



COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

November 16, 2023

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

Excused Absence: Cesar Morales, Matt LaVere, JoHanna Jones

Staff Present: Petra Puls, Lauren Arzu, Jina Jue, Tyla Adams, Christina Laubacher, Shelby Ferns, Lilia Gurrola, Jhoelle Aspuria-Arca, Sharon Elmensdorp, Joanna Mackie, Janet Fleming, Mario Rodriguez, Marisol Hernandez

Public Present: Maria Ponce-Montañez, Mike Winters, Alicia MacFarland, Cindy Escobar

OPENING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Zimmerman opened the meeting at 1:02 p.m. and asked Commissioners to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Minutes from October 19, 2023, Commission Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to approve the minutes from October 19, 2023 Commission Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packet

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 Walker, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments/ Correspondence

There were no comments from members of the public.

Items were reordered to accommodate the presenters' schedules.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 6. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County's Financial Report as of September 30, 2023**
- 7. Recommendation to adopt a resolution per Government Code 54954(a) to establish time and place for holding regular Commission meetings for Calendar Year 2024**

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

REGULAR AGENDA

- 8. Election of new officers to be seated in January**

The F5VC Commission held nominations for the election of new officers for 2024.

Commissioner Stenslie nominated Commissioner Zimmerman as Chairperson, seconded by Commissioner Walker.

Commissioner Zimmerman nominated Commissioner LaVere as Vice Chairperson, seconded by Commissioner Stenslie.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill to elect new officers. The motion passed unanimously.

- 9. Recommendation to Rescind Commission Action to Increase Executive Director's Floating Holidays**

Commissioner Zimmerman explained that in June 2023, the Commission granted 6 additional annual floating holidays to the Executive Director as part of the annual performance review. Subsequently, the Commission approved updates to the Employee Handbook, including increasing the number of annual floating holidays commensurate with an employees' years of service, with up to 8 days of floating holidays for employees with 20 or more years of service. The Executive Director has been employed by the Commission for more than 20 years, thus receives 8 annual floating holidays.

A motion was made to rescind prior Commission action that increased the Executive Director's floating holidays from 2 days to 8 days per year, effective January 1, 2024, by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Zimmerman. The motion passed unanimously.

- 10. Report from Executive Director – Petra Puls**

Petra started the report with an update on Prop 10 tax distribution which was 9% more than the previous year or \$9,700. Open enrollment just closed with no changes to coverage. The same benefits will be maintained at an increased cost of 10% but less than the budgeted 15% increase. Lastly, she

congratulated Commissioner Stenslie for receiving the Rodney Fernandez Founders Award for his visionary leadership.

Petra spoke about the NfL Parent and Child Together (PACT) classes being at capacity. As a result, staff have been offering additional drop-in classes at libraries to accommodate families. She spoke about a new NfL location in Santa Paula at Isbell Middle School. She reported on the Fatherhood Initiatives' efforts on deepening engagement with fathers by creating intentional opportunities and piloting parenting education groups. Petra highlighted the collaboration with Children and Families Services (CFS) and Barnes and Noble's annual Book Drive.

Petra shared that 5 parent leaders have been trained in the COFI model (Community Organizing and Family Issues) and created a community needs assessment. The goal is to understand what the needs and strengths of their neighborhoods are and identify action items from the responses. Petra mentioned that F5VC contracted with VCOE to provide a 4-day CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid training for all NfL, Help Me Grow, MICOP, and library staff who are implementing PACT classes. The purpose is to have shared learning and understanding of concepts resulting in consistent implementation. She shared that Help Me Grow will offer screenings at County libraries before and after library story times beginning 2024.

Petra announced that Prenatal-to-3 released their roadmap: compared to other states, CA is doing well in childcare subsidies, birthing individuals receiving adequate prenatal care, and lower percentage of babies born preterm but needs improvement in reducing administrative costs for SNAP and children living in crowded households. Lastly, she announced the First 5 CA's Annual Summit will be held at the end of March in Oakland, CA. Commissioner Zimmerman emphasized that as NfLs explore co-locating with CFS, it is important maintain a culture of inclusiveness and access. Commissioner Champagne thanked F5VC for utilizing the Teaching Pyramid.

5. Presentation: Mixteco Indigena Community Organization Project (MICOP): Providing early childhood development and family support services to Mixtec children 0-5 and their families in Ventura County (Genevieve Flores-Haro, MPA, MICOP Associate Director)

Petra briefly shared F5VC's history with MICOP and introduced the speakers Genevieve Flores-Haro and Irene Gomez. MICOP serves Mixteco, Zapoteco, and Purepecha communities with recent immigration from the state of Guerrero. Genevieve reviewed the timeline of immigration from 1930s with the Bracero program, IRCA act to present migrations. They have been displaced and come to this area to work in fields. She pointed out that the Mixtec indigenous communities are primarily in South Oxnard and face system barriers like language access, discrimination from Latinos from other areas, and economic stressors. Genevieve emphasizes that when agencies are selecting interpreters, they need to know from which community the families originate as there are many different variants of the Mixteco language.

Irene talked about the importance of children being proud of the Mixtec culture and the language they speak. Genevieve described the F5VC funded PUENTES program which is the bridge between Mixteco families and services like parenting workshops, health screenings, and care coordination. Through these efforts trust is built with families, allowing them to feel comfortable in participating in PACT classes.

Genevieve introduced the Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) workshops which offer important leadership classes to parents. She then introduced the development of the Childhood Games book

written in Spanish, Mixteco, and English. This book helps parents affirm their language as part of their identity.

Commissioner Levin expressed his longtime support for MICOP. He asked how MICOP encourages families to maintain their spoken language beyond the early childhood years. Genevieve answered that they are hoping to build strong foundations through the PUENTES program, by implementing the anti-bullying campaigns, and encouraging parents to continue speaking with children in their indigenous languages. Irene mentioned Oxnard School Districts' efforts to create a Mixteco library. Commissioners Stenslie and Marquez-O'Neill shared their appreciation for the many differentiation of language and dialect. Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill applauds the PUENTES program, the development of the book, Opening Doors (Abriendo Puertas) Workshop, and their advocacy efforts.

Commissioner Champagne asked about efforts to partner with school districts to address bullying? Genevieve answered that the TEQUIO youth group started the "No Me Llames" campaign to stamp out certain words being used on the playground.

Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill inquired how they funded the Abriendo Puertas workshop and the Childhood Games book. Genevieve answered that they received mini grants that allowed staff to become trained.

Commissioner Champagne asked if they work with any state preschool programs. Irene answered saying that they collaborate with CDR. Commissioner Champagne offered to partner with Catalyst Kids to reach 3 and 4-year-olds before kindergarten.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked about the needs of the community as changes in immigration patterns occur. Genevieve answered that since more than 50% of families are from Guerrero (versus from Oaxaca) they have to repeat engagement strategies and raise new awareness about systems.

11. Commission Member Comments

No comments from the Commissioners.

12. Next Meeting

Thursday, December 14, 2023, County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 pm.