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the proposed Raise a Reader Project; he further added that he is proposing no scope of work changes. He is recommending that the library ensure that there is no duplication of services, and report activity of services offered to same families. He is recommending that the Project eliminate the Library Administrative Specialist from the budget as well as a reduction in occupancy expenses, and to adjust the indirect costs.

A motion to award the Imperial County Free Library – Raise a Reader Project with the recommended changes was made by Commissioner Kim, seconded by Commissioner Deol. Commissioner Green asked that assurances be in place to avoid duplication of services. Brief discussion followed regarding the Family Place Libraries Project and the POP Mini-Grant Project. Having noted no further discussion, the motion carried.

A motion to fund the Imperial County Free Library – Raise a Reader Project at the recommended amount of \$72,121 was made by Commissioner Hodgkin, seconded by Commissioner Green, and the motion carried.

Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program – Project Nenes: Mr. Rodriguez provided a brief summary of the Project's proposed services. He is recommending the funding of this Project with the caveat that the Project continue targeting children living within the underperforming school districts and in coordination with the Commission's School Readiness Program. He is proposing budget reductions in occupancy and training, and to adjust indirect costs.

Commissioner Castillo re-entered the room at this time.

A motion to award the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program Project Nenes was made by Commissioner Deol, seconded by Commissioner Castillo, and the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program Project Nenes at the recommended amount of \$183,900 was made by Commissioner Kim, seconded by Commissioner Castillo, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Brawley Public Library – LAMBS Project: Mr. Rodriguez provided a brief summary of the Brawley Public Library LAMBS Project; he noted that the Project has been funded by the Commission for 16 years now and it is a very good program targeting over 3,000 children. As for the budget, he is recommending that the Project cover costs for the Project Coordinator, as well as costs for repair of the vehicle. Mr. Rodriguez also noted that the Evaluator's score for this program was not too high mainly because the Project has not updated its information since 2002, and because the evaluation component was not very strong.

A motion to award the Brawley Public Library LAMBS Project with the recommended changes was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol. Brief discussion followed regarding the evaluation component. Commissioners strongly recommend that the Project include this tool contingent to funding. The Executive Director will assist the Project in including either a provider survey or parent survey. No further discussion was noted and the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the Brawley Public Library LAMBS Project at the recommended amount of \$188,059 was made by Commissioner Deol, seconded by Commissioner Castillo, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Imperial County Office of Education – Special Education Project: Mr. Rodriguez explained that this Project is an inclusion model preschool program, however unlike previous funding cycles where children were in a classroom setting, children will receive services at child care sites where specialists will be going to the centers and providing their support. The Project also proposes to provide special education training to child care providers. Mr. Rodriguez cautioned that the per-child cost was significantly high, and this was an issue of concern for the Evaluators. This Project is similar to the one the Commission has been funding for more than 10 years.

Discussion continued regarding the Project costs, and the issue of sustainability. Mr. Rodriguez advised Commissioners that as part of the funding stipulation made for the previous funding cycle, it was understood that the agency would not be re-applying for Commission funds to sustain an inclusion project such as this; this language was clearly included as part of the Agreement for Services entered between Imperial County Office of Education and the Commission. Commissioners commented that the agency really needs to bring in its own resources in order for this Project to be successful. They further added that inclusion programs are not new, and there should be other grant resources for this as well.

Commissioners discussed issues of concern regarding this Project. It was unclear whether the trainers would be credentialed Special Education Teachers. They talked about the training component for childcare providers, and acknowledged that there is a need for this type of specialized training. However, it was also mentioned that there are resources in place that fulfill this need, for example, SELPA provides a course on Special Education at Imperial Valley College.

A motion not to award the Imperial County Office of Education Special Education Project was made by Commissioner Deol and it was seconded by Commissioner Green. The motion did not pass with 2-in favor (Deol, Green); 5-opposed (Price, Hodgkin, Castillo, Kim, Sigmond); 1-abstain (Camacho).

A motion to award the Imperial County Office of Education Special Education Project provided that they meet the stipulations requested by the Commission and with direction given to the Executive Director to negotiate was made by Commissioner Castillo, seconded by Commissioner Kim. The motion carried with 5-in favor (Price, Hodgkin, Castillo, Kim, Sigmond); 2-opposed (Green, Deol); 1-abstain (Camacho).

A motion to fund the Imperial County Office of Education Special Education Project at the recommended amount of \$100,000 was made by Commissioner Castillo, seconded by Commissioner Kim. The motion carried with 5-in favor (Price, Hodgkin, Castillo, Kim, Sigmond); 2-opposed (Green, Deol); 1-abstain (Camacho).

Neighborhood House of Calexico – Early Literacy Program: Mr. Rodriguez explained that this is a continuing Family Literacy Project where they intend to target 185 children. The Project is using the Latino Family Literacy model through home visits and visits to preschool centers by staff. He is recommending staff remain the same as in previous years, a reduction in operating supplies and equipment purchases was made, occupancy was reduced as was travel and training, and indirect costs were adjusted.

A motion to award the Neighborhood House of Calexico Early Literacy Project was made by Commissioner Castillo, seconded by Commissioner Kim.

Commission is recommending that staff be well-trained in the literacy component and develop a better evaluation tool. The issue of staff turn-over was also discussed, Commissioners encourage the agency to access grant funding through the Professional Development Support Application in case staff turnover is an issue with the agency, and additional training is necessary.

Having noted no further comments, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to fund the Neighborhood House of Calexico Early Literacy Program at the recommended amount of \$147,924 was made by Commissioner Castillo, seconded by Commissioner Deol. Mr. Rodriguez advised that by approving this last Project the Commission has gone over its funding cap of \$1.5 million that was allocated for RFP grants, total funded is \$1,500,660. No objections were raised at this time, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Brief discussion continued regarding the financial impact of new cigarette taxes, and State forecast on funding. Commissioners also talked about utilizing funding from unspent grant awards and whether they should go over the allocated amount for RFP grants being considered.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hodgkin to stop the funding amount reached thus far of 1,500,660 for award of RFP grant funds, seconded by Commissioner Camacho, and the motion carried with all in favor.

VII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Sigmond extended an invitation for the Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting of the Parent and Community Engagement Facility that will be held on June 7. Commissioner Sigmond talked about building strong partnerships among local agencies in support of the families.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion adjourning the Commission meeting was made by Commissioner Hodgkin and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol. Having noted no further comments and by unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08 pm. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for June 8, 2017.