

**FIRST 5 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION  
San Luis Obispo County**

**Meeting Minutes, December 5, 2007**

<b>Members Present</b>	Katcho Achadjian René Bravo, M.D. Carol Capito Julian Crocker Don Dennison Janet Murphy Rosalinda Rodriguez Greg Thomas, M.D.	SLO County Board of Supervisors SLO County Medical Association Child Care Planning Council SLO County Office of Education Children's Services Network Community at Large Community at Large SLO County Dept. of Public Health
<b>Members Absent</b>	Lee Collins, SLO County Dept. of Social Services, excused.	
<b>Staff Present</b>	Susan Hughes, Armando Corella, Anne Tognazzini	
<b>Call to Order</b>	Chairperson Katcho Achadjian called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.	
<b>Public Comment</b>	There were no comments from the public.	
<b>Consent Agenda:</b>	Commissioner Dennison moved, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, to approve the October 24, 2007 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.	

**First 5 SLO County 2006/07 Annual School Readiness and General Evaluation Report**

Tom Keifer, Evaluation Consultant, presented a PowerPoint overview of the annual evaluation report including key accomplishments. Susan Hughes noted the report was still in progress and the Commissioners would be receiving a paper copy at the next Commission meeting.

Mr. Keifer explained he used two main lenses in this overview: 1) First 5 San Luis Obispo Making a Difference and 2) First 5 Service Areas.

In regards to First 5 Making a Difference, three themes were reviewed: 1) helping identify and meet emerging needs, 2) helping underserved children with special needs, and 3) helping underserved communities.

First 5 Service Areas were also reviewed: 1) Improved Child Development, 2) Improved Child Health, 3) Improved Family Functioning, and 4) Improved Systems of Care. Historical data and statistics were provided.

Chairperson Achadjian asked if there were any questions or comments, and there were none. Mr. Keifer was thanked for his presentation.

**Discussion/Approval of a candidate to fill the seat currently held by the San Luis Obispo County Health Officer.**

Ms. Hughes explained that Commissioner Thomas, the County Health Officer (CHO), has submitted his resignation to the county and noted his position on the First 5 Commission is a designated seat per

County code. She pointed out that County Counsel was present to provide input, and the packet of information given to the Commissioners included the related County code sections.

Chairperson Achadjian asked County Counsel Patricia Gomez to provide input. Commissioner Crocker asked specifically whether the First 5 Commission has a say in the decision re: replacing Dr. Thomas, or whether it is a Board of Supervisors' (BOS) decision. Ms. Gomez explained the Commission can make a recommendation, but the Board of Supervisors has ultimate authority. She noted this is practice rather than written policy.

Commissioner Bravo expressed concern about the possibility of a significant lag time between Dr. Thomas leaving and his replacement coming on board.

Ms. Gomez explained there were six options for replacing Dr. Thomas, including other specified county managers instead of the CHO. Commissioner Bravo stated he strongly supports replacing Dr. Thomas with the next CHO because of the CHO's knowledge and position in the agency's hierarchy. Chairperson Achadjian explained the Board of Supervisors would go with the recommendation of the First 5 Commission as long as it follows the code in making its selection.

Commissioner Crocker agreed that knowledge and expertise related to the Public Health Dept. is valuable, but thought it also could be provided by a high level manager in Public Health who has knowledge about children's health. He also expressed support for having Health Agency Director Jeff Hamm fill the seat.

Commissioner Thomas explained that over the long term the CHO can be a valuable member of the Commission because that position is often the only physician in Public Health. He also stated it could be argued that finding someone who could cover both Public Health and Behavioral/Mental Health would be beneficial.

Chairperson Achadjian asked Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director, to join the discussion.

Director Hamm noted both the CHO and the Behavioral/Mental Health Manager report to him and would bring a high level of management perspective and breadth of responsibility. He also agreed the CHO seems a logical choice as it would bring that position's strength and depth of knowledge about medical issues. He added it is presumed the new CHO would be someone with a similar perspective and depth of knowledge, in addition to being a physician. He also presumes he/she will have a considerable level of interest and enthusiasm for Commission issues as well as for anything the Health Agency Director asks him/her to do within the scope of his/her responsibilities. He also mentioned the employment gap between CHOs wouldn't be an issue if the seat were filled by the Health Agency Director or one of the others mentioned in the code. He said he hasn't spoken with Dr. Baylor (the Mental Health Director/ Behavioral Health Administrator) about this yet, thinking that the CHO would be the most likely candidate for the seat from the Commission's perspective, followed by the Director of the Health Agency.

Commissioner Thomas explained he would be leaving his fulltime position on January 15, but expects to be a contract employee or independent contractor with the Health Agency for the foreseeable future. Jeff Hamm explained the County hopes to have a contract with an interim Health Officer soon and already has a contract with a backup Health Officer, Dr. Lata. Commissioner Crocker asked about the wording in the code re: member vacancies, and whether Commissioner Thomas could stay on until the new CHO is hired. If not, then his personal preference would be to have Mr. Hamm serve in the interim. Chairperson Achadjian didn't think it would be possible because the code specifies county personnel. Ms. Gomez explained it would require a review of the backup officer contract, to see if serving on the Commission is included in the duties.

Commissioner Bravo suggested, for continuity sake, it is critical to have someone with Commissioner Thomas' knowledge and stature, and having him stay on until the new CHO is hired would be the least disruptive to the Commission. If he is amenable to it, it should be determined if it's contractually possible.

Commissioner Bravo expressed concern that an interim Health Officer would be appointed to the Commission and would only be here three or four months. Mr. Hamm said they hoped to have a permanent replacement by May. Mr. Hamm further explained if Commissioner Thomas is able to continue on the Commission until that time, a decision could be made then about whether the new CHO would take his place on the Commission. However, if Commissioner Thomas cannot continue, Mr. Hamm would prefer to be appointed to the seat for a year, followed by the new CHO.

Chairperson Achadjian summarized the Commission's preference was to have Commissioner Thomas continue if it is possible, and if it is not possible, then Health Agency Director Hamm would be appointed.

Patricia Gomez asked for the expiration date of Commissioner Thomas' term, because the language in the code refers to the "unexpired term," and was told it expires in 2009.

Chairperson Achadjian asked for public comments, and there were none. He then explained he would not ask for a motion, because the consensus is to move forward.

Patricia Gomez summarized that the Commission was asking staff to work together to see if there was a mechanism by which Commissioner Thomas could continue serving on the Commission under the category of County Health Officer, until a permanent successor has been hired, and to decide then how to proceed. Commissioner Bravo added that if that doesn't work, the recommendation was to appoint Jeff Hamm.

**Request for approval of a 2007-08 budget amendment reducing Salaries/Benefits in the amount of \$55,000 and increasing Professional Services by a corresponding amount in order to contract with independent entities for accounting services and program contract management services.**

Susan Hughes presented a request for approval of a budget amendment because of vacancies in staff and complications that have arisen in trying to fill the vacancies. The proposal is to bring money out of staff salaries into the professional services area in order to contract with outside sources.

Ms. Hughes explained there were two options in regards to filling the Administrative Services Officer (ASO) position, one of which is to contract with an outside entity, a consultant. She said she also recently learned of a second option, which is the possibility of shifting staff in the Health Agency to First 5.

In regards to the Accountant's position, Ms. Hughes stated she met with staff from the Auditor's Office and they offered to assign someone from their staff to provide services until the end of fiscal year at the price of \$50/hour, which would be a total of about \$10,000, for one day a week.

Commissioner Crocker asked about ASO position options, and Ms. Hughes explained that a couple of people have been identified who could come in to keep on top of the critical portions of the ASO duties. Commissioner Crocker clarified that his question related to staying within the county system, and Ms. Hughes explained that a couple of county employees have been identified who might be interested in the ASO position, which was new information in the last week. Commissioner Crocker asked about advertising for the position, and Ms. Hughes explained she worked with an existing list of six names, and no one came for an interview.

Commissioner Thomas explained that because of the County's current "hiring process," it is a challenge to get this position advertised and open for interviewing and selection. Theoretically after an unsuccessful ASO I recruitment, you could do an ASO II recruitment, but it would not be an easy task right now. Chairperson Achadjian further explained the current hiring process, and that a request for hiring would have to go to the Administrative Office and then to the Board of Supervisors if refused by the Administrative Office.

Regarding the ASO position, Commissioner Crocker expressed concern about hiring someone temporarily (on a consultant basis) because that position requires programmatic knowledge. If the hiring would take a long time, such as a year, it would be fine to bring someone in temporarily. But, otherwise it would be better to wait to get someone hired permanently.

Armando Corella explained that an additional problem may be in getting someone to take the position with the prospect that the commission will no longer be in the County structure at the end of June. Ms. Hughes added that if an ASO were hired and layoffs later occurred, the new hire might get bumped.

Commissioner Bravo summarized the budget amendment as being a way to give Ms. Hughes more latitude to deal with the situation. Commissioner Murphy added that she sees it as giving Ms. Hughes the responsibility and permission to make choices and put the pieces together in the best manner possible.

Chairperson Achadjian asked for comments from the public and there were none.

Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the budget amendment request, noting it gives the Executive Director options rather than mandating certain actions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murphy and passed unanimously.

### **Discussion and staff recommendation on the re-distribution of unspent funds from the 2004-07 Funding Cycle.**

Susan Hughes explained that now that the audit has been completed, staff now has exact amounts of unspent funds from the 2004-07 funding cycle. She explained that staff looked at immediate needs and possible future needs in the currently funded programs. Staff then determined there were some immediate needs they believed they should recommend for additional funding. Armando Corella referred the Commissioners to their agenda packets, where he provided justifications so they might best understand staff recommendations. He explained two of the recommendations were for School Readiness in Oceano: one for an increase in the family advocate's time and also for accreditation costs for the First 5 preschool. For Georgia Brown Elementary in Paso Robles, additional funds were recommended for a family support counselor, and for a van for the family advocate/site coordinator to provide transportation services and do home visits. One other recommendation was to increase direct service funding to Pediatric Physical Therapy Services (PPTS). Mr. Corella explained in the last funding cycle some funding to PPTS was pulled back because the program was ramping up and not expending its allocation. This is no longer the case.

Chairperson Achadjian asked for questions from the Commissioners and then from the public and there were none.

The motion to approve the recommendation was moved by Commissioner Crocker, seconded by Commissioner Bravo and passed unanimously.

### **Update on Children Services Network (CSN) Reorganization**

Copies of the CSN Redesign Proposal were distributed. Commissioner Dennison spoke about significant changes within CSN, pointing out assumptions and restructuring objectives enumerated in the Redesign Proposal. He explained that ultimately the most visible effect of the redesign is to reshape the Policy Council, to make a smaller group primarily composed of directors of agencies, both public and non-profit, that serve children and families in our county. He also pointed out the four support levels of CSN participation.

Commissioner Crocker also noted CSN would recommend an appropriate representative from CSN for the First 5 Commission, and that person, if accepted by the Commission, would then have full policy status with CSN. Under that basis, Commissioner Dennison explained he is able to continue as the CSN representative on the First 5 Commission and as a full member of the revised CSN Policy Council.

Commissioner Crocker added that the new council has met twice, and is working through some fairly sophisticated organizational issues.

Chairperson Achadjian noted this was informational only at this time. There were no additional questions from the Commission and none from the public.

## **Staff Report**

Oral Health Summit. Susan Hughes reported on the Oral Health Summit, planned for the 22<sup>nd</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> of February. Dr. Harold Slavkin, Dean of the USC School of Dentistry, has agreed to be the keynote speaker. His expenses are to be covered but no honorarium would be required. Ms. Hughes gave additional information about summit goals, outcomes and tentative activities. She indicated they were beginning to identify attendees and that a subgroup of the Planning Committee would meet again on December 10.

Human Resources Study. Ms. Hughes mentioned that the HR Study continues. She met with the Auditor Controller's Office and contacts were being made with other First 5 Commissions about insurance benefits and other administrative costs. She noted Susan McGraw will be back in January 2008 to provide more detail.

Advocacy Support. Ms. Hughes gave information on advocacy letters written recently.

State Association Meeting in Fresno. Ms. Hughes reported on visiting their Assessment Center for Children. She noted that it is embedded within Exceptional Parents Unlimited which has been around since 1976. It is also a 501(c)(3) and gave information about its funding. She also reported the State Association is encouraging local legislator visits and is working on key messages to promote consistency. She indicated there also was discussion centered on the trials and tribulations of the new annual report form.

State Conference Date. May 21-23, 2008 at the Marriott in Anaheim. Commissioner Thomas asked that an email be sent with the date.

Partner's Meetings. Ms. Hughes spoke about PEDS input changes that make it easier for Partners to report data for quarterly reports.

New Commissioner Program Visits. Ms. Hughes mentioned that Commissioners Murphy and Capito toured the Georgia Brown School Readiness Site and Clinica de Tolosa.

Kits for New Parents. Ms. Hughes mentioned that distribution of Kits is now being done "in house" by First 5 staff and that numbers are up.

Looking ahead. Ms. Hughes finished with a brief look ahead at the January meeting. Armando Corella noted that Martha's Place funding expires June 30, 2008, so if the Commission continues to support it, it's crucial it be done during the first quarter of the year to allow for contract development time.

Ms. Hughes extended holiday greetings to the Commission.

### **Commissioner Comments and Announcements**

Commissioner Murphy expressed appreciation for being able to visit the School Readiness program site at Georgia Brown and Clinica de Tolosa.

Commissioner Rodriguez expressed enthusiasm about the Oral Health Summit and noted she is hoping we are looking at the long view of what can happen in addition to immediate needs.

With no other announcements or comments, Chairperson Achadjian adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

All materials referred to in these minutes are available at the First 5 Children & Families Commission office. For a more detailed account, recordings of the meeting are available by calling 781-4058.

**The next regular Commission meeting will be:**

**January 23, 2008  
4:00 – 6:30 p.m.**

**McMillan Complex Conference Room  
2975 McMillan Ave., Room MM1  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401**