



**California Children and Families Commission Meeting**

**October 19, 2023**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Item 1 – Opening Remarks**

Chair Albright called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Katie Albright  
Elsa Jimenez  
Lori Risso  
Vivian Paz  
Shana Hazan  
Jackie Majors

Ex Officio Member: Melissa Stafford-Jones

Announcements

Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, Executive Director, First 5 California (F5CA), introduced First 5 Fresno partners to open the meeting with a Tribal Land Acknowledgement and Labor Acknowledgement.

Chair Albright began her remarks by providing an overview and goals for the meeting. She requested Closed Session be moved to the end of the meeting to allow time for discussion.

Ms. Wong thanked First 5 Fresno for the tour of the Lighthouse for Children. She stated the Lighthouse is a beacon of hope and aligned toward the needs of families, babies, and communities.

**Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, Executive Director, First 5 California**

Ms. Wong presented the Executive Director's report. The report included program, fiscal, and personnel updates. Ms. Wong referenced F5CA's 2024 Child Health, Education, and Care Summit: Stronger Starts: 25 Years of First 5 on March 25–27, 2024, at the Oakland Marriott City Center. Ms. Wong shared the Summit will be highlighting the work F5CA, the Association, and local county partners have done together, what that looks like on the ground, and what the future looks like around the network.

## **Commissioner Comments**

Vice Chair Hazan requested the timeline for projects in development and implementation. Ms. Wong provided an update on projects in development.

## **Advisory Committees**

None.

## **Avo Makdessian, Executive Director, First 5 Association,**

Mr. Makdessian presented the Executive Director's report. The report included updates on the California Health and Human Services (CHHS) Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), short term and long-term solutions for the flavor ban on tobacco taxes, revenue decline, small population county funding augmentation, and the continued work around network alignment with F5CA and the Association.

## **Commissioner Comments**

Chair Albright thanked Mr. Makdessian for the update and said she looks forward to hearing more on the aggregated data regarding revenue decline and small county augmentation.

## **Presentation**

Fabiola González, Executive Director, First 5 Fresno, began her remarks by providing background, history, and information around the Fresno County. Ms. González stated they will focus on stories and examples of California investments in their region and other work that the county commission is known for locally. Ms. González shared that when F5CA commits funding to an initiative, county commissions galvanize the work on the ground and that one example is Madera County, a small county commission. Ms. González stated the IMPACT investment has been instrumental in offering training and coaching needs for all early care and education providers, while also providing advice on how to leverage and coordinate various funding sources. Ms. González also shared that through local relationships with family serving organizations, county commissions have leveraged F5CA investments to maximize positive outcomes.

Wendy Wendt, Executive Director, San Luis Obispo, shared a few examples of what First 5s are known for on the ground. Ms. Wendt stated First 5 Mariposa operates a popular preschool with First 5 funds, Kern County recently hosted an annual Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) conference that raises awareness around childhood trauma experiences and has awarded 25 mini grants in celebration of First 5's 25 years. Ms. Wendt added Kings County has four family resource centers across the county in partnership with schools and local community-based organizations. Ms. Wendt also shared a few examples from Madera, Merced, Tulare, San Luis Obispo, and Fresno counties.

## Item 2 – Public Comment

Francine Rodd, First 5 Monterey: Ms. Rodd stated First 5s need to look at race equity, diversity, and inclusion as root causes to get to a place where they are creating change. Ms. Rodd expressed she is hopeful that there will be some funding from F5CA while work is being done to find a longer-term solution to declining revenue.

## Action Item 3 – Consent Calendar

### Commissioner Comments

Vice Chair Hazan asked whether the dollars being spent for sponsorships, as revenues are declining, is justified in the current environment.

Ms. Wong stated F5CA is evaluating how it is managing sponsorships and developing a rubric to better implement the sponsorship program.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Paz moved to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Majors.

**VOTE:** The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

## INFORMATION ITEMS – REGULAR AGENDA

Protocol for information items includes staff presentations, questions from the State Commission, and public input. There will be a three-minute per person time limit during public comment.

## Information Item 4 – Financial Update

Marcia Thomas, Director of Fiscal Services, provided an update on F5CA's financial status, including funding structure, funding resources, how the state administers funds, fiscal year (FY) 2023–24 projected revenue by account, declining revenue factors, budget contingency clauses, and FY 2023–24 overall projected fund balance.

### Discussion

Vice Chair Hazan asked how FY 2023–24 projected fund balance compares to FY 2022–23. Ms. Wong shared the percentage decline is on Table 2 of the item and is approximately a 2% decline from FY 2022–23. Commissioner Jimenez shared that within the public health space, when the work is done correctly, less people are going to smoke and it's unsustainable in terms of relying on a funding source that is taxing bad behavior. Commissioner Jimenez challenged the Commission, Association, and First 5 members to think about alternative funding sources. Vice Chair Hazan posed several questions for consideration regarding the statutorily mandated fund distributions and how the Commission may want to align investments with potential impact. Commissioner Majors shared the strategy should be how we spend less and get the biggest impact for our dollars and how to spend the money to meet F5CA's mission. Ex-Officio Melissa Stafford-Jones urged First 5s

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to think about the linkages between community and community-based services, and the healthcare system for providers and health plans. Ms. Wong stressed the importance of being intentional in leveraging resources and the collective impact at the state level to make it easier for First 5s on the ground to access funding.

Chair Albright stated F5CA, county commissions, the Association, and Commissioners need to be strategic, forward thinking, and maximize current resources.

Public comment

None.

**Information Item 5 – Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act Requirements**

Milad Dalju, Deputy Attorney General at the California Department of Justice, provided an overview of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, including pre-pandemic, pandemic era, and post pandemic meeting requirements. Mr. Dalju encouraged people to visit <https://www.oag.ca.gov/open-meetings> to access updated information related to Bagley-Keene.

Discussion

Chair Albright encouraged Commissioners to keep the new post pandemic provisions in mind as the Commission segues into Item 6 to discuss the cadence of the 2024 Commission meeting schedule.

Public comment

None.

**Information Item 6 – Commission Meeting and Advisory Committee Structures**

Jaime Hastings, Deputy Director, Administrative Services, provided historical context on how and when Commission meetings and Advisory Committee meetings were held pre-pandemic and how meetings are currently structured. Ms. Hastings shared F5CA staff recommendations for the 2024 Commission meetings and the rationale behind the revised meeting schedule.

Simon Marquez, Staff Services Manager, Administrative Services, shared the purpose of Advisory Committee meetings, a potential meeting timeline for 2024, and the potential outcomes of staff recommendations.

Discussion

Chair Albright asked what the goals/objectives are the Commission is trying to achieve and do the meetings allow that to happen. Commissioner Majors shared the proposed timeline would allow Commissioners to take a meaningful look at items, including requests for

funding proposals, and utilize Advisory Committees to provide the expertise and feedback required. Vice Chair Hazan shared she appreciates the suggested quarterly updates in between Commission meetings and would like to explore the best way to provide the updates. Commissioner Jimenez questioned how the Commission ensures the public will have the opportunity to comment on recommendations made by staff and Advisory Committees to the Commission prior to action being taken. Ms. Wong responded the process will continue to follow the information/action format to make sure there is opportunity for public comment on items that come before the Commission.

### Public Comment

Francine Rodd, First 5 Monterey: Ms. Rodd expressed concern regarding the opportunity for participation from counties, the Association, and others who might have input on items due to some Advisory Committees not subject to the Bagley-Keene Act.

### **Action Item 7 – Media Campaign**

Jamiann Collins-Lopez, Information Officer II, provided a summary of the information item presented at the August 17, 2023, Commission meeting. Ms. Collins-Lopez stated F5CA is requesting funding for the next media campaign contract and staff is recommending the Commission approve up to \$57 million from the Mass Media account for a 3-year contract.

### Discussion

Chair Albright thanked F5CA for their powerful efforts in public education and outreach. Commissioner Majors stated the Public Education and Outreach (PEO) Advisory Committee strived to understand the concept around the Stronger Starts campaign and toxic stress to ensure the campaign is intentional and impactful. Ex-Officio Melissa Stafford-Jones asked how some of the findings from the current campaign may inform the future campaign. Ms. Collins-Lopez stated there will be a comprehensive evaluation of the current campaign and F5CA will be using the information to guide the future campaign. Vice Chair Hazan questioned the \$57 million investment with declining revenue. She asked if it made sense to spend a little less now so there is more later. Ms. Collins-Lopez responded F5CA could consider a reduction; however, it would mean less media buys and less outreach. The larger investment procures more for the money, and the added value that comes with larger buys. Commissioner Majors stated campaigns take time to build and they didn't want to shortchange the development and building of a strong campaign and communication. Ms. Collins-Lopez shared that with a large investment upfront, a message is established, and if an agency decides to pull back some funding later, it's already created the foundational message and developed creative material to use for years to come.

### Public Comment

Wendy Wendt, First 5 San Luis Obispo: Ms. Wendt urged F5CA to work with all 58 counties as primary partners to provide messaging to families and children.

Fabiola González, First 5 Fresno: Ms. González shared how important it is to leverage resources, including working with other agencies to eliminate duplicate efforts. Ms. González also encouraged F5CA to create a simple message all counties can promote.

Avo Makdessian, First 5 Association: Mr. Makdessian stated he hopes counties and the Commission can work together on messaging and how to roll it out, especially in hard-to-reach populations. Mr. Makdessian asked if there is any data on how mass media campaigns reduce ACEs and that he would like to see the results and promote them as a network.

Carissa Ravelo, First 5 Kings: Ms. Ravelo shared there are the ACEs Aware awards and existing structures within communities that are currently in progress. She asked if the media proposal would be working in conjunction with the work that is already being done.

Mary Ann Hansen, First 5 Humboldt: Ms. Hansen acknowledged there is work being done on the ground in communities and the missing piece is what communities and parents can do. Ms. Hansen appreciated the work of Ms. Lopez for reaching out and listening to the needs of the counties. Ms. Hansen shared the Association is ready to serve, contact, and connect with target populations to support F5CA's media campaign and provide input as the campaign is being developed.

Wendy Sims-Moton, First 5 Santa Barbara: Ms. Moton echoed how important it is to work locally with counties and keep the message simple and create continuity.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Jimenez moved to approve up to \$57 million from the Mass Media account for a 3-year media campaign contract provided the resources are available and the resulting contract includes a 30-day cancellation clause. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Majors.

**VOTE:** The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

### **Action Item 8 – *Kit for New Parents Program***

Vernettia Syphax, Information Officer, provided a summary of the information item presented at the August 17, 2023, Commission meeting, including:

- Background and History of the *Kit*
- Expanding the *Kit's* Reach to Families with Low Income
- *Kit for New Parents* Study and Timeline Presented by Heather Quick, American Institute for Research
- Future Investments

### Discussion

Commissioner Majors complimented the *Kit for New Parents* team on a job well done and emphasized how important the *Kits* are for parents and families. Commissioner Riso acknowledged how impressed she was with the amount of content that staff were able to include. Commissioner Jimenez asked what other languages the *Kits* come in other than English and Spanish. Ms. Syphax responded the *Kits* are in Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Vice Chair Hazan inquired how F5CA can ensure that messaging from the campaign will be used to leverage opportunities. Ms. Bachez stated upon review of the full evaluation, F5CA can identify what needs to be modernized and streamlined to continue reducing costs of supplies and distribution.

### Public Comment

Fabiola González, First 5 Fresno: Ms. González shared First 5 Fresno does not distribute the *Kit* and relies heavily on hospitals and partners to distribute the material.

Francine Rodd, First 5 Monterey: Ms. Rodd shared that with the reduction in funding, there has been a huge drop in distribution due to lack of staff related to working on the *Kit*.

**MOTION/ACTION:** Commissioner Paz moved to approve up to \$15 million from the Unallocated account to fund the development, fulfillment, and marketing of the updated *Kit for New Parents* for fiscal years 2024–25 through 2026–27 provided the resources are available and the resulting contracts include 30-day cancellation clauses. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jimenez.

**VOTE:** The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Report Out of Closed Session:

The Commission met during Closed Session. No action was taken.

### **Item 9 – Adjournment**

Chair Albright adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

The next scheduled Commission meeting is December 14, 2023.