



**COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

March 16, 2023

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

Excused Absence: JoHanna Jones

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Jennifer Johnson, Alma Perez, Jhoelle Aspuria-Arca, Janet Fleming, Lilia Gurrola, Mario Rodriguez, Jimena Hernandez, Shelby Ferns, Grace Montejano, Andrew Huizar

Public Present: Regan Bynder, Alicia McFarland, Sandybell Romero

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Zimmerman opened the meeting at 1:04 p.m., gave Commissioners the opportunity to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Minutes from February 16, 2023 Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, to approve the minutes from February 16, 2023 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. 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 Marquez-O'Neill, seconded by Commissioner LaVere, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments/Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County Financial Report as of January 31, 2023

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

REGULAR AGENDA

6. Report of Committees

a. Administration and Finance – Commissioners Morales and Stenslie

i. Progress Report

Jennifer Johnson provided a progress report on items the Administration and Finance Committee is working on. Jennifer noted that in March, the Committee conducted its annual review of the Commission's Investment Plan, per investment policy, including a review of market rates for both longer term securities and the 2 investment pools to inform the investment plan for FY 2023-24. She noted that when looking at external investment sources, a vast improvement in interest earnings as compared to last year. She summarized an unusual "inverted yield curve" and stated that future trends are uncertain. The Committee recommended that all funds be maintained in the Ventura County Treasury Pool for FY 2023-24, which is currently outperforming the State pool. Plus, there is great efficiency in keeping funds with the County where the Commission's deposits are received. There are no recommended changes to the policy at this time.

Jennifer reported that the Committee is in the process of updating the Employee Handbook, which includes all of the Commission's personnel policies. Updates include replacing gendered pronouns with they/them, increasing notice for an unscheduled absence from 15 minutes to 30 minutes, clarifying Life and AD&D insurance policy restrictions, and aligning bereavement leave and sick leave with new legislative requirements. The proposed employee handbook changes will be brought to the Commission at a subsequent meeting.

Jennifer reported that the Committee reviewed the preliminary budget assumptions and staffing pattern for the FY 2023-24 Annual Budget. Budgets, an updated financial plan, and the administrative cost rate will be brought forward to the Commission in April.

7. Visioning and Strategic Planning

Petra Puls provided a summary on the historical context for the current Strategic Plan and reminded Commissioners that the plan expires on June 30, 2023. She went over steps taken to review national and local early childhood data trends and current demographics on the population F5VC serves. Petra further detailed the Commission's current strategic priorities and reviewed parent engagement efforts in the Kamala/McKinna region of South Oxnard. She discussed the implementation of F5VC's new pilot program, Welcome Every Baby.

The Commission engaged in a conversation on child care capacity building. Petra shared data on licensed child care facilities lost during the pandemic (March 2020- present) and reported on recent

trends to rebuild that capacity. Commissioners weighed in on the struggle to maintain a sufficient workforce to keep facilities open. Commissioner Champagne expressed interest in seeing data on local child care facilities pre and post pandemic.

Commissioner Walker inquired as to how F5VC identifies newborn babies in Ventura County. Petra noted that F5VC distributes the New Parent Kit at hospitals, local WIC and medical offices throughout the county. The Commission held a discussion on barrier that prevent families from accessing preventive medical services. Petra stated that F5VC is collaborating with Gold Coast Health Plan to better support children and families in accessing well-child visits, screenings, and follow-up.

After reviewing current Strategic Priorities, Key Investments and Desired Outcomes, Petra detailed additional focus areas within the current priorities of child health and development, strong families, and quality early learning. She then invited Commissioners to identify additional areas for potential refinement to best address the needs of families. The Commission reflected on how far F5VC has come since its establishment. Commissioner Stenslie discussed how F5VC can remain adaptive to the growing needs of children and families. Commissioners LaVere, Levin, and Morales shared an interest in exploring how to incorporate health resources at NfL sites.

A discussion ensued around proposed investments for FY 2023-26 and the Commission stated the importance of remaining flexible. Petra stated that proposed investments are aligned with the Commission's long range financial plan and assure the Commission's ability to maintain existing NfL capacity on which ARPA-funded NfL program expansion relies on. She further explained that the Strategic Plan is the overall, high-level guiding document supported through the long term financial plan, and operationalized through funding decisions detailed in multi-year program allocations, annual operating budgets, and implementation strategies. Proposed focus areas and areas for refinement discussed today would complement these tools to manage and guide the work of First 5 Ventura County.

The Commission's consensus is that the current Strategic Plan elements, including strategic priorities, investments and outcomes, are still relevant and a three-year extension should be considered. Petra thanked the Commission for the thoughtful discussion and stated that a recommendation to extend the FY 2020-22 Strategic Plan for FY 2023-26 along with proposed investments will be brought back to the Commission in April.

8. Report from Commission Staff

Due to time constraints, Chair Zimmerman referred to the written report from staff and asked Commissioners to bring any questions or comments to the April Commission meeting.

9. Commission Member Comments

Chair Zimmerman thanked staff for their hard work and dedication.

10. Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 pm. The next meeting is on Thursday, April 20, 2023, IN-PERSON at VCOE.