



MINUTES May 16, 2019

I. Call to Order

This Special Meeting of First 5 Imperial was called to order at 3:36 p.m. by Commissioner Sigmond, Commission Chair. The meeting was held at the Imperial County Administration Building, 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:

- Ray Castillo
- Yurii Camacho
- Joong Kim
- Fred Miramontes
- Karla Sigmond
- Danila Vargas

Commissioners Absent:

- Barbara Deol
- Becky Green

Staff:

- Julio C. Rodriguez
- Bea Duran
- Christian Hernandez

Guest:

- Jacob Grillot, Esq.

III. Public Comment

No comments were made at this time.

IV. Adoption of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 4, 2019 was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

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

1. Evaluation of Request for Proposal for General Grant FY 2019-2021 Notice of Intent to Make an Award: Mr. Rodriguez advised Commissioners that they will be making a Notice of Intent to Make an Award of RFP applications during this meeting. \$1,500,000 has been allocated for this process. He explained the rank sheets, and copies were provided to Commissioners.

Mr. Grillot from Currier and Hudson provided an overview of the conflict of interest policy; he further advised that the policy was recently amended by the Commission on December of 2018. He provided recommendation on the process Commissioners may follow during the review of the applications. If a Commissioner has a conflict with a particular application, at the outset of the discussion of the application, the Commissioner will step outside of the meeting room.

The following conflicts of interest were disclosed at this time:

Commissioner Castillo – Imperial County Free Library
Imperial County Public Health

Commissioner Sigmond – El Centro Elementary School District

Commissioner Vargas – Imperial County Public Health

Mr. Rodriguez clarified that, as per the Commission's Bylaws, a majority of the quorum may vote (3 Commissioners); there should be no issue with the rule of necessity in case 2 Commissioners need to step out from the room at the same time.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a brief review of the application that was submitted by the City of Brawley, Brawley Public Library. The recommended funding amount is \$189,009. He is also recommending that the BPL LAMBS Project focus on serving the majority of sites where children with a low socio-economic status live or where there are large numbers of children who are deemed as being "at-risk" such as children in the foster care system. Mr. Rodriguez also stated that the evaluators noted that the evaluation component was a little weak; the Project should work on developing a survey to measure outcomes, and submit it to the Commission.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). The recommended funding amount is \$91,763. He is recommending the following scope-of-work changes: CASA should work to ensure that I.C. Social Services is involved in the developmental screening process; the Project should report how the volunteers are involved in the developmental screening component; the Project should identify who is screening the children and where they are being referred to; CASA should identify targets related to what a permanent home is; establish the appropriate benchmarks for the school readiness of children; and ensure that there is no supplantation of funds.

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

Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the application that was submitted by the El Centro Elementary School District. Through this application, the Project is proposing to implement a prevention/intervention support program for children between 4-5 years of age who are enrolled in TK, kindergarten and preschools; they are proposing parenting trainings and Parent Cafes; and to conduct ASQs and case management. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that the Commission fund the case management and ASQ component only; he feels the Commission should continue maximizing resources on a program that has been successful. He advised that the ECESD Fact Center has not had a lot of success with their parenting program; Mr. Rodriguez further talked about the parent curriculum. He is recommending that the Project should work with another agency such as the Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council in order to provide parenting classes. Mr. Rodriguez identified some of the issues regarding the screening services for children enrolled in TK and Kindergarten classes. He talked about the burden of identifying children who are under 5 years old that are enrolled in the classrooms, and the fact that the proposal did not show a buy-in from teachers. He feels the school district should demonstrate a vested commitment for teacher training and support of this proposed project. Mr. Rodriguez is advising that the school district will need to work to support the sustainability of the project through a cash match. If approved, the recommended funding amount is \$144,228.

Commissioner Sigmond returned to the meeting room.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the El Centro Regional Medical Center Head Start Asthma Project. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$148,892. He discussed the fact that this proposal is different from previous years; he noted that the El Centro Regional Medical Center and Imperial County Public Health have done a good job with asthma services for children. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that the Project would need to ensure that they are targeting all three head start agencies: Imperial County Office of Education, Migrant Head Start and the

Volunteers of America. He briefly talked about the lack of a Plan B, what if there aren't enough children in the head start centers who have asthma. He feels the Commission should gauge the first three months of the project's services to ensure resources are being maximized and the Project should be open to including other child care provider systems.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the application that was submitted by the El Centro Regional Medical Center Bridges for Newborns and Families Project. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Commission has funded this program for the past eight years. One of the conditions made to the project for the previous funding cycle was that they would need to adopt 8 of the 10 Baby-friendly steps by the end of the cycle; to which the agency has not. More importantly, the very first step is adopting a policy in which the hospital outlines the 10 steps for Baby-friendly. Therefore, Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that, if funded, the start date for this project should not commence until after the hospital has adopted the policy. Furthermore, the Project should adopt all 10 steps by the end of the second year. Further discussion continued regarding the hospital's efforts and breastfeeding rates.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the application that was submitted by the SDSU Exceptional Family Resource Center. He further added that the proposal was unclear on various issues such as the trainings for providers, how the 500 families would be receiving the trainings, identifying the providers, and not providing enough detail regarding the advocacy services. He noted that the evaluators felt the proposal was "all over the place". Another weakness identified was in regards to the excessive number of administrative staff who were identified in the proposal. The proposal did not score well with the evaluation team. Mr. Rodriguez advised that he is not recommending for funding but if the Commission decides to do so he would recommend that the Project focus more on the advocacy component and ensure that they provide advocacy for parents whose children are going through IEP services.

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

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Imperial County Free Library. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$96,997. If approved, Mr. Rodriguez is recommending that the Commission not fund the parent component. He feels the parent component is similar to the model that is being offered in the family place libraries. He also recommends eliminating the outreach component; it was not made clear whether the outreach was intended only for children 0 to 5 years or to all the population in general as had been identified in the library's Strategic Plan. Discussion was held regarding the number of participants; the feeling was that the number was too high.

Commissioner Castillo returned to the meeting room.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Imperial County Office of Education Special Education Inclusion Initiative. He advised that this project is very similar to an inclusion initiative model that was funded by the Commission four years ago. He compared the previous model to the current proposed model, and further advised that the Evaluators noted that the model is expensive and unsustainable. Evaluators also noted an issue with the budget; numbers did not match. Mr. Rodriguez is recommending funding the initiative at the same level as the previous fiscal year. He talked about the relevance of providing training for providers who work with children who have special needs.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Imperial County Office of Education Quality Start Initiative. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$87,963. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the Commission is currently funding this project. He talked about the preschool center assessments, and its process; he noted that Imperial County Office of Education cannot

do external reviews of their own centers. Of the two staff positions, he is recommending funding the Coach position only, not the Manager position. He also advised that the Commission, through its IMPACT Program, can support the Project by providing coaching to the centers and by performing the assessments. Mr. Rodriguez explained that he would recommend that the Project focus on quality improvement, only two of the four components during the first year of funding. He is also recommending not to fund the parent component, there are other funds they can use to address this component.

Commissioner Castillo and Commissioner Vargas stepped out of the meeting room at this time.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Imperial County Public Health Department. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$212,140. Mr. Rodriguez is advising that the Project focus on providing training to all providers within the 10 preschool centers they plan to work with. He is also recommending that the Project follow-up with preschools they have served in the past.

Commissioner Castillo and Commissioner Vargas returned to the meeting room.

Mr. Rodriguez advised that the application that was submitted by the Imperial Valley Food Bank did not meet the scoring criteria, and could not be considered for award.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$175,916. He is recommending that the Project focus on ensuring that at least 70% of the children they serve live within Program Improvement catchment areas; in line with schools which are being served by the Commission's School Readiness Program. Also, that the children they are targeting are not enrolled in a preschool. The Project should work to ensure they are making the appropriate referrals, and that this information is being reported back to the Commission. Mr. Rodriguez also noted that the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program should focus on a plan for sustainability of the Project.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the Neighborhood House Calexico. He is recommending funding in the amount of \$142,349. Mr. Rodriguez advised that, if funded, the Project should ensure that they offer age-appropriate services, such as the books that are being provided. Also, they should work to increase the library card benchmark. He also noted that it would be more cost-effective to provide services in a group setting. He further encouraged the Project to focus on serving more families residing in Calexico.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a review of the application that was submitted by the UC Desert Research and Extension Center. He stated that the evaluators noted that it was a costly one-time event; also, it was not clear how parents would be selected. Further discussion continued regarding the amount budgeted for the event.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Kim to approve funding for the Brawley Public Library for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Castillo to approve funding for the Court Appointed Special Advocates for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Castillo and Commissioner Vargas stepped out of the meeting room at this time.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the Imperial County Public Health for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried.

Commissioner Vargas returned to the meeting room at this time.

A motion was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by Commissioner Vargas to approve funding for the Imperial County Free Library for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried.

Commissioner Castillo returned to the meeting room at this time.

A motion was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the El Centro Regional Medical Center Head Start Asthma Prevention for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the El Centro Regional Medical Center Bridges for Newborns and Families Project for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes provided that the El Centro Regional Medical Center must first establish the policy within the hospital; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Sigmond stepped out of the meeting room at this time. Commissioner Castillo chaired the meeting at this point.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the El Centro Elementary School District for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried.

Commissioner Sigmond entered the meeting room.

A motion was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the Imperial County Office of Education Special Education Inclusion for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Castillo to approve funding for the Neighborhood House of Calexico for the recommended amount and the recommended

scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve funding for the Imperial County Office of Education Quality Start Project for the recommended amount and the recommended scope of work changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho to not fund the SDSU Exceptional Family Resource Center. Mr. Kim stated because it is out of the scope of the RFP budget. The motion carried with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes not to fund the UC Desert Research and Extension Center; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Mr. Rodriguez advised the notices will be sent to applicants and the protest period will be held the following week, May 20 through May 24. Any protests received will be presented at the June 6th Commission Meeting. The Protest Proceedings Policy was included in the packet.

2. Request to Accept Disengagement of Services from Roger Tubach, CPA, for Audit of Financial Statements for FY 2018-2019: Mr. Rodriguez referred to a letter addressed by Mr. Tubach whereby he indicates he will no longer be performing the Commission's audit. Mr. Rodriguez advised that it is a short notice.

Mr. Kim is advising that the Commission should go out to bid for a new auditor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho to accept the letter addressed by Mr. Roger Tubach.

At this time, Mr. Hernandez, Fiscal Analyst, noted his concern about charges that may be incurred by Mr. Tubach for his services during the transition, including copy costs. Mr. Rodriguez advised setting a limit of costs.

Mr. Grillot made the recommendation that staff should dialogue with the auditor between now and the June 6th Meeting to inquire about potential costs, get an estimate of costs. He is advising that Mr. Tubach should be informed not to engage in any incurring costs on the Commission's behalf without prior approval from Mr. Rodriguez.

The motion carried with all in favor.

VI. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Sigmond announced that after 34 years of service she will be retiring from the El Centro Elementary School District; she will, however, continue serving on the Commission.

Commissioner Castillo stated that interviews were recently held for the position of Director of Social Services, and announcement of the selected individual will be made within the next few weeks.

VII. Adjournment

A motion adjourning the Commission meeting was made by Commissioner Castillo and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes. Having noted no further comments and by unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for June 6, 2019.