



**COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

April 21, 2022

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

Excused Absence: Barry Zimmerman, Michael Gollub

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Jennifer Johnson, Alma Perez, Lilia Gurrola, Heather Guerrero, Sam McCoy, Jhoelle Aspuria-Arca, John Anderson, Amy Cook, Grace Montejano, Shelby Ferns, Christina Saenz, Blanca Morales, Janet Fleming, Tyla Adams, Andrew Huizar, Jimena Hernandez, Teresa Gutierrez, Jared Martin, Lauren Arzu

Public Present: Liz Bruce, Chrystal Tipping, Alicia McFarland, Regan Bynder

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Stenslie opened the meeting at 1:01 p.m., reminded attendees how to participate via public comment, and gave attendees the opportunity to introduce themselves.

2. Adopt a Resolution for Commission to Continue to Hold Virtual Meetings due to COVID-19 Emergency

Chair Stenslie stated that virtual meetings have been held in response to Governor Newsom signing an Executive Order. According to Assembly Bill No. 361, local agencies and boards are permitted to hold virtual meetings through January 1, 2024. He detailed the conditions that must be met in order for virtual meetings to occur.

Commissioners will be asked to verify monthly that they see a need for continued virtual meetings.

A motion was made by Commissioner LaVere, seconded by Commissioner Levin, to adopt a resolution authorizing F5VC to allow Commissioners to participate via teleconference so long as such actions comply with AB 361. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes from March 17, 2022 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to

approve the minutes from the March 17, 2022 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets

Petra 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 Morales, seconded by Commissioner Levin, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County Financial Statements as of December 31, 2021

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

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Report of Administration and Finance Committee – Commissioner Morales, Chair Stenslie

a. Presentation on employee satisfaction survey results

Lauren Arzu presented the results from the employee satisfaction survey conducted during the month of March 2022. Lauren stated that the goal of this survey was to identify which factors contributed most to worker retention rates for both present staff and potential new hires. Lauren explained the questions created for this survey as well as the five-point scale to measure each response (from strongly disagree to strongly agree).

According to the results, 100% of employees agreed that F5VC is a family-friendly employer and would recommend F5VC as an employer to a friend. The survey results indicated that work life balance, health care coverage, and paid holidays were among the highest valued benefits offered by F5VC. From the data collected, 97% of staff said that retirement plan contribution, management/leadership, and organizational culture were the most important for employees. F5VC scored high in all areas of importance among staff.

Lauren detailed the list of benefit options employees were given to select which were the most desired. This list included budgetary investments F5VC could possibly offer such as a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and hourly rate/salary increase.

Lauren stated that the COLA, hourly rate/salary increase, and retirement contribution were the highest ranked among the options provided. Life insurance, paid vacation, and college

tuition assistance were the next highest-ranking factors.

Commissioner Champagne inquired as to what manner were the questions for the survey distributed and how were the responses kept confidential. Lauren explained that the survey was administered through Google Forms and the identities of each survey respondent was not collected. In total, 33 responses were collected.

Chair Stenslie asked about the expenditures associated with professional development. Lauren shared that a large portion of F5VC staff have a bachelor's degree and master's degree in an area related to their field of work. Lauren expressed that Jennifer would go over the professional development expenses in the budgetary report shortly.

b. Recommendation to adopt proposed budgets for Fiscal Year 2022-23

Jennifer Johnson presented the proposed budgets for Fiscal Year 2022-23. She reviewed the overall Operating Budget, including the Operating Fund and the Community Investment Loan Fund. She noted revenue projections for Proposition 10 tax distributions are projected using a 4% rate of decline, and detailed leveraged funding amounts as well as revenue by source area for the Community Investment Loan Fund. Total revenue is projected at just over \$6 million. She reviewed proposed expenditures of \$6.9 million for the Operating Fund, which includes the approved allocations for program strategies, grant expenditures, evaluation, administration, and equipment. Jennifer stated the proposed expenditures and outflows for the Community Investment Loan Fund totals \$685,000, which includes projected loan disbursements of up to \$650,000 and up to \$35,000 for loan implementation costs. She discussed the utilization of the fund balance and stating that, for the Operating Fund, only \$306,800 is projected to be used in FY 2022-23 to maintain program services. Excess interest earnings from FY 2022-23 are not anticipated, therefore, a transfer is not budgeted in FY 2022-23. Jennifer reviewed the estimated administrative cost percentage.

Referring to the staffing chart, Jennifer noted that there are no overall changes regarding full time equivalents (FTEs). The total staffing budget remains at 38.25 FTEs. Jennifer reviewed the methodologies used to allocate centralized administrative support positions and the resulting percentages that will be used to allocate shared operating costs (services and supplies) on the basis of FTEs. Jennifer reviewed the budget assumptions used to prepare internal budgets, including the methodologies that will be used to allocate shared operating costs. There was a discussion on the creation of new NfL positions and the change of classification titles to include aids under the assistant position.

Jennifer reviewed proposed budgets for each internal cost center, including: Program & Systems Integration; Neighborhoods for Learning; Help Me Grow; Results-Based Accountability; and Administration. She summarized these budgets, highlighting the variances and providing explanations as to the proposed budgeted amounts.

Jennifer concluded her presentation noting the operating budget shall be the final budget if there are no substantive comments by the Community Commission of Ventura County and the Board of Supervisors after their reviews.

A motion was made by Commissioner LaVere, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to

approve the proposed budgets for Fiscal Year 2022-23. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Recommendation to approve a cost-of-living adjustment for FY 2022-23 and to update employee compensation schedule

Lauren Arzu stated that staff's greatest concern currently is their hourly rate/salary. The Consumer Price Index has risen 8.1% in the western U.S. in the last year – significantly higher than the 2.5% average for the west over the last 22 years. Staff recommends applying a one-time 3% COLA to all staff hourly rates or salaries, which will be processed with annual merit increases. Staff also recommended updating the existing salary ranges based on the 3% increases.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, to approve a cost-of-living adjustment for FY 2022-23 and to update the employee compensation schedule. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Recommendation to increase employer retirement contribution and add life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance to employee benefit package

The current employee benefits package includes a retirement plan providing a 3% Commission contribution and up to 4% match for a total of up to 7% of the employee's salary. Lauren reviewed the data collected from other First 5 Commissions, which indicated F5VC contribution rates are low. Staff recommends increasing the minimum Commission contribution to 5%, and increasing the match to up to 5%, for a total of up to 10% of the employee's salary as of July 1.

The Commission does not currently offer life insurance as a benefit. Lauren presented data on this low-cost but meaningful addition to the existing benefits package. Staff recommends updating the employee handbook and offering coverage of 150% of employees' annual salary in both Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage, to be paid for by the Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to approve an increase to employer retirement contribution and add life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance to employee benefit package. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Recommendation to update administrative cost policy and adopt administrative cap at 12% of total operating budget for FY 2022-23

Jennifer Johnson stated that county commissions are required to adopt a policy establishing a limit on the percentage of the Commission's operating budget that may be spent on administrative functions. Jennifer reviewed the proposed changes to the policy on administrative costs related to the allocation of centralized administrative support services (also called central services). Jennifer stated that the cap is set on an annual basis and she discussed the rationale for the establishing the rate for the upcoming fiscal year.

The staff recommendation for FY 2022-23 is to maintain the administrative cap at 12% of the total operating budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Champagne, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to update administrative cost policy and approve the administrative cap of 12% for Fiscal Year 2022-23. The motion carried unanimously.

f. Recommendation to approve updated financial plan, FY 2021-29, in compliance with Health and Safety Code Section 130151

Jennifer Johnson presented the long-range financial plan that has been updated as part of the budgeting process. Jennifer reviewed updates that have been made to the plan, including audited actuals for FY 2020-21, a forecast for FY 2021-22, and the proposed budget for FY 2022-23. Based on the current (and improved) trend in Proposition 10 disbursements, for FY 2021-22 and beyond, the plan utilizes the Commission's typical practice of estimating the annual rate of decline at 4%. Recognizing costs rise over time and the associated potential loss of capacity with level spending amounts, the Committee previously recommended increasing annual spending levels for relevant initiatives/contracts as a long-term financial planning strategy. She reviewed the application of the 5% year-over-year increase for the strategic plan extension period of FY 2021-23 to mitigate the potential loss of capacity due to costs rising over time. Jennifer reported that available resources were utilized to also increase spending levels for the subsequent three year period (through June 2026). The plan preserves the revolving Community Investment Loan Fund at \$1.3 million. She reported that the minimum fund balance of 6 months for working capital and \$1 million (or 20%) for a reserve/safety net are maintained.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the updated Financial Plan for FY 2021-29. The motion carried unanimously.

g. Recommendation to adopt a new attribution and logo policy

Lauren Arzu reported that the attribution and logo policy need to be updated to reflect that the Commission now runs key programs (the Neighborhoods for Learning and Help Me Grow) internally. The F5VC logo is a recognizable symbol of our work and supports brand identity and messaging when used consistently. Lauren reviewed the new Attribution and Logo policy, which will clarify expectations for funded partners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to approve the New Attribution and Logo Policy. The motion carried unanimously.

h. Recommendation to revise contract boilerplate for funded programs

Jennifer Johnson discussed the annual review conducted for the Boilerplate Contract, which includes review of insurance requirements, new provisions that may need to be added or modified based on any issues in prior years, and modification to language used. All changes have been reviewed by the insurance broker as well as the F5VC legal counsel.

Jennifer stated that funded programs are allowed to utilize unspent funds at the end of their

fiscal year. Jennifer detailed the revisions made under the “Religious Activities.” This revision clarified the type of contractors required to submit information about how religious activities will be prohibited. The audit submission requirement was noted to be refined to instead say “make available” in contrast to the original “mandatory submission.” Jennifer went over the updates made under the “Attribution” section.

Jennifer explained that the provision on reimbursement has been separated and that additional information has been moved to better align the content of the contract.

Jennifer detailed the revisions made under “Payments”, “Inventory”, “Matching Funds”, “Reimbursement”, and “Monitoring Evaluation”.

Commissioner Levin asked F5VC staff to format the bullet points on the boilerplate contract before finalizing. All suggested edits were noted.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marquez-O’Neill, seconded by Commissioner Morales, to approve the updated boilerplate contract for funded programs. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Recommendation to Approve Contract with Economic Development Collaborative to Manage and Implement the Community Investment Loan Fund – John Anderson

Commissioner Stenslie recused himself.

John Anderson presented the recommendation to continue to contract with the EDC to manage the implementation of the community investment loan fund for Fiscal Year 2022-23. John gave a summary of the loan fund and its goal to increase the number of high quality licensed child care and preschool spaces in Ventura County. John detailed that this recommendation would make up \$650,000 in new loans available to eligible applicants. This will allocate up to \$35,000 to cover the expenses to manage this fund.

John shared that the interest earnings from the loans aid in the offset of management expenses. John informed Commissioners that the recommended action is to authorize the executive director to contract with EDC for Fiscal Year 2022-23 for an amount not to exceed \$685,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Levin, to authorize the Executive Director to contract with the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) to continue managing the implementation of the Community Investment Loan Fund for FY 2022-23, not to exceed \$35,000. The contract would also provide funds for EDC to issue up to \$650,000 in loans to eligible Community Investment Loan Fund applicants under the previously approved loan guidelines, for a total FY 2022-23 contract amount not to exceed \$650,000. The motion passed with Commissioner Stenslie abstaining.

9. Report from Executive Director – Petra Puls

Petra acknowledged the exceptional work performed by Jennifer Johnson, Lauren Arzu, the Administration/Finance Committee and the F5VC team and thanked the Commissioners for their

support of the recommendations brought forward at today's meeting.

Petra gave an update on recent in-person Neighborhoods for Learning (NfL) activities and shared details relating to the NfL's Earth day event, "Bloom with First 5!".

Petra reported on the rededication of the Born Learning Trail at Ventura's Westpark, and thanked Area Energy and United Way for their partnership.

Petra reported on a 4-part parent education series on positive parenting and challenging behaviors hosted by the NfL team for the Conjeo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). Petra covered outreach efforts and discussed F5VC's partnership with WIC. F5VC's partnership with WIC brought nearly 100 completed interest forms for the NfL's PACT classes as well as a 200% increase in website visits to the F5VC website.

Petra gave an overview of the Help Me Grow (HMG) National semi-annual assessment. F5VC HMG provided case management services for 59 families and recorded over 800 Centralized Access Points activities supporting families. Petra shared that F5VC HMG program manager, Janet Fleming, has been invited to serve on the HMG National Forum Planning Committee scheduled for September 2022.

Petra gave an updated report covering countywide strategies including engagement in the Early Childhood Coalition and Shared Services Alliances of Ventura County.

Petra discussed state-wide advocacy efforts regarding infant and early childhood mental health and a local call for Ventura County residents to complete and prioritize early childhood investments in the County's ARPA survey

Petra reminded Commissioners of the Take 5 and Read to Kids! event scheduled for May 4th and 5th in various NfL sites throughout Ventura County. Celebrity readers have been invited to read bilingual books to the kids enrolled in PACT classes.

Petra gave an update on county, regional, and national events, including the First 5 statewide Advocacy Day held on April 19th, 2022.

The Commission thanked Petra for an insightful report.

12. Commission Member Comments

Chair Stenslie thanked staff for their tireless efforts during the pandemic.

13. Next Meeting

Thursday, May 19, 2022, VIRTUAL/IN-PERSON (To observe or participate in the meeting conducted via Zoom, please contact First 5 Ventura County at assistant@first5ventura.org at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting for registration information).

14. Future Meetings

Thursday, June 16, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo

Thursday, July 21, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo
Thursday, August 18, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo
Thursday, September 15, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo
Thursday, October 20, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo
Thursday, November 17, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo
Thursday, December 15, 2022, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo

The meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.