

Marin Children and Families Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 1, 2005

I. CALL TO ORDER

Frima Stewart, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission offices at 5:44 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Regina Archer
Jane Chopson
Cio Hernandez
Supervisor Steve Kinsey
John Leonard
Frima Stewart
Alicia Suski

Commissioners Excused

David Bonfilio

Staff Present

Amy L. Reisch
Dana Pepp
Lorenzo Gonzalez
Sunny Friedrich
Michelle Fadelli

Consultants Present

Jara Dean-Coffey

Representatives from the Community & Agencies

Peter B. Collins, Nuestros Niños and Childhood Matters
Jan Hutchinson, Novato Even Start
Dr. Marisol Muñoz-Kiehne, Nuestros Niños and Childhood Matters
Ethel Seiderman, Parent Services Project
Dani Tarry, School Linked Services

II. MINUTES OF MEETING

Frima Stewart asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the Commission minutes of May 4, 2005. ***Minutes were approved as submitted.***

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dani Tarry, School Linked Services, wanted to respond to the Commission meeting minutes of April 6th. The commission stated its desire to fill the next commissioner vacancy with an individual with early childhood education experience. Dani's concern is that the Commission should always choose the best candidate to fill the vacancy and not pre-determine or limit how the commission populates the vacancy. Dani also informed the commission about the community of Las Gallinas in San Rafael and the lack of services to the children there. There are over 600 kids that don't get any direct support from School Readiness or School Linked Services. 60% of the children are Latino and 50% have low reading and math skills. Support grants from the federal government (Title 7) are ending soon. It is the area in the county with the highest % of kids entering kindergarten without any preschool experience. These families need additional support from somewhere.

Jan Hutchinson from Even Start Family Literacy at Novato's Linwood campus has a pre-kindergarten Even Start program and provides ESL, GSL and AA Degree support for parents. She is collaborating with Head Start and their partnership is producing good results. She is here at the commission meeting to learn more about First 5 Marin.

IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Jane Chopson wanted to discuss the possibility that School Readiness work with Las Gallinas. Dana Pepp explained the difficulty that Las Gallinas presents because of its geographic location. Gallinas may be better suited to link with the Novato School Readiness community and, in fact, Even Start at Gallinas has begun working with the Novato School Readiness effort. Las Gallinas is not the only community in Marin without a School Readiness program. For example the Stinson/Bolinas community, which has two children without pre-school at the moment, has been offered the opportunity to join the Shoreline Summer Bridge program. Also, Las Gallinas has applied for funding from School Linked Services and will find out on June 9th whether they will receive a grant. Approximately 30% of the children attending Las Gallinas live in the Canal and are or can be served by the Canal Summer Bridge program. John Leonard expressed his concern that the children at the biggest disadvantage be provided preschool opportunities. Staff will explore these issues further with Dani Tarry and representatives of the school and the School District.

Steve Kinsey informed the Commission that the Board of Supervisors is moving forward with some level of funding support for the new CARES program. The Board has requested a detailed budget indicating the levels of support anticipated from all other funding partners prior to making a final decision.

Steve Kinsey continued with information about Canal Transportation meetings that will be held by Grassroots Leadership Network. The meetings will be looking for community input about how to alleviate some of the access problems community members encounter with the closing of the San Pedro and Bahía Vista school campuses. Canal parents/families are encouraged to attend. Please contact Erika Erickson or David Escobar to find out about when and where the meetings will be.

John Leonard responded to Dani Tarry's remarks during the public comment time. He explained the context of the minutes she referred to and the recognition on the part of the Commission that it is important to have someone with expertise in early care and education. He also stated that he agreed that we need the best candidate, whatever their skills. In order to facilitate having both, he indicated that he would give up his seat to someone with an early care and education background if that were necessary.

Frima Stewart complemented the successful collaborative efforts of the School Readiness Initiative and School Linked Services.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ STAFF REPORT

See handout for full report.

First 5 California has selected its new Executive Director. Kris Perry will be starting on June 12th. She was the Executive Director of First 5 San Mateo and brings with her an understanding of local First 5 Commissions.

The State Commission is developing a new advertising campaign, in conjunction with the State Department of Health and Human Services, targeting the issue of obesity, particularly in young children. They have been encouraged to emphasize solutions, such as exercise and nutrition, rather than the problem.

Steve Kinsey asked about the F.E.L.T. program (put on by Parent Services Project) that Lorenzo just completed, and in what ways it was different from the leadership training program that Canal Ministries used to run. The Ministries program was focused on training community members to become Board members of non-profit organization and to develop other community leadership positions. The PSP program is focused on assisting parents in becoming leaders and advocates for their children in the schools.

Alicia Suski wanted an update on the recently launched One-Stop-Enrollment phone number. Jane Chopson responded with the information that there is no data yet on the number of people getting enrolled through the phone number, as it is too new. The workers answering the phone, however, are receiving many resource and referral questions that hadn't been anticipated. Her staff and the Commission staff will be reviewing data and training needs as they develop.

VI. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

CHIS Investment: Please see Jara Dean-Coffey's PowerPoint presentation handout for slide details. Much discussion followed around the Community Level Indicators, the comparability of the data from various sources, the context of the indicators being included, and our ability to track and evaluate long term trends in the county. First 5 California is funding the CHIS survey and has added specific questions that pertain to families with children 0 to five. Over time/years the data collected will be added together, creating a larger sample size and thereby becoming more statistically meaningful.

At the next commission meeting a report will be given about the baseline data that is currently available for a clearer understanding of where we are starting from.

The Commission proceeded to a vote:

Recommendation: To partner with Marin DHHS and invest \$100,000 in FY2005-2006 for the 2005 CHIS survey, with and additional \$20,000 earmarked for potential additional analysis/reports if needed, and to repeat this investment in FY2009-20010

M/S Leonard/ Chopson

Call for discussion

Call for vote

Ayes: 7, Archer, Chopson, Hernandez, Kinsey, Leonard, Stewart, Suski

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1, Bonfilio

FY2005-2006 Revised Budget and Long Range Funding Plan: Alicia Suski asked the Executive Director, Amy Reisch, how the commission compares to other county commissions in regards to how much unspent money we have each year. Amy Reisch responded that we are actually doing a lot better than others that have a lot more left unspent. After some discussion and clarification on the dollar amounts shown in the long range plan and budget, the Commission proceeded to a vote:

Recommendation: Approve the FY05-06 Revised Budget and Long Range Funding Plan.

M/S Leonard/ Kinsey

Call for discussion

Call for vote

Ayes: 7, Archer, Chopson, Hernandez, Kinsey, Leonard, Stewart, Suski

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1, Bonfilio

Childhood Matters/Nuestros Niños Video Presentation:

The commissioners, staff and members of the public were very impressed with the video presentation. Peter B. Collins informed the Commission that TeleMundo, a Spanish TV station, does a re-cap on screen each Wednesday of the previous Sunday's Nuestros Niños program. Childhood Matters and Nuestros Niños are working on expanding to counties in Central and Southern California and are in talks with Monterey County and Humboldt County.

Appointment of Review Committee for Commission Applicants:

The following commissioners volunteered to be the Review Committee: Cio Hernandez, John Leonard, and Jane Chopson.

Discussion continued about the procedure to fill Jane Chopson's seat. Jane Chopson is one of the two mandated Health and Human Services Commissioners. It was agreed that the Commission Chair, Frima Stewart, would inform Larry Meredith, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, of the Commission's sense that someone with a child welfare background would be a good replacement in this position.

Legislative Update: An updated legislative Matrix was presented, with the summary of the bill and the status of each, as well the positions taken (if any) by Marin Board of Supervisors, First 5 California and First 5 Marin. Since the printing of the Matrix the status of some of the legislation has changed.

Held in Committee (will probably die):

- ***AB 788 (Montanez) – Family Childcare Career Ladder***
- ***AB 1032 (Jones) – Preschool Learning Standards***
- ***AB 1254 (Coto) – Preschool Teachers/Limited English Proficiency***
- ***SB 35 (Florez) – CA Children and Families Commission***

Moved Forward:

- ***AB 109 (Chan) – CA Children and Families Commission***
- ***AB 172 (Chan) – Universal Preschool***
- ***SB 437 (Escutia) – CA Healthy Kids Insurance Program***
- ***SB 564 (Torlakson) – CA Healthy Children Trust Fund***

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

John Leonard informed the Commission that he is also a member of the Citizens Advisory Board of Marin Senior Services and sees a correlation between elder abuse and how a community cares for its children. We are part of the full circle and need to keep this in mind.

VIII. ADJOURN 7:24 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday July 6, 2005

5:30PM – 7:30PM

1101 5th Ave., Suite 215, San Rafael