



**COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

October 20, 2022

Commissioners Present: Bruce Stenslie, Christine Walker, Barbara Marquez-O’Neill, Robert Levin, Barry Zimmerman, Matt LaVere, Cesar Morales

Excused Absence: Rachel Champagne

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Jennifer Johnson, Lauren Arzu, Alma Perez, Heather Guerrero, Jhoelle Aspuria-Arca, John Anderson, Janet Fleming, Tyla Adams, Jimena Hernandez, Teresa Gutierrez, Grace Montejano, Andrew Huizar, Christina Saenz, Blanca Morales

Public Present: Sandybell Romero, Chrystal Tipping, Alicia McFarland

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Stenslie opened the meeting at 1:02 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 Morales, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, 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 September 15, 2022 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Zimmerman, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O’Neill, to approve the minutes from the September 15, 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 LaVere, seconded by Commissioner Zimmerman, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

6. Public Hearing on Annual Audit and Year-End Report to the First 5 State Commission for FY 2021-22, in compliance with Section 130150 of the Health and Safety Code

Petra Puls reminded Commissioners that F5VC hosts this public hearing annually in October in compliance with statutory requirements and invited Jennifer Johnson to present the Audit to the Commission.

Jennifer Johnson noted that Commissioners received an electronic copy of the audit and offered to mail a bound hard copy to any Commissioner who would like one. Jennifer reviewed significant events for Fiscal Year 2021-22, noting this was the first year of the two-year strategic plan that was adopted in June 2020. She highlighted investments, services and activities that occurred during the fiscal year, including bringing the Neighborhood for Learning program in-house.

Jennifer reviewed the difference between the two sets of financial statements, which include Governmental Fund and Government-wide reporting. Jennifer presented balance sheet and the statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances, noting variances to the prior year and providing explanations. Jennifer stated that F5VC planned on using resources from existing fund balances, but revenues more than covered expenses, resulting in an increase to the fund balance. Overall, F5VC’s financial condition remains strong. Jennifer provided highlights of the notes to financial statements and the disclosures included in the audit report. Jennifer also reviewed budgetary comparison schedules and provided overview of the economic outlook.

Jennifer stated the auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the basic financial statements, commonly referred to as a clean opinion. Jennifer referred to the Report on Internal Controls and noted there were no control deficiencies or material weaknesses. For the Report on State Compliance (the expanded audit), which is required for local First 5 Commissions relative to compliance with certain state laws and accountability mechanisms, the auditor’s report compliance in all areas. Jennifer referenced the post-audit letter provided by the auditors. Jennifer concluded her presentation stating that the audit was reviewed by the Administration/Finance Committee, which serves as F5VC’s audit committee, on October 7.

Commissioner LaVere asked about tobacco tax revenues and the basis for distributing revenues. Jennifer stated that the revenues are collected statewide with 20% allocated to the State First 5 Commission and the remaining 80% distributed to local county commissions based on their county's proportion of statewide births. For Ventura County, the proportion was 1.977% for fiscal year 2021-22. Commissioner Zimmerman inquired whether loans funded through the Community Investment Loan Fund have a fixed or variable interest rate. Jennifer reported that they have a fixed interest rate at 4.5%.

Petra Puls presented highlights from the FY 2021-22 annual report, which captures service and client demographic data in three sections. F5CA designates the categories of result areas that cover direct services and systems change efforts, which impacts the ability to represent the full scope and details of F5VCs work. Petra Puls will present a more detailed version of the annual accomplishments in the coming months.

Petra presented the AR-1 overview of investments by the assigned result areas: improved family functioning, improved child health, improved child development, and improved systems of care. She noted each contractor can only be included in one service per outcome area and added the F5VC annual report, to be presented in the near future, will capture F5VC investments and outcomes in greater detail and with our local frame.

Petra outlined information from AR-2, which include numbers served categorized by caregivers, children 0-3, and children 3-5, as well as race/ethnicity and primary language spoken in the home. Commissioner LaVere and Petra had a discussion on the percentage of the indigenous community served. Petra shared that F5VC is able to work with the indigenous population through collaboration with Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP).

Petra concluded her report with an overview of AR-3, which includes narratives for the county evaluation summary and county highlights. She noted the First 5 California annual report, which aggregates these county level reports from across California, will be presented to the Commission once it is completed by the state.

Chair Stenslie opened up the meeting for public comments at 1:54 p.m.

There were no comments from members of the public. Chair Stenslie closed the public hearing at 1:55 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morales, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to receive and file the Annual Audit and approve the Year-End Report to the First 5 State Commission for FY 2021-22, in compliance with Section 130150 of the Health and Safety Code. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

7. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County Financial Reports as of August 31, 2022

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

REGULAR AGENDA

8. Report of Committees

a. Administration and Finance

i. Recommendation to Extend COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave and Approve Revised Policy and Procedures – Lauren Arzu

Lauren Arzu noted that F5VC has offered supplemental COVID sick leave throughout the pandemic, which has been used sparingly by staff. The requirement to offer this sick leave expired on September 30. However, many staff members are working directly with families with young children who cannot be vaccinated yet, and many who are too young to wear masks. The recommendation would extend our compliance regarding paid COVID sick leave as is through December 31, 2022 and approve the updated Policy and Procedures. The Administration Finance Committee reviewed and approved this recommendation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Levin, to extend supplemental paid sick leave and approve the revised policy and procedures.

ii. Recommendation to Eliminate COVID-19 Vaccination Policy from the Employee Handbook – Lauren Arzu

Lauren Arzu stated that F5VC has required staff to be vaccinated against the coronavirus or get tested weekly since November, 2021. She noted that weekly testing of unvaccinated persons is no longer slowing the spread of COVID-19 and the federal government is no longer requiring unvaccinated employees to test. The EEOC now requires that employers must show that coronavirus testing is job-related and consistent with business necessity. Additionally, the CDC and CDPH no longer recommend different quarantine guidance for unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals. Commissioner Levin confirmed that this recommendation does align with the CDC.

A motion was made by Commissioner Levin, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to eliminate the COVID-19 vaccination policy from the employee handbook.

9. Report from Executive Director

Petra Puls presented the Report from Commission staff. She went over updates on staffing and introduced NFL new hires Desiree Campos, Maria Espinola, and Sabrina Nuno. Petra highlighted NFL and community events including the Fall and Harvest festival recently hosted in all three NFL regions.

Petra showcased the new NFL and PACT videos created by Tyla Adams and Dowitcher. The Commission gave feedback on the videos and thanked Tyla and staff for their creative efforts.

Petra reported on Parent Leader training completion, Help Me Grow data tracking, ARPA funding updates, legislative updates, and introduced F5CA's new "Dragon Song" campaign.

The Commission thanked Petra for organizing a concise report.

10. Commission Member Comments

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

11. Next Meeting

Thursday, December 15, 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).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.