



October 23, 2023
October Commission Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes
Teleconference & Zoom Conference Call

Commissioners Present

Maria May	Erica D'Anis	Ben Anderson
Sandra Applegate	Bekkie Emery	Jenine Miller
Mo Mulheren		

Commissioners Absent

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Public Present

Townley Saye	Andres Alvarado	Sariah Neff
Jenna Flesch	Jade Aldrich	Lisa Frederickson
Bonnie Boek	Megan Carson	Maddie Torrey
Brain Williams		

ITEM 1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner D'Anis called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm. The Commission and staff made introductions.

Commissioner Emery is attending virtually and will abstain from voting according to AB 2449 guidelines.

ITEM 2 MINDFUL MINUTE

Jade Aldrich guided the attendees in a mindful minute to ground and arrive.

Commissioner Mulheren arrived at 1:04 pm.

ITEM 3 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

Commissioner D'Anis opened public comment on non-agendized items. No comment was offered. Commissioner D'Anis closed public comment.

ITEM 4 CONSENT CALENDAR (ACTION)

- Meeting Agenda
- Meeting Minutes: September

Commissioner D'Anis pulled the October Agenda for a correction to packet Item 10.1 meeting materials indicating a misspelling of Commissioner Miller's name in the Appointment Dates to Remember section.

Commissioner D'Anis requested the following edits/revisions to the September Minutes:

- Page 4.3, Item 5 to have a transition sentence added regarding the annual meetings calendars that were presented stating that if a bimonthly calendar was adopted then a newsletter would be disseminated during those non-meeting months.
- Page 4.3, Item 6 a typographical error to the word “renown” that should read renowned.
- Page 4.4, Item 6 a typographical error in the first paragraph for the word Improvement should read Improvement.
- Page 4.5, Item 7 replacing “Hospital Resident” with “Family Medicine Resident”.
- Page 4.5, Item 7, correct the misspelling of Dr. Glier to Dr. Glycer.

Motion to approve the Agenda as modified.

Motion: Anderson, Second: Applegate

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D’Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery

Absent: None

Motion: Passed

Motion to approve the Minutes as modified.

Motion: Anderson, Second: May

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D’Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery

Absent: None

Motion: Passed

ITEM 5 ANNUAL REPORT & PUBLIC HEARING (ACTION)

The Annual Report Presentation for First 5 Mendocino for FY 2022-23 was presented by Business Manager, Jenna Flesch. It was noted the Administrative expenses were significantly down from last fiscal year due to reallocation of expenses to the newly formed Family Empowerment Center (FEC). Overall revenues exceed expenses with miscellaneous revenues higher than previous years due to the reallocation of Prop 10 funds due to new contract and grant procurements. These revenue funds were temporarily moved into the admin class to balance the rest of the budget classes until the FEC is fully determined. Specific Strategic Plan areas were reviewed:

- Child Health & Development: Includes partner collaborations, Kits for New Parents, Early Start. Overall interactions were increased from last FY.
- Early Learning & Care: Includes IMPACT and Talk, Read, Sing activities. These are likely to go up in the next FY due to the return of the Imagination Library.
- Family Resilience: Includes all of the Triple P and community & parent education. Children served were significantly higher than last FY.
- Integrated & Equitable Systems, and Support Systems: Includes Title IV-E, Home Visiting Consortium activities and other programs that support families. No demographics are collected other than information related to providers served since these dollars do not go directly to serve families.

The Annual Report total demographics have a higher than average “unknown” numbers due to the increased social media engagement and soft-touch activities to engage community members.

Children served over 5 years data shows an increase from reopening from COVID and expect to see an increase in the coming FY due to the return of the Imagination Library.

Flesh clarified that reports included in the meeting packet were copies that First 5 Mendocino submits to First 5 California.

Commissioner D’Anis opened the public hearing for comments. Commissioner D’Anis asked for clarification on the Home Visiting numbers. The numbers are for the 2022-23 FY in contact directly associated with First 5 Mendocino and the Home Visiting Consortium. Anticipated numbers for FY 2023-24 are expected to be much higher.

Motion to approve the 2022-2023 annual report.

Motion: Mulheren, Second: D’Anis

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D’Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery

Absent: None

Motion: Passed

ITEM 6 INDEPENDENT AUDIT & PUBLIC HEARING (ACTION)

Business Manager, Jenna Flesch reviewed the Independent Audit. A couple of minor changes were made from what was included in the packet.

- Page 1, a period was added after the United States of America in the Basis for Opinions paragraph.
- Page 4, the First 5 Mendocino logo was replaced with the new logo.
- Page 7, the last sentence “The Commission’s emphasis is on improved parenting and reduced substance abuse among families with young children” was replaced with “The Commissions emphasis is to strengthen and nurture early childhood systems that promote optimal health and development, narrow disparities, and make improvements through advocacy, education, and support.”
- Page 15, the funding reference prop 56 was removed under the heading “Accounts Receivable and Grants and Contracts Receivable” because Prop 56 dollars ceased with the passing of Prop 31.

The audit had no findings.

Commissioner Applegate pointed out that the original appointment dates for page Commission Memberships are incorrect for some members, specifically Applegate, Anderson and D’Anis. Those dates will be updated.

Commissioner Applegate requested her appointed position to be identified as “Retired Child Welfare Attorney”.

Commissioner D’Anis asked for any comments or questions from staff or public on the Annual Audit. No public comments were received.

Motion to accept the audit as amended.

Motion: Anderson, Second: Miller

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D'Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery

Absent: None

Motion: Passed

Commissioner D'Anis closed the public hearing.

ITEM 7 **FIRST 5 VACATION ACCRUAL POLICY (ACTION)**

ED Saye introduced the change to the First 5 Mendocino Vacation Accrual Policy and Business Manager Flesch detailed the changes being offered. Current policy allows staff to "bank" 160 hours of vacation before they are capped. The new policy would allow staff to "bank" more weeks of vacation the longer they stay employed at First 5 Mendocino and have a higher "capped" limit.

Commissioner Anderson expressed concern over the financial liability of a long-term employee leaving and those hours having to be paid out at one time. He asked if the financial liability could be expensed as time goes by. Flesch stated she does not feel financial liability is a concern and that expensing it out as the employee works would not be a possibility because it would look like it was paid out, when in fact it was not.

ED Saye reported that First 5 Mendocino staff show a healthy work life balance and staff is taking vacation regularly. This change would provide additional incentives to maintain staff and offer more satisfaction to long-term employees.

There is no change for employees in years 0-3. Years 4-9 would add an additional week to the capped hours bringing them from 160 to 200 hours. Years 10+ would offer an additional 2 weeks to the capped hours bringing them from 160 to 240 as well as adding an additional week of annual accrual bringing the accrual total to 4 weeks, instead of 3.

Motion to approve the updated First 5 Vacation Accrual Policy.

Motion: Anderson, Second: Applegate

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D'Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery

Absent: None

Motion: Passed

ITEM 8 **FIRST 5 FLOATING HOLIDAY POLICY (ACTION)**

ED Saye reported that this change was brought to the Commission based on recent experiences with a new employee that left shortly after being hired. The new policy will require 90 days of employment before a floating holiday is paid out.

Motion to approve the updated Floating Holiday Policy.

Motion: Mulheren, Second: May

Yes: May, Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D'Anis, Applegate

Abstain: Emery
Absent: None
Motion: Passed

ITEM 9 ***ED & STAFF UPDATE***

ED Saye reported that Karla Kohler and Maria Fuentes were absent due to training in the Community Resiliency Model (CRM).

The Imagination Library is up and going. ED Saye thanked Sariah Neff for her dedication to getting the program live. The waitlist for enrollment was about 500 children and they had to be inputted into the online system one by one. In the two weeks of sharing the program approximately 400 children were newly enrolled. The branding for the Imagination Library is strict and Sariah has been navigating the branding requirements to get all the advertisements and pamphlets printed.

ED Saye reported that Alex Rounds was going to update the Commission on the Eligibility Wizard, but Rounds had a family emergency. The Wizard was scheduled to go live, but there have been some glitches with getting the site translated, so we will need to wait for a detailed update.

Andres Alvarado updated the Commission on the children coming to the new playgroup. One is a returning child who was under a year old when the playgroups were last available. Slowly new children are trickling in. Playgroups are being heavily advertised.

ED Saye also reported that Alex Rounds and Maria Fuentes had the first Childbirth Class at Adventist Health. Alex leads the classes and Maria is available to translate. There is space for 25 attendees and 18 were enrolled in the last report.

ED Saye has been working on the DHCS Round 3 Funding for wrap around services with the help of Alex Rounds. The objective is to address the gap in the home visiting programs using AmeriCorps members trained in Parents as Teachers (PAT) and short-term home visiting services.

Megan Carson reviewed upcoming available trainings. Igor Koutsenok is returning for a Motivational Interviewing on the Coast October 24-25. He will also be coming back for Advanced Motivational Interviewing in February or March 2024. Dr. MaryCatherine McDonald will be coming to the SPACE Theater to share specifics from her book *Unbroken: The Trauma Response is Never Wrong* on November 9. The Triple P Stepping Stones Training will be offered November 13-15. The Intro to Play Therapy date has been finalized as January 18 and that will be with Georgie Wisen-Vincent who is a play therapist and director of Play Strong Institute. Georgie will also be coming back in March for training with foster parents. There is a page dedicated to Play Therapy at the end of the packet.

Jade Aldrich reported on her experience with the Motivational Interviewing training. Aldrich believes that this training is especially applicable to the work we do with parents, families, and children. Aldrich specifically drew attention to the OARS handout included in the packet. OARS stands for Open-ended Questions, Affirmations, Reflective Listening, and Summaries.

ED Saye drew attention to the handout in the packet regarding the First 5 California 2024 Policy Priorities which include Sustainability and Scale, Resilient Families, Comprehensive Health and Development, and Quality Early Learning.

ED Saye also noted the document regarding lifting families out of poverty entitled “What if Every Eligible Person in California Received Safety Net Benefits?” There needs to be advocacy as well as efforts to break down the stigma of people qualifying for these programs.

Andres Alvarado drew attention to the English and Spanish Playgroup flyer in the packet.

ED Saye reported that the estimated move in date to the new location is mid-November. A formal meet-and-greet is tentatively scheduled for January.

Neff pointed out that two out of three of the Imagination Library flyers were not approved. The approved one includes a QR code for quick registration. Commissioner Emery asked if the QR code took visitors to a Spanish page. Neff explained there are two QR codes, and the information is available in English and Spanish.

ITEM 10

COMMISSIONER REPORTS, STAFF COMMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, QUORUM CHECK & ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Commissioner May reports they are still looking for a Pediatrician at the Mendocino Coast Clinic.

Commissioner Anderson reports that MCHC is going through a change to hire LMFTs and LPCCs to expand their Behavioral Health providers.

Commissioner D’Anis provided an update on her daughter.

ED Saye noted Chico State is offering information on their Social Work program and available stipends.

Commissioner Applegate updated attendees on her granddaughter.

A quorum check was conducted for December 18. Commissioner May will have to confirm at a later date. Commissioners Miller, Anderson, Mulheren, D’Anis, Applegate, and Emery should be present.

Commissioner D’Anis closed the meeting at 1:51 pm.