

Marin Children and Families Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cio Hernandez, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at First 5 Marin at 5:36 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Regina Archer
David Bonfilio
Aideen Gaidmore
Cio Hernandez
Supervisor Steve Kinsey
John Leonard
Frima Stewart
Alicia Suski

Staff Present

Amy L. Reisch
Barbara Clifton Zarate
Michelle Fadelli
Sunny Friedrich
Lynn Quinones

Representatives from the Community & Agencies

Jennifer Colombo, Children's Oral Health Project
Balandra Fregoso, Canal School Readiness Coordinator
Diana Kronstadt, Retired child mental health practitioner
Florencia Parada, Mentores Project

II. MINUTES OF MEETING

Cio Hernandez asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the Commission minutes of December 3, 2008. There were none. *Minutes were approved as submitted.*

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENT

David Bonfilio mentioned that he has noticed a growing awareness among the scientific community of the lack of strong math and science education and, as a result, the lack of qualified workers for medical and other science fields.

Aideen Gaidmore brought brochures of the Annual "Striving for Excellence" Childcare Conference to share with the Commissioners and noted that the Marin Child Care Council is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Alicia Suski reported about a few items from the one-day Zero to Three conference she attended last month. There were many speakers, including from the Buffet Fund, The Educare Center, The Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Kris Perry, ED of First 5 California. Kris talked about the opportunity to "get on the band wagon" with the Obama administration for early childhood issues. Alicia observed that there are differences between California and other states' approach to policy change. First 5 as a "holder" of programs and concerns for young children and families, is a people's initiative whereas in other states, policy priorities around young children have been instigated at the governor's and legislatures' level. This makes significant investment and policy change much more feasible as the decision-makers are part of the plan from the beginning. Many states are working towards universal preschool. Alicia also announced that she submitted a poster abstract to the American Academy of Pediatrics about the partnership between the Special Needs/Mental Health

Initiative and the Marin Community Clinics. The abstract was accepted. Alicia noted that Susanne Kreuzer and Amy Reisch were named as co-authors with her.

Amy took the opportunity to thank Alicia for her hard work and dedication during her term as Commission Chair. Amy presented Alicia with an orchid plant as a symbol of thanks and appreciation.

John Leonard made an observation about shifts in the federal government's approach to governance. There is a federalization of things that used to be under the states' purview.

Cio Hernandez extended her thanks and appreciation to Alicia for all of her Commission work.

Cio mentioned that she and Barbara Clifton Zarate have submitted a proposal for a workshop to the First 5 California State-wide Conference about the social determinants of health. They have yet to hear if it was accepted. Cio explained that she continues to take *Unnatural Causes* on the road. She showed an episode at Barbara's Health Advocates meeting.

Cio also reminded the Commission that the Point in Time Homeless count is at the end of this month. It has been observed that there are more homeless families this year than before.

Frima Stewart passed around information on what the actual cost, to a family of three, of minimum self-sufficiency is in Marin (versus the existing Federal Poverty Level). The content of the draft report, compiled by the Department of Health and Human Services, was discussed at length. Michelle Fadelli noted that page 3 of the Commission's FY0708 Annual Report contains some of the same information about how much money a family needs to be self-sufficient in this county. Frima stressed the fact that families maintain a delicate balance financially and it does not take much to throw them into crisis.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cio welcomed the members of the public.

Diana Kronstadt introduced herself. She is a retired child psychologist for Children's Hospital Oakland and would like to become involved in Marin.

The members of the public introduced themselves to the Commission.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORT

See the Executive Director's report for full details.

Discussion amongst staff and commissioners including the following;

- First 5 Marin's Annual Breakfast
 - Dana King will be Emcee
 - Tony Iton, Alameda County Health Department Director, will be the keynote speaker (assuming he confirms his availability)
 - Inviting San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom to speak about universal preschool, healthcare, living wage etc. and creating the political will to make it happen
- Budget Proposals from Republican Legislators to take Prop 10 and Prop 63 funds for use in the State's general fund.
 - Would require a special election
 - Bay Area First 5 Executive Directors agree to be proactive and make an offer, in the hope of reducing the legislature's efforts to dismantle the County Commissions.

- MRMIB—52 First 5 Commissions have agreed to consider funding new enrollees 0-5 into Healthy Families to prevent kids from going on a waiting list.
- CalKids funding – The contract covering the 6-18 year olds with the Marin Community Foundation has expired, without any word from MCF about continued funding. Steve Kinsey volunteered to check with Tom Peters about this situation.
- Michelle passed around a flyer about a free toy lead testing event this Saturday. She also discussed the Breastfeeding Coalition's plans for launching the breastfeeding campaign.

Discussion continued at length between the Commissioners and staff on the subject of autism, prompted by several big articles, in the local paper, about the increase in cases. Discussion covered the genetics, environmental factors, diagnosis, appropriate screening tools in pediatric practices, MCOE often not accepting the diagnosis, lack of available specialists, and the problems presented by having to use out of county providers who accept MediCal.

VI. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Legislative Update

Nothing to report.

Finance Committee Report

David Bonfilio discussed the Finance Committee recommendation to purchase Sage/MIP for the Commission's Finance Management System. David thanked Lynn Quinones for all the research she did on this project.

Call for vote

M/S: Bonfilio/Suski

Ayes: 8, Archer, Bonfilio, Gaidmore, Hernandez, Kinsey, Leonard, Stewart, Suski

Nays: 0,

Abstain: 0,

Absent: 0,

David let the Commission know that staff is still exploring payroll and health benefit providers. The first choice is that the County of Marin provide payroll services on a contract basis (in lieu of an outside provider such as ADP) so staff can maintain the same benefit package.

Healthy Families Enrollment Expansion: Amendment to FY0809 Budget

The Commission discussed the budget amendment. The fact that the funding is for new enrollees was reiterated.

The following motion was heard: **The First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission approves funding up to \$56,234.25 for expansion of the HFP to include children 0-5 years old in Marin County who qualify for, but would otherwise not be enrolled, in the HFP due to the lack of funds and the implementation of a waiting list. This funding is for the period from December 18, 2008 to June 30, 2009.**

Call for vote

M/S: Bonfilio/Gaidmore

Ayes: 8, Archer, Bonfilio, Gaidmore, Hernandez, Kinsey, Leonard, Stewart, Suski

Nays: 0,

Abstain: 0,

Absent: 0,

Strategic Planning Update

Kathy Tabor reviewed the Strategic Planning process and the recommendations the work groups have made for each of the three priority result areas. Discussion continued at length regarding details of the recommendations. Kathy emphasized that these are recommendations, not decisions and that the Commission will have time to decide on priorities at the February retreat. Kathy reviewed the retreat agenda with the Commission. Commissioners requested that staff provide as much environmental context as possible in order to make well informed decisions. Commissioners observed that without knowing our economic future, it will be more difficult to make long term plans and will probably require several scenarios.

Retreat Schedule:

Friday, February 6th: 8:30 A.M to 4:30 P.M.

Saturday, February 7th: 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

- No Commission meeting on February 4th. Regular Commission business will be conducted in the first ½ hour of the retreat.
- The Commission Retreat is on February 6th and 7th, 2009 at the Health Campus in San Rafael. The retreat is an open and public meeting; members of the public are welcome.
- First 5 Marin's Annual Summit is Thursday, February 5th.
- Small Grant Cycle is in January 2009

VIII. NEXT STEPS

IX. ADJOURN 7:16 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Friday, February 6, 2009

8:30 AM

Connection Center Conference Room

Marin County Health and Wellness Campus

3240 Kerner Boulevard (at Bellam)

San Rafael