

FIRST 5 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

San Luis Obispo County

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

September 24, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT

Katcho Achadjian	SLO County Board of Supervisors
René Bravo, M.D.	SLO County Medical Association
Carol Capito	Child Care Planning Council
Lee Collins	SLO County Social Services
Julian Crocker	SLO County Office of Education
Janet Murphy	Community at Large
Greg Thomas, M.D.	SLO Co Public Health (back-up CHO)

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Don Dennison	Children's Services Network
Rosalinda Rodriguez	Community at Large

STAFF PRESENT

Susan Hughes, Jason Wells, Anne Tognazzini

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Achadjian called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the Minutes of the August 27, 2008 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Collins and passed unanimously. There were no other items on the Consent Agenda.

PRESENTATION: BORN LEARNING PROJECT

Rick London, CEO of United Way San Luis Obispo, did a presentation on United Way's Born Learning initiative. He thanked the Commission for its support of the Born Learning Trail at Mitchell Park, which was dedicated in August 2008.

He spoke of United Way's goals as well as its shift from being seen solely as a fundraiser to a role as community leader, galvanizing communities to change lives. He also noted the influence of a shift of thinking, from treatment to prevention. He added that early learning is one of United Way's top three strategic initiatives and is built on three cornerstones: awareness, education, and action. He gave an overview of Born Learning, noting that children are learning constantly from birth, and parents and caregivers dramatically undervalue their role in early learning. Mr. London noted the Born Learning initiative includes over 500 online tools, tips and templates, and he showed several Public Service Announcements. He also spoke about United Way's Born Learning partnership in Santa Barbara County, which is sponsored by First 5 Santa

Barbara County, and will involve pediatricians initially.

Chairperson Achadjian asked if United Way had plans to go outside the city of San Luis Obispo, and Mr. London explained that Born Learning Trails could be installed throughout the county with community support, including financial support.

Commissioner Thomas noted that Born Learning mirrors what First 5 has been saying for the past 10 years, and asked about United Way's next steps related to Born Learning. Mr. London explained they are trying to get more people around the table to develop ideas and decide how to best utilize the Born Learning resources.

Commissioner Thomas brought up First 5 CA's Kits for New Parents. Susan Hughes, First 5 Executive Director, noted that First 5 SLO County may start including Born Learning materials in customizing the Kit. Commissioner Bravo suggested that hospitals are the best target for Kits, and that those doing homebirths need to be reached as well.

Commissioner Crocker suggested the County Office of Education's Channel 19 on Charter Cable is a powerful medium, available at no cost, and is an underutilized strategy for parent education. He noted that what is lacking is not content, but rather, the marketing of Channel 19 to viewers so they turn it on.

Commissioner Thomas asked that First 5 staff agendaize periodic updates regarding Born Learning, to keep it on the radar. Ms. Hughes also noted that it could be kept in mind as First 5 approaches minor and major strategic planning in the months and year ahead.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

APPROVAL OF THE FIRST 5 SLO EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Susan Hughes noted that County Counsel reviewed Commissioners' comments regarding the earlier version of the Handbook, and that some suggested changes were incorporated.

Commissioner Crocker noted he still believes the vacation accrual allowed is too much. He encouraged the Executive Director to be very stringent on the accrual of vacation, not from a financial standpoint, but from the personnel practice of encouraging people to take their vacation time. He added that he believes it is also a potential financial issue, although it has not been so far.

There were no questions or comments from the public. There were also no comments from County Counsel.

Commissioner Bravo moved to approve the First 5 SLO County Employee Handbook and Personnel Policy Manual. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crocker and passed unanimously.

[Note: The order of items as listed in the Agenda was shifted at this time, due to the late arrival of some presenters/participants.]

PRESENTATION: SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

Commissioner Crocker did a presentation on school accountability with a focus on the Commission's School Readiness projects in Oceano and Paso Robles. Commissioner Crocker noted that the state accountability reports from early September contain a tremendous amount of data, and that Georgia Brown Elementary and Oceano Elementary [School Readiness sites]

have done particularly well. He prefaced his report by acknowledging that one cannot judge the effectiveness of school readiness solely by student achievement. He noted that even though there was significant improvement at both schools, he is not trying to make a direct cause and effect relationship. However, with respect to schools that have turned around, he noted a quality preschool is always a component, so it is a significant part of the achievement, although not the only part. He also reminded that school readiness is more than the two preschools, and includes family support, parent education, and advocacy.

Commissioner Crocker then explained the differences between Academic Performance Index (API, state), and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP, federal). He noted schools must meet targets for growth for all students as well as for all subgroups: 1) students in poverty, 2) students of various ethnicities, 3) students who are English learners, and 4) students with special needs.

Commissioner Crocker then reviewed API scores for Georgia Brown and Oceano for 1999 to 2008 and AYP scores for 2003-2008, and discussion ensued regarding the scores. He summarized by saying that the two schools have shown significant progress and each school's most recent accountability reports have been outstanding.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

DISCUSSION/UPDATE REGARDING PENSION TRUST CONTRACT

Susan Hughes noted she found out in early August that the Pension Trust contract, previously approved by the Commission and by Pension Trust, had been pulled from the Board of Supervisors agenda. She noted that representatives of the Administrative Office, David Edge, the County Administrative Officer, and Ginger Fisher, the analyst overseeing labor relations, were present to explain that action.

Mr. Edge explained that their perspective is that First 5 employees should not be part of the County Pension retirement system when First 5 becomes its own employer. He spoke about concerns with the adequacy of the County Pension Trust and its \$200 million in unfunded liability, due to people living longer, investments doing poorly, and COLAs increasing faster than anticipated. He noted the County did enter into Pension Trust contracts with LAFCO and SLOCOG in the past, but if they were looking at either now, a contract would not be extended to them either. He added that, as a courtesy, he would be willing to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they keep the existing First 5 employees in the system, as long as there are contract provisions ensuring that none of the obligations and cost for those employees would become a financial burden to the county.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding options and potential costs to remain within the Pension Trust system, including the possibility of another Pension Obligation bond, which would require additional payments by the Commission to the Auditor's Office.

The discussion was opened to the public.

Penny Borenstein, County Health Officer, noted that an extended timeline puts the Health Agency in a bit of a hamstrung position, regarding filling positions. She requested that the decision regarding retirement plans be done as expeditiously as possible.

Staff was directed to do more research, and prepare a matrix of options, for future review.

CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Jason Wells, First 5 Program Officer, spoke about the Children's Oral Health Coordination Project and the work plan provided in the Agenda packet, noting that it will be the basis for the contract and scope of work. Mr. Wells noted that the contractor developed the work plan based on the RFQ, but also included additional items they deemed important.

Wendy Wendt, First 5 consultant, reported on progress on the grant proposal to be submitted to The California Endowment. She reported that First 5 staff are now at the point of submitting a (solicited) proposal to The California Endowment, with the input of the Coordination Project contractors. She noted the funding would not support direct service, and reviewed the main components of the proposal: coalition-building, dental home capacity, school-aged prevention, pediatrician involvement, assessment, and sustainability. She asked if any Commissioners would be interested in reading the grant proposal, and Commissioners Collins and Capito expressed interest. Commissioner Bravo specifically asked to see the section on pediatricians.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Borenstein, the new County Health Officer, was introduced. Dr. Borenstein gave her background, which includes 6 years as a pediatrician. She noted she is excited to be here, and is looking forward to working with First 5. Ms. Hughes indicated she would provide Dr. Borenstein with a First 5 orientation binder. All Commissioners introduced themselves.

Because it was Commissioner Thomas' last meeting as a Commissioner, Chairperson Achadjian expressed appreciation on behalf of the Commission and First 5 staff for his service on the First 5 Commission since its beginning. Commissioner Crocker specifically thanked Commissioner Thomas for teaching him a great deal about Public Health.

Commissioner Bravo asked that the issue of opening a low income dental clinic in the south county be kept in front of the Commission as an Agenda item. It was noted that the issue is on the work plan for the Coordination Project, but Chairperson Achadjian also asked that it be included as a main agenda item for the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other announcements or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM

**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 (805) 781-4058.**

**The next regular Commission meeting will be:
October 22, 2008, 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.
2975 McMillan Ave., Room MM1, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401**