



September 28, 2020

**September Meeting Minutes**

Zoom Conference Call

Commissioners Present Via Video Conference

Paul Tichinin	Sandra Applegate	Lucresha Rentería	Ben Anderson	John Haschak
---------------	------------------	-------------------	--------------	--------------

Public Present

Julie Fetherston	Samantha Bond	Holly Unluata	Bonnie Boek	Jenna Flesch
Stephanie Zazueta	Megan Cavalli	Andres Alvarado	Andres Alvarado	Bekkie Emery

**ITEM 1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Commissioner Tichinin called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and welcomed visitors. The Commission and staff made introductions.

**ITEM 2 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

Commissioner Tichinin asked for public comment on non-agendized items and opened the public hearing. No comment public received. Commissioner Tichinin closed the public hearing.

**ITEM 3 CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION)**

- Meeting Agenda
- DRAFT Minutes from April 27, 2020 Commission Meeting
- DRAFT Minutes from August 24, 2020 Commission Meeting
- Title IV-E Contract
- Equity Statement
- Staff Report to the Commission

***Motion to approve the consent calendar without the draft minutes from April 27, 2020 and August 24, 2020 Motion/Anderson, Second/Applegate (all ayes, no nays) Motion Passed***

A roll call of the Commission was taken.

**Yes:** Tichinin, Applegate, Rentería, Haschak & Anderson

**ITEM 4 ITEM 4: ONGOING HUMAN RESOURCES CONSULTATION (ACTION)**

Interim Executive Director Fetherston clarified that with laws constantly changing and now having changes due to COVID-19, it has been discussed that hiring a human resources consultant would best to ensure everything is being done correctly and in a timely manner. They attempted to hire locally but had no luck. The consultant’s proposal that are included in the materials were recommended to them. They have key policies they want to revise and set up processes that could be strengthened. IED Fetherston believes having the additional support for that would be beneficial to Jenna Flesch, Business Manager, with what she currently works on as well as to staff to receive clearer information.

***Motion to approve the on demand, limited consultation contract for Human Resources Motion/Haschak, Second/Anderson (all ayes, no nays) Motion Passed***

A roll call of the Commission was taken.

**YES:** Tichinin, Applegate, Rentería, Haschak & Anderson

**ITEM 5 STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION**

IED Fetherston is now in step two of her strategic planning project. The one item she must continue working on is the external capacity map for the commission. The overview for today is listed below.

What are the needs? Discuss primary functions that must be served for		
▪ Pre-Natal Care	▪ ACEs/Resilience	▪ Quality Child Care
▪ Breastfeeding/infant nutrition	▪ Child Development & Screening	▪ Quality Early Childhood Education
▪ Perinatal Mental Health	▪ Early Child Mental Health	▪ Parent Support
▪ Brain Development 0-2	▪ Reduces Substance Abuse	▪ Material Support

What does the data show? An overview of Mendocino County child data

<p>Total 0-5 population = 6,140</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-2 = 2,831 (46%)</li> <li>3-5 = 3,309 (54%)</li> <li>7% of the total county population</li> <li>30.5% of 0-17</li> </ul>	<p>Total Births (2017) = 992</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50.4% White</li> <li>35.8% Hispanic</li> <li>5.1% Native American</li> <li>8.7% Other</li> </ul>
--	--

Data Issues

**Metadata quality**

- Collection design, reporting (e.g. early prenatal care, poverty)

- Prenatal substance use and substance use by prenatal status
- Fetal alcohol syndrome rate and breakdown

**Available/current data**

- Perinatal mental health
- Breastfeeding at 6-12 months
- Child disabilities by type and other breakdowns

- Early childhood mental health use and availability
- Number of children not enrolled I pre-school (have unmet preschool needs)

**POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

The following Mendocino County indicators are on par with the rest of California:

- Infant mortality rate
- Pre-term births
- Number of babies with low birth weights

Mendocino County scores better than the rest of California on these indicators:

- Percent of breastfeeding mothers in the hospital
- Food insecurity

**NEGATIVE OUTCOMES**

The indicators where they fall behind contribute to impaired outcomes in cognitive, social-emotional, and academic outcomes. They increase the risk of chronic toxic stress for both children and parents, leading to a range of negative outcomes well-documented in the ACEs literature. The inequities are even more startling when viewed through racial and economic lenses: families of color and low-income households having worse outcomes that point, at least in part, to institutional racism and generational trauma.

The disparities grow as children age, eventually reducing the availability and accessibility of higher education and job opportunities, which can lead to generational poverty and additional trauma.

Mendocino County falls behind the rest of California in the following indicators:

**Early Childhood Education and Care**

- Availability of quality, affordable childcare
- Preschool enrollment
- Third and fourth grade English Language Arts proficiency

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

- 2018 rates of substantiated cases of child abuse
- 20.2 per 1,000 children (1,904 total cases)
- 36.7 per 1,000 children for ages 0-5 years

**Family Composition, Poverty, and Food Insecurity**

- 24.8% of children in Mendocino County live below the Federal Poverty line
- 19% of children experience food insecurity, which is expected to rise to 30% in 2020 due to COVID-19
- 53% of children live in two-parent households
- 1.9% live in homes with no parents or other relatives

What is First 5's capacity?

If First 5 is to be a driving force in meeting the needs of local families with children ages 0-5, they must find innovative ways to increase efficiency and prioritize their efforts. This may include the need to re-evaluate current resource allocation and/or integrate new and expanded outcomes utilizing current programs. For example, rather than simply participating in a local consortium meeting, they should establish key outcomes that drive the way they participate to assure they are always strengthening existing programs and/or addressing gaps.

In examining First 5's current individual and organizational skills, knowledge, functions and bandwidth, several things emerged.

**Room for Improvement**

- First 5 was lacking the capacity to measure program data and external data, essential to their quality improvement efforts
- First 5 needed to streamline several key functions in HR and IT and to utilize contracted services to increase internal team functionality
- First 5 has limited available bandwidth to add additional programs

**The Good News**

- First 5 employees are passionate about their work and possess the skills and knowledge to directly address the five key protective factors

## What is the County's capacity?

Our preliminary analysis highlighted three key findings:

- There is a limited amount of support for parents unless they are in crisis
- When they are in crisis, it can be difficult to navigate the system
- To prevent child abuse, we must normalize support for families

## Why They Must Improve

The rate of child abuse and neglect in Mendocino County is unacceptable and in direct conflict with their mission. These rates are calculated by the number of cases, reported and substantiated, that meet the threshold of abuse and neglect necessary for CPS to intervene. This means that there are a range of situations that remain undetected, unreported and/or severe enough to cause harm to the child but not legally severe enough to warrant government intervention.

This has been true for the past 25 years, and despite a wide range of intervention and prevention strategies, they and their partners have not been successful in changing the outcomes.

They believe these inequities are built into governmental and societal systems and that without sustained, strategic effort across a range of scales, too many Mendocino County children will not become thriving adults. They must prioritize innovative solutions that leverage and build on local strengths, wisdom, and resources. They must continue to provide the skills, knowledge, and support to families and the organizations that serve them, while strengthening and revising the systems that create the conditions that are driving these inequities.

Let them develop a strategic plan that centers around their mission and vision and has a significant impact on the lives of children in their community.

### **First 5 Mission:**

*We strengthen early childhood systems and supports needed to ensure that Mendocino County children are safe, healthy, and ready to thrive in school and in life.*

### **First 5 Vision:**

*Mendocino County children will be happy and healthy which will be reflected in its future thriving adults.*

IED Fetherston provided a recap of both the commissions and staff's recommendations for the strategic planning discussion in February. After doing a preliminary analysis, IED Fetherston put together her general recommendations.

1. Build on the body of work they have and the skills and passions of their team:
  - Do not throw out their direct service (they are already committed and effective) but use it to drive and inform their strategy
2. Use both countywide and program level data to inform:
  - Quality improvement
  - Strategic integration of goals across sales
  - Staff professional development priorities
  - Communication/education priorities
3. Leverage existing relationships to:
  - Amplify the voices of parents and families
  - Find small wins that support system changes
  - Only attend meeting with clear purpose – identify intended outcomes and how it relates to our strategic goals

## **ITEM 6 SET PRIORITIES AND REVIEW NEXT STEPS (ACTION)**

IED Fetherston's next step is to complete the external capacity map and the gap analysis and taking it back to the commission to review to get feedback. She asked the commission if she could use a small portion of the money allocated for the strategic planning process to get support on pulling data from different places to overlay on the capacity map. The commission all confirmed that they are in support of IED Fetherston using a portion of those funds and they would prefer to go with IED Fetherston's recommendation for the next steps. They will have the completed finalized Strategic Plan in January instead of December; commission confirmed that would be better.

## **ITEM 7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRING UPDATE (ACTION)**

Commissioner Tichinin let staff know that they have been able to work through the issues they were having with the job posting. The salary has been corrected, the description was updated and the "qualifications" that staff provided were reviewed. The close date is on Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. All interviews will be done through Zoom with having the final interviews during a commission meeting. Commissioner Rentería suggested that it should just be the commission being a part of the interview process since the commission works with the Executive Director and if they do need any assistance, they will ask Karen to do the screening and reference checking if needed. The Commission feels that is best as well.

**ITEM 8 COMMISSIONER REPORTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, QUORUM CHECK & ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

Commissioner Anderson, Haschak and Applegate all expressed their appreciation for staff and IED Fetherston for always providing good work despite everything that is going on.

Commissioner Rentería commented that they are attempting to track their prenatal care patients now that their labor and delivery has closed in Fort Bragg. They are making sure the women are getting safe transfers to Ukiah. They have some funding from the Health Care District to ensure they are giving moms a \$50 gas card when they make the transfer and suppling those who needs assistance with a \$250 Visa card per day for whatever may happen around their birth plan. They are trying to do a pediatric tour for the moms so they know they can go back and get that care locally. They have seen a dramatic increase of behavioral health services. They will continue to do surveillance testing until the end of the year.

Bekkie Emery thanked everyone for allowing her to be a part of the meeting and having her get familiar with the information provided. She also thanked staff for the hard work they are providing. She is excited to be a part of the Commission and looks forward to future meetings and the work that will be done.

***Quorum check for next meeting on October 26, 2020***

Yes: Commissioner(s) Rentería, Haschak, Anderson, Tichinin

No: Commissioner(s)

Tentative: Commissioner(s) Applegate, Baumker, Flaherty

***COMMISSIONER TICHININ ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 3:18 P.M.***