



**Imperial County Children and Families First Commission**  
**MINUTES**  
**Meeting of June 4, 2020**

**I. Call to Order**

This Special Meeting of First 5 Imperial was called to order by Karla Sigmond, Chairperson, at 3:32 p.m. The Special Meeting was held via a video conferencing webinar hosted through Zoom.

**II. Roll Call**

Commissioners Present:

Yurii Camacho  
Barbara Deol  
Becky Green  
Joong Kim  
Fred Miramontes  
Veronica E. Rodriguez  
Karla Sigmond

Commissioners Absent:

Ray Castillo  
Danila Vargas

Staff:

Julio C. Rodriguez  
Christian Hernandez  
Bea Duran

**III. Public Comment**

The Chair recognized public participants although no comments were made at this time.

**IV. Adoption of Minutes**

A motion was made by Commissioner Deol to approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 7, 2020 and it was seconded by Commissioner Green; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

**V. Consent Calendar Items**

Commissioners considered approval of the consent calendar items for the June 4, 2020 Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Deol to approve the Consent Calendar Items as presented and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

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

1. Request to Approve the FY 2020-2021 Budget for First 5 Imperial: Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the proposed First 5 Imperial Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. He provided an account of the categories that decreased and/or increased in comparison to last year's budget. Mr. Rodriguez highlighted that the Commission would be having a new RFP cycle and more expenses were anticipated during this process. He further noted a budget decrease under the Professional and Special Services category of the School Readiness Program. Mr. Rodriguez also commented on the new First 5 Impact program and the revenue anticipated for this program which is much less than the previous Impact program. Total funds reserved for the general RFP grants, community development mini-grants, the PACES Stipend Program, Community Outreach Support, and Professional Development Contribution and Support are estimated at \$1,533,692.00. The mini-grant budget was increased from \$100,000 to \$150,000 for this new cycle. Mr. Rodriguez further noted that administrative and evaluation costs are

estimated at \$549,135.00. He is asking the Commission to approve the total budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 at \$2,509,606.00.

A motion to approve the First 5 Imperial Budget for FY 2020-2021 was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol.

Commissioner Green stated that a lot will change in the manner our agencies operate due to the current COVID-19 circumstances and asked if we should anticipate cuts in our funding stream. Mr. Rodriguez advised that he did not expect any decrease in funding from First 5 California and noted possible new funding alternatives such as the First 5 CA Home Visiting Coordination RFP. He advised the Commission will be assessing the scope and requirements of the RFA and noted that the application requires a dollar per dollar match, he also noted that the Commission has the first right of refusal, and would notify other agencies that may be interested in applying, though noted that the match may be difficult. Mr. Rodriguez also referred to the possibility of receiving additional monies through the IMPACT Region 9 HUB, though noted that the HUB had not worked out the details yet, and that the members of the HUB, as a group, are working on decisions of how the HUB funding will be spent. Therefore if any additional funding is allocated through the Region 9 HUB, the Commission will be asked to approve that these funds be added to the FY 2020-2021 budget at a later date.

The motion to approve the First 5 Imperial Budget FY 2020-2021 was put to a vote and the motion carried with all in favor.

2. Request to Approve the Administrative Costs Report FY 2020-2021: Mr. Hernandez, Fiscal Analyst for the Commission, presented the Administrative Costs Report for FY 2020-2021. He stated that all County Commissions are required to adopt an Administrative Costs policy and Cost Allocation Plan that limits administrative costs. He went on to explain that the Administrative Costs Report was created directly from the 2020-2021 Budget; all category expenses are broken down by three groups which are listed as administrative costs, program costs or evaluation costs. Our County Commission limits administrative costs for the operating budget to no more than 15% of the total budget. Mr. Hernandez reported that administrative costs proposed for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 reflects 9.36% of the total budget.

Commissioner Sigmond noted that administrative costs were quite low and well below the 15% cap; this was the consensus of Commissioners.

A motion approving the Administrative Costs Report FY 2020-2021 as presented was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

3. Request to Select Auditor to Complete FY 2020-2021 Audit of Commission's Financial Statements: Mr. Rodriguez advised that the Commission will be needing to select a new auditing firm for the procurement of services that would complete the Commission's independent audit report of its financial statements. The agency must have experience and the ability to complete government audits and understand the First 5 Audit Guidelines issued by the State Controller's Office.

The following bids were reviewed:

Brown Armstrong, CPAs	Bid: \$12,000 plus travel expenses for year 1
Moss, Levy & Hartzheim, LLP	Bid: \$12,250 year 1; \$11,228 year 2; \$11,565 year 3, \$11,912 year 4
Fechter & Company CPAs	Bid: \$11,000; 3% increase for subsequent years

Mr. Hernandez noted that all the agencies are located outside of the county. Based on the bids that were provided, he feels that all the agencies are highly qualified and have the field experience needed

to perform a government audit. He pointed out that Brown Armstrong has experience working with other First 5 Commissions; Fechter & Company has worked with special districts as well as large agencies; and he pointed out that Moss, Levy & Harzheim was highly recommend by our local County Auditor. He recommends that the Commission go with the lowest bid.

Mr. Rodriguez provided further summary and review of the qualifications and Commissioners talked about the proposed bids that were received from the auditing firms.

At this time, Commissioner Green made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to give authorization to the Executive Director to select an auditing firm and negotiate an agreement; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

4. Request to Authorize Director to Negotiate Commission Office Lease: Mr. Rodriguez advised that Commission staff is currently working to re-negotiate its office space lease with IDABEC, the incorporated partnership that currently owns the building. However, as result of issues relevant to the partnership and the availability of some of the partners, IDABEC is working on extending our lease for another 3-year period, though signatures from the partners will be necessary, and they are working on that. Also, they are noting that the building is for sale, and in the event that the building is sold the agreement will be void. The contract for the current lease was signed effective 2016 through 2020. Mr. Rodriguez further noted that Commission office space is leased at 2,250 square footage at \$27,000 annually, and First 5 Impact space is 1,666 square footage for \$19,992 annually. He advised that IDABEC is willing to negotiate a similar agreement, such as a 3-year option, as noted in the letter from IDABEC, and he is asking the Commission for approval to negotiate with the owner for terms that are reasonable and consistent with the current terms of the lease agreement.

A brief session of questions and answers continued. Commissioner Miramontes advised that because this is an “operational” issue, he is recommending that this matter be left at the discretion of Mr. Rodriguez so that he may negotiate similar terms with the property owners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate the Commission’s office space lease.

Mr. Kim sought further clarification regarding the cost per square footage, and he recommended that Mr. Rodriguez try to negotiate a lesser amount because right now commercial office space was generally lower.

Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

5. Request to Approve the ICCFFC Strategic Plan: Mr. Rodriguez advised that all County Commissions are required to review their Commission’s Strategic Plan on an annual basis; Commissions can determine to either adopt a new plan, approve a revised plan with changes, or to approve it without changes.

Mr. Rodriguez anticipates that there will be changes to the plan and anticipates that an initial draft will be done in December of this year. He noted that changes/updates will be implemented into the plan that will address the change in dynamics due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ECE workforce study that is currently underway, and also to update the most current data that has been collected and reviewed at previous meetings with the Commission.

A motion to approve the Imperial County Children and Families First Commission Strategic Plan with no changes was made by Commissioner Kim and it was seconded by Commissioner Green.

At this time, Commissioner Rodriguez sought further clarification on the plan and asked if the approval is to extend the existing Strategic Plan. Mr. Rodriguez provided a timeline of the plan noting that the plan is a fluid document; however, no changes are being recommended at this time due to the fact that a new plan is being drafted.

Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

6. Request to Approve the First 5 California Annual Report 2018-2019: Commissioners briefly reviewed the First 5 California Annual Report 2018-2019 titled "Our Kids Our Future: Investing for 20 Years in California's Children." Mr. Rodriguez advised that all County Commissions are required to review and approve of the annual report as per a requirement of the Children and Families Act of 1998. Components of the report were presented to the Commission, and he noted that County Commissions are given equal space which highlight their local efforts; Imperial County is highlighted on page 34 of the report. The data describes an aggregate of services provided by all counties.

A motion to approve the First 5 California Annual Report FY 2018-2019 was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

7. COVID-19 Support for Early Care and Education Providers in Imperial County: Mr. Rodriguez advised that a number of efforts were under way to support ECE providers. Though the use of First 5 Impact funds, authorized by First 5 California, in addition to emergency supplies procured through supplybank.org by First 5 CA, and in collaboration with the Imperial County Office of Education's Resource and Referral Program, the Commission continues to support the early care and education providers within Imperial County that are continuing to provide childcare services during this time, and that these providers are essential works offering childcare. Efforts include:

First 5 California: The distribution of essential safety products that were purchased through supplybank.org, such as masks, gloves, wipes, cleansers, and diapers supplied within 3 shipments. The plan of distribution includes a drive-up delivery set-up at the ICOE parking lot and direct delivery to centers. These distribution activities included two events that targeted as many as 145 family childcare providers and one event that included 84 exempt (FFN) providers identified by the ICOE Alternative Payment Program.

ECE COVID-19 Initiative: \$35,000, that were approved of by the Commission, were earmarked for the purchase of safety supplies and sanitizers to FCCs, and center-base sites that are currently open and providing care for the children of essential workers. A recommendation was made to include the acquisition of thermometers.

COVID-19 Relief Stipend: Childcare providers working at sites that are open are be eligible to receive a \$500.00 stipend for COVID-19 related expenses. To date, 192 individuals have applied for the stipend. Commission will go back and evaluate whether additional funds are needed to ensure additional childcare providers receive the stipend as more services are beginning to re-open.

8. Other Commission Updates:

Early Care and Education Physical Activity Initiative: 13 applications from family childcare providers were received in response to this grant. Of those 13, only five applicants met the liability criteria and subsequently were approved for a grant. A total of \$23,696 has been approved for these 5 applicants. Those that did not qualify were primarily due to not having current liability insurance for their childcare site.

Third Quarter Progress Reports: 10 major grants and 4 mini-grants submitted their 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Progress Reports. Expenses for major grant projects were 64% and for mini-grant projects were approximately 41% through the end of the quarter. Preliminary data indicates that projects have served a total of 6006 through individual contacts through case management, mobile visits, home visitations in-person consultations, and class/workshops. Of these direct services, 51% were offered under Early Care and Education, 18% were Child Health and 31% were Family Functioning. Projects continue to provide services amid the COVID-19 pandemic, although, with most of them having to re-adjust the way they provide their services. Commission has advised grantees that they will continue to honor their contracts. For second year, grantees will need to ensure that they can meet their scope-of-work within the context of COVID-19.

Community Development Mini-Grant FY 2020-2021: 7 agencies were invited to apply under Step 2 of the mini-grant application; deadline for submittal is June 16<sup>th</sup> via email to the Commission office. Applicants must include language which addresses how they will ensure safety amid COVID-19 pandemic. Commissioners will meet in July to evaluate and select mini-grants.

#### **VII. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Kim cautioned Mr. Rodriguez to ensure that the legality of open meetings is being practiced as it relates to virtual meetings, he recommended seeking legal advice.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

A motion adjourning the meeting was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Deol; the meeting was adjourned at 4:36 pm. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held the first week of July via Zoom.