



**COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES**

September 23, 2021

Commissioners Present: Rachel Champagne, Dr. Michael Gollub, Matt LaVere, Dr. Robert Levin, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Dr. Cesar Morales, Bruce Stenslie, Dr. Christine Walker

Excused Absence: Barry Zimmerman

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Tyla Adams, John Anderson, Lauren Arzu, Jhoelle Aspuria, Amy Cook, Fahim Farag, Heather Guerrero, Lilia Gurrola, Teresa Gutierrez, Jimena Hernandez, Andrew Huizar, Jennifer Johnson, Jared Martin, Sam McCoy

Public Present: Lisa Colvig-Niclai, Alicia McFarland

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marquez-O'Neill opened the meeting at 1:01 p.m., reminded attendees how to participate via public comment, and shared a quote.

2. Approval of Minutes from June 17, 2021 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Gollub, seconded by Commissioner Stenslie, to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2021 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Chair Marquez-O'Neill provided an overview of regular and supplemental packet items, noting materials were sent via email and are posted on the F5VC website.

A motion was made by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Gollub, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

5. Presentation: First 5 Ventura County Strategic Framework and Evaluation Plan

Sam McCoy reported that the Commission adopted a two-year extension of the strategic plan in June 2020, with new evaluation framework development as part of that plan. In August 2020, staff released an RFP for a revised evaluation plan, and Applied Survey Research (ASR) was unanimously selected by the proposal review committee. Sam outlined ASR's experience and introduced Lisa Colvig-Niclai, VP of Evaluation with ASR, to update the Commission on the evaluation plan.

Lisa stated the full evaluation framework report is enclosed for reference and noted the Strategic Framework Diagram was reviewed to clarify strategic priorities and goals. The diagram outlines F5VC's vision of change and the pathways to produce that change. The evaluation plan is designed to determine what needs to be measured for each strategic priority area, using a Results Based Accountability Framework. Lisa detailed efforts to develop indicators for strategic priorities to determine quantity and quality metrics for all F5VC strategic investments, and what the desired benefit is for each area. She outlined the methods staff will use to track and manage data and results, including tool trackers and data flow charts. Data will be presented in four reports: a technical report, PowerPoint, the annual report which will be available online, and a strategic initiative snapshot. Sam McCoy will train staff on the new plan, tools, and procedures. Lisa recommended staff invest time and resources to build out the new database as well as consider developing a subcommittee for data evaluation.

Commissioner Gollub pointed out that there aren't any measures for prenatal health and screenings or improving fetal health.

Petra noted that when we developed the evaluation framework, we used key investments from the strategic plan. While prenatal isn't specifically called out, F5VC continues to increase awareness about the importance of the prenatal period.

Commissioner Champagne thanked Lisa for including families and advised that staff use the data to pivot as needed.

Chair Marquez O'Neill thanked Lisa for making a clear, easy to follow presentation, and inquired about the Parenting Ladder. Lisa replied that the Parenting Ladder is a tool to measure parenting knowledge and confidence, developed in Oregon and used by F5 Monterey and Contra Costa, with ten items and a few open-ended questions to ask parents to self-report on key aspects of parenting.

Chair Marquez O'Neill asked if the 4 Ps Plus is still being used by the County. Commissioner Levin and Petra will look into it.

6. Presentation: Update on Neighborhoods for Learning

Heather Guerrero detailed NfL transition efforts, including efforts to ensure a smooth transition for staff and developing new policies. She noted new facility partnerships in Santa Paula and Nyeland Acres and staff efforts to connect with local families. She also detailed additional partnership opportunities in development, such as Many Mansions. Services began online in July, with the return to in person programming recently in Moorpark, Simi Valley, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and Santa Paula. Additional locations will open for in person services in November, with virtual services also to be continued. She

detailed services offered at NfLs in addition to PACT classes, such as developmental and maternal depression screenings, care coordination, and parent education and engagement. Heather highlighted partnerships that allow us to meet the needs of families in Ventura County, including WIC, libraries, MICOP, and more. She concluded her presentation with an overview of the QIS assessment process that will be used to drive continuous quality improvement.

Commissioner Champagne asked if the NfLs will host collaborative meetings with contractors and ECE partners throughout the County. Heather and Petra noted that it is a priority for the current year to relaunch those meetings.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 7. Recommendation to Update Commission’s Policy and Procedures on Internal Control**
- 8. Recommendation to Extend Persimmony Software and Evaluation Data System Contract**

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 9. Report of Committees**
 - a. Administration and Finance**

Commissioner Stenslie noted that the Administration and Finance Committee met in September to receive a presentation on the plan for the FY 2020-21 audit, adding the Committee agreed to present single year financial statements moving forward. The Committee also discussed the upcoming items and the proposed Apricot 360 software system contract, which will be presented to the Commission separately in item 10.

Following the Commission’s Employee Handbook discussion in June, the Administration and Finance Committee discussed several items for potential changes. The Committee recommends leaving the employee handbook sections related to holidays and marijuana/drug use as is but recommends updating a few other sections.

- i. Recommendation to Update Commission’s Employee Handbook**

Lauren Arzu reported that currently, employees are unable to access their accrued vacation until they have reached 90 days of employment. There is little flexibility if a new employee has a pre-scheduled vacation. Staff recommend that the Commission grant authority to the Executive Director to grant exceptions to the 90 days of employment requirement. Lauren noted that while the Employee Handbook mentions the expectation of confidentiality, there is not a specific confidentiality policy in place. She detailed a proposed addition to the Employee Handbook, which will increase the importance of confidentiality among staff.

Commissioner Champagne asked if staff are aware that there are circumstances, such as when working with Child Protective Services, where it is necessary to share details about families. Lauren confirmed that staff has been trained as mandated reporters and that there are additional policies in place for these situations.

Lauren detailed the proposed COVID-19 vaccine or testing policy, which has been reviewed by legal counsel. Effective November 1, F5VC would require staff to be fully vaccinated or undergo weekly tests. She outlined procedures for getting tested and submitting results, as well as documentation for fully vaccinated staff.

Commissioner Gollub suggested weekly testing may not be frequent enough and advised that staff be required to become vaccinated instead of having the option to test weekly.

Commissioner Levin suggested that future staff could be required to be vaccinated as a condition of employment. Lauren noted staff will discuss that option with legal counsel and report back to the Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, to approve the updated vacation policy and add sections on confidentiality and vaccines in the Employee Handbook. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Recommendation to Grant Exception to Employment Length Requirement Related to Health Insurance

Lauren Arzu noted that staff are recommending a one-time exception to the policy that requires staff on unpaid medical leave during their first 90 days of employment to pay their own health insurance premiums. The exception would only apply to staff who transferred from ICFS to F5VC in May or June of 2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Levin, to grant an exception to the employment length requirement under policy for providing health insurance when on leave without pay for NfL staff who transferred to F5VC employment in May or June 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Recommendation to Extend and Increase Social Solutions Global (SSG) Contract for Apricot 360 software system

Sam McCoy reported the Commission previously selected Social Solutions Global's (SSG) online database, Apricot 360, as the new data collection and management system, approving an initial contract from June 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022 for up to \$70,000, subject to annual renewal for FY 2022-24. During contract negotiations, it was determined that a three-year contract would be mutually beneficial, yield significant cost savings, and is in line with F5VC and SSG's contracting standards. Sam added

the proposed contract extension would result in cost savings of approximately \$80,000 in Commission funding over three years in comparison to the current database allocation.

A motion was made by Commissioner LaVere, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to extend the previously approved FY 2021-22 contract with Social Solutions Global (SSG) for their Apricot 360 software system through June 30, 2024 for a total amount not to exceed \$180,000. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Recommendation to Reassign the FY 2021-22 Triple P Funding Allocation for New Dawn Counseling to Infinite New Day

John Anderson noted the Commission has funded Triple P services through New Dawn Counseling and other partners for over 10 years and approved a Triple P allocation for FY 2021-22 of up to \$50,000 for New Dawn Counseling. During contract development, New Dawn's CEO proposed a superior leveraging opportunity through her companion organization, where Ms. Torres is also the CEO, Infinite New Day Counseling & Consulting Inc. The recommended reallocation will create an approximately one-to-one match with F5VC funds through Beacon insurance clients served by Infinite New Day. Infinite New Day is staffed with trained Triple P providers and could access additional staffing capacity from New Dawn, if needed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Stenslie, to reassign the FY 2021-22 Triple P allocation previously approved by the Commission for New Dawn Counseling Inc., to its partner organization Infinite New Day Inc. and to grant authority to the Executive Director to enter into a contract for FY 2021-22 for up to \$50,000 with this newly designated contract agency. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Report from Executive Director

Petra Puls delivered highlights from her written report, noting the annual audit is underway and the report will be presented at the October meeting. She welcomed new NfL and program management staff to the F5VC team and wished recently departed staff success in their next endeavors. NfL services continued virtually throughout the summer, serving almost 200 families, with in person services to resume in the coming weeks. Petra provided an update on Help Me Grow activities, including helping develop an ACEs Pathway Pilot. She noted staff worked closely with our legislators to include revenues for F5VC through a Prop 10 backfill in the proposed SB295 Vape Tax legislation. Staff is also advocating for full-day transitional kindergarten and for American Rescue Plan Act funds to be allocated to young children and their families.

F5VC received 15,000 books from F5CA through the Dollywood Foundation, and staff distributed books throughout the community with our partners and preschools, early head start, and local clinics. Petra announced Ventura County received a \$247,000 grant to support shared services, including offering technical assistance and technology stipends for providers. She provided an update on the Community Investment Loan Fund, noting while many loan recipients have successfully made their payments during the pandemic, one loan recipient is struggling to manage loan payments. EDC and F5VC staff are working with them on a repayment plan. Petra reported F5VC worked with community partners at Food Share to distribute almost 700 cases of diapers and wipes to local families. She also

provided an update on the Parent Leader Network, noting two local parents have been elected to the National Parent Leader Network Steering Committee. Petra concluded her report with an update of community outreach activities, a workshop on Race, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion recently announced by the First 5 Association, and updates to Brown Act regulations regarding virtual meetings.

Commissioner Gollub advised that families should use cotton pads with water instead of diaper wipes. He also inquired about the staffing availability at preschool partners. Commissioner Champagne reported ECE employers are having difficulty finding and retaining qualified staff, which impacts enrollment.

Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Levin reported that the 4 Ps Plus program is still in use by Ventura County Public Health.

Commissioner Walker asked about the Abuse and Molestation insurance amounts. Lauren Arzu reported F5VC was able to obtain a \$1 million policy.

13. Next Meeting

Thursday, October 21, 2021, format TBD.

Chair Marquez O'Neill asked if the Commissioners would prefer to meet virtually or in person. All Commissioners expressed a preference for continuing virtual meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.