COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

August 21, 2025

Commissioners Present: Matt LaVere, Dr. Cesar Morales, Dr. Christine Walker, Dr. Loretta Denering, Bruce Stenslie, Kimberly Naslund, Barbara Marquez-O'Neill

Excused Absence: Rachel Champagne

Staff Present: Sharon Elmensdorp, Jina Jue, Lauren Arzu, Jennifer Johnson, Sam McCoy, Lysa Urban, Sky Limón, Courtney Pyle, Shelby Ferns, Jhoelle Aspuria-Arca, Mario Rodriguez, Marisol Hernandez, Veronica Reynoso, Sandra Diaz

Public Present: Alicia McFarland, Regan Bynder

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

   Chair LaVere opened the meeting at 1:06 p.m. and asked Commissioners to introduce themselves.

2. **Agenda Approval and Review of Commission Packets**

   The agenda was accepted by consensus.

3. **Public Comments / Correspondence**

   There were no comments from members of the public. Due to a power outage, the public was not able to participate via Zoom. Everyone who had requested the Zoom link was notified in advance and invited to share their comments in person.

4. **Presentation: 2nd Annual Fatherhood Summit**

   Mario Rodriguez opened his presentation by emphasizing the important and positive role of fatherhood in a child's development. He credited the success of the annual event to strong partnerships with local agencies. The event engaged 92 fathers and offered 14 workshops covering topics such as personal finance, goal setting, wellness, and navigating the child support system. Workshops were conducted in English, Spanish, and Mixteco to ensure accessibility.
   Mario concluded by noting the high level of interest in future fatherhood training opportunities. He also announced the upcoming release of two toolkits: one designed to help organizations engage fathers, and another aimed at supporting fathers in building stronger connections with their children.

   Commissioners praised Mario for identifying a critical community need and developing a successful program to address it.

5. Presentation: 2025 Ventura County Home Visiting Summit

Sam McCoy provided a brief background on the $160,000 in funding provided by First 5 California for Regional Technical Assistance for Home Visiting Coordination and Integration, and how the funds have been invested to develop county-wide home visiting collaboration, strengthen partnerships with Medi-Cal learning communities, host the Home Visiting Summit, and develop an online Home Visiting Connections tool.

Courtney Pyle shared key highlights from the Home Visiting Summit, reporting that the event was attended by 110 home visitors and included representation from all home visiting partners, managed care organizations, and community partners. She highlighted the keynote address by Dr. Victoria Gonzalez, which focused on perinatal mental health and emphasized skill-building and provider well-being. Courtney also spoke about the breakout sessions, which were well received by attendees, who found the content highly relevant and informative. Additionally, she noted that the summit included panel discussions featuring leadership from First 5 Ventura County's Welcome Every Baby program, Child Development Resources, and Ventura County Public Health.

She then highlighted the need for tools to help providers and patients navigate the variety of home visiting programs available locally. Two tools have been developed for staff use: one for care coordinators to assist families in navigating the eligibility matrix, and another serving as a staff decision-making tool. She concluded by introducing *Ventura County Home Visiting Connections*, an online resource designed to connect pregnant individuals and families with children from birth to age five with free, helpful home visiting programs.

Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill expressed her appreciation for the expanded availability of home visiting programs and commended the implementation of the eligibility tool. Commissioner Denering commended the ease of use of the tool and agreed that streamlining the options of home visiting programs is important.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Receive and File the First 5 Ventura County Expenditure Report as of May 31, 2025

7. Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2025 and June 25, 2025 Commission Meeting

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

REGULAR AGENDA

8. Report of Administration and Finance Committee – Commissioners Stenslie and Morales

a. Recommendation to Approve Lactation Accommodation Policy and Procedures - Lauren Arzu

Lauren Arzu reinforced F5VCs commitment to being a family-friendly employer and promoting the health and well-being of young children and families. The proposed Lactation Accommodation Policy meets state and federal law requirements and uses inclusive terminology including "chest feeding" in addition to "breastfeeding." The proposed policy outlines specifications for lactation locations and the scheduling practices. Lauren noted that the policy also allows staff to develop customized solutions for individual circumstances.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stenslie, seconded by Commissioner Marquez-O'Neill, to approve Lactation Accommodation Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Strategic Planning: Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Sam McCoy reported that Phase I of the Strategic Planning process has been completed, utilizing community outreach data collected by Applied Research Survey. The data identified family needs and barriers, priority areas for resources and services, preferred parent education topics, and the level of community awareness of F5VC. These findings were gathered through parent/caregiver surveys, organizational partner surveys, listening sessions, and key informant interviews.

Phase II will focus on prioritizing desired outcomes and investment areas, while the last Phase will involve the development and finalization of the Strategic Plan.

10. Report from Acting Co-Executive Directors

Sharon Elmensdorp encouraged Commissioners to review the Acting Co-Executive Directors' Report to receive updates on administrative and Commission activities.

11. There were no Commission member comments.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Thursday, September 18, 2025, Ventura County Office of Education, 5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m.