



## Commission Meeting Minutes

**Date:** February 23, 2026

**Start Time:** 1:01 pm

**Stop Time:** 2:06 pm

**Location(s):** Mendocino County Public Health, Zoom

### Commissioners Present:

Anderson ☐ Applegate ☐ Bailey ☒ D'Anis ☒ Haschak ☒ Hills ☒ May ☒ Miller ☒

### Staff Present:

Aldrich ☒ Alvarado ☐ Boek ☒ Carson ☒ Flesch ☒ Fuentes ☐ Troxler ☒ Kohler ☒

Rounds ☐ Yoast ☒ Saye ☒ Avalos ☒ Anderson ☒ DeBiase ☒ McGill ☒

### Public Present:

Stephen White (Assistant Director Mendocino County Social Services), Mariah Diebold (Potter Valley Youth & Community Center), Chemaine de la Rosa (Legget Valley Family Resource Center)

## 1. Welcome & Introductions

- The meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm.
- Attendees were welcomed by the chair.
- Roll call was conducted; introductions were made. Commissioner May is attending via teleconference for medical necessity.

## 2. Mindful Minute

- ED Saye led attendees in a Mindful Minute.

## 3. Public Comment on Non-agendized Items

- Public comment was opened.
- ED Saye invited Stephen White to introduce himself. Stephen submitted his application to join the First 5 Mendocino Commission, and the Board of Supervisors is voting on his appointment at the February 24<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors Meeting. Stephen provided a brief personal introduction.
- Public comment was closed.

## 4. Consent Calendar



- **Action**
- Discussion: None
- **Motion: Motion to approve the Consent Calendar.**
- **Move:** Haschak
- **Second:** Hills
- **Yes:** Bailey☑ D'Anis☑ Haschak☑ Hills☑ May☑ Miller☑
- **No:** None
- **Abstain:** None
- **Absent:** Anderson☑ Applegate☑
- **Passed**☑

## 5. Strategic Plan Update

- **No Action**
- Discussion: ED Saye presented an update on the Strategic Plan, introducing a draft data dashboard and theory of action, and explaining that many baseline metrics come from last year's annual reporting, while additional measures will be developed in FY 26–27. The dashboard is organized by priority area, with “deep impact” (individual/family) and “horizontal impact” indicators, targets for 2031, identified data sources, and is intentionally limited to outcomes directly connected to First 5 Mendocino services rather than broad population data. Commissioners expressed strong support for the dashboard format and the clarity it brings to the strategic priorities. They also praised the theory of action layout, noting that the “if–then” structure and formatting are easy to follow. ED Saye shared that the theory of action will be converted into an infographic and that a survey will be sent to Commissioners and staff to gather more detailed feedback on the metrics and framework.

## 6. Sick Leave Policy Update Based on New Labor Laws

- **Action**
- Discussion: ED Saye presented updates to the sick leave policy to align with recent changes in state labor law. It was noted that the organization's payroll system (Heartland) has already been updated, effective January 1, so practice is currently in compliance; the



policy language now needs to be brought into alignment. Both a redline and a clean version were presented with notations from the HR Consultant.

- Key Policy Changes
  - i. Accrual Rate Change
  - ii. Non-Retaliation Language
  - iii. Workplace Notice Requirement
- **Motion: Motion to approve the updated sick leave policy.**
- **Move:** D'Anis
- **Second:** Haschak
- **Yes:** Bailey☒ D'Anis☒ Haschak☒ Hills☒ May☒ Miller☒
- **No:** None
- **Abstain:** None
- **Absent:** Anderson☒ Applegate☒
- **Passed**☒

## 7. FY 2025-26 Updated Approved Budget

- **Action**
- Discussion: Ed Saye presented an updated version of the approved FY budget, explaining that First 5 California updates local projections each year based on birth rates and prior-year tobacco tax revenues. Significant adjustments were noted between the original estimate at the start of the year and the amount projected for the current year and FY 26-27. Updating the budget now avoids some budget line items as showing over budget and allows QuickBooks to reflect current projections and grant awards accurately. Commissioners confirmed it was a net increase of approximately \$300,000, and they expressed appreciation for staff efforts focusing on sustainability.
- Revenue Changes:
  - i. First 5 California Tax Allocation Decrease
  - ii. PATH Cited 4 Grant Award Increase
- Allocation Adjustments
  - i. Employee Healthcare Costs



- ii. Addition Community Health Worker Hired – Tracy McGill
- iii. Two Vehicles to Support Field Work
- iv. Stabilizing Positions for Welcome Baby while CalAIM Billing is Refined
- **Motion: Motion to approve the updated budget.**
- **Move:** Haschak
- **Second:** Miller
- **Yes:** Bailey☑ D'Anis☑ Haschak☑ Hills☑ May☑ Miller☑
- **No:** None
- **Abstain:** None
- **Absent:** Anderson☑ Applegate☑
- **Passed**☑

## 8. ED & Staff Updates

- **No Action**
- ED Saye formally welcomed Tracy McGill as a new Community Health Worker (CHW) joining the Welcome Baby team, transitioning from parent education work, and noted she is becoming accredited in Positive Indian Parenting (PIP) and offering parenting supports at Coyote Valley. Staff McGill is thrilled to join the team.
- Positive Parenting Awareness Month was successfully continued at the state level despite Triple P America stepping back; Staff Aldrich helped coordinate with statewide partners, and Assemblymember Avila-Farias read the proclamation on the Assembly floor, where Aldrich and the ED Saye were recognized on behalf of First 5s. Commissioner Haschak was appreciated for his work on the local Proclamation.
- Attending Staff described the local Triple P Facilitator Appreciation Lunch organized by Staff Aldrich, which brought together facilitators from multiple sectors (indigenous doula, school staff, social worker assistant, etc.), offered recognition, and strengthened local Triple P relationships.
- ED Saye reported that the Partnership HealthPlan “Cover” grant application was not funded; a debrief meeting with the Partnership liaison is scheduled to better understand the decision and improve future applications.



- ED Saye highlighted increased outreach and support in Anderson Valley, with Bonnie Beck and staff helping local partners plan and pace training steps, and reported ongoing collaboration with NCO, Grace Hudson, UUSD, South Valley, and other partners through Raise & Shine and Welcome Baby activities. Staff Aldrich continues to offer parent support on the Coast from Cleone to Manchester, including multiple bilingual family nights throughout the school district.
- Welcome Baby staff reported on increased referrals, including for infants in foster care (new referrals via Partnership HealthPlan and work to embed Welcome Baby referrals in Family & Children's Services reunification plans). The program had a first family "graduation", where a young family met their goals, including closure of an FCS case. The team has a focus on outreach to TK classrooms, teen audiences, and diverse community settings, emphasizing "vicarious resilience" from watching families' progress.
- Several staff attended, in person and remotely, the Whole-Brain Child 2.0 conference with Dr. Dan Siegel and Dr. Tina Payne Bryson in San Diego. Staff shared observations, including a deeper understanding of integration (balancing chaos and rigidity, supporting nervous system regulation), strong alignment with existing work in Community Resiliency Model (CRM), Triple P, and nature-based activities, and reinforcement that both children's and adults' brains can grow and heal, supporting the integration of personal and professional well-being.
- Staff Rounds is working with Apricot to fully integrate Welcome Baby referrals and case tracking so the program can reliably pull data for the strategic plan metrics and long-term evaluation.
- ED Saye updated the Commission on the two most recent First 5 Mendocino Community Hour episodes: a father-engagement show featuring Staff Alvarado and a local father, and a show highlighting Family Resource Centers featuring Jayme Shields-Spence from the Family Resource Center Network.
- ED Saye invited Commissioners to the upcoming State of the Child Summit, highlighting father-engagement and featuring two speakers who will share guidance on how agencies can better invite and support fathers, as well as share some school-based father-child activities.



- Author of *Trauma Stewardship* and *The Age of Overwhelm*, Laura van Dernoot Lipsky will be coming to present on moments of vicarious resilience, vicarious trauma, burnout, and the community nervous system. Staff will collectively be reading *The Age of Overwhelm* in advance.
- The State of the Child Survey results will be shared in April, with a focus on policy, agency, and parent blocks.
- Stephen White's application for Commission was approved by the Executive Committee, and it will be voted on by the Board of Supervisors this week.
- ED Saye reported a "personal win" in successfully elevating rural/tribal voices in state-level Citizen Review Panels. A tribal partner has been invited to participate and will bring additional tribal representatives. This aims to ensure that state policies better reflect rural and tribal contexts, which in turn improves county-level implementation. ED Saye thanked Staff Boek and the Commission for consistent support and collaboration that has built trust with tribal partners.
- First 5 Mendocino has been invited by Juvenile Hall and Family and Children's Services to provide parenting support for incarcerated youth who are parents. Staff Alvarado, Avalos-Garcia, and Aldrich will support with a curriculum of Triple P plus coping skills and emotional literacy. Weekly one-hour groups will be held at Juvenile Hall, followed by staff debriefs and peer support.
- ED Saye provided an update on legacy audit issues related to the Sandbox childcare center and Raise & Shine nonprofit. A 2021 audit was rejected, and an appeal has been filed. There is potential fiscal exposure of approximately \$100,000 if not resolved, and First 5 Mendocino is prioritizing protection of the long-term planning funds held in the county.
- Staff Kohler reported on updates to the Brown Act. Commissioners will see updates to the Commission webpage, agendas, and minutes to follow best practices for Spanish-speaking community members. Staff will also be bringing a future voting item addressing teleconferences and procedures for disrupted or failed remote meetings.
- Staff Boek announced the upcoming "Helping Your Selective Eater Grow" workshops via Zoom and in person at Neurodiversity Night at Mendo Leap. Boek also reported that Raise & Shine playgroups remain steady and that there are two parent groups per month



alongside weekly playgroups. Boek also commended Staff Troxler, who serves as a key coordinator and “anchor” across these activities.

- ED Saye detailed a new early literacy partnership with Pinoleville Head Start. First 5 Mendocino will be supporting staff and newly hired tutors on how to engage families with books, participating in monthly meetings with staff, and hosting quarterly parent activities. Staff recently collected books donated by children from Yokayo Elementary and shared them with Pinoleville to support upcoming reading events.

## **9. Commissioner Reports, Staff Comments, Announcements, Quorum Check & Additional Materials**

- **No Action**
- Commissioner Updates:
  - Commissioner D’Anis shared a personal family update.
  - Commissioner Hills reported that after preparing for 6 months, the state review of 17 State Preschool sites was recently completed with no findings, aside from potential minor technical assistance related to family eligibility files.
  - Commissioner Bailey reported that the Community Foundation recently closed its Community Enrichment grant cycle, during which the Foundation piloted larger capacity grants to a smaller group of nonprofits. This is part of planning for anticipated significant growth in the Foundation’s granting capacity over the next five years and helps test how to balance breadth vs. depth in funding.
  - Commissioner Haschak referenced the Nuestra Alianza newsletter in the packet and reported attending their post-holiday community event at the Grange in Willits, which drew roughly 200 attendees with dinner, toys, and children’s activities. He also shared that he heard ED Saye’s radio broadcast with Jayma Shields-Spence and appreciated the message and outreach.
  - Commissioner Miller reported upcoming “Fentanyl High” community screenings in Fort Bragg and Ukiah in partnership with NCO. Each event will include a film screening followed by a panel discussion on fentanyl and opioid issues in the community. She also provided a measles update and reported that while Mendocino County has no cases, Napa County has a single case. Several states



are experiencing larger outbreaks, so Public Health is issuing guidance emphasizing MMR vaccination, particularly for individuals who are unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated.

- Commissioner May offered a personal medical update.
- Quorum Check for Upcoming Meeting: Bailey☒ Haschak☒ Hills☒ Miller☒
- Commissioner D'Anis will not be available for the April meeting. Commissioner May will be planning to attend outside of a pending medical situation.
- Absent Commissioners will be polled.
- The meeting ended at 2:06.