

Riverside County Children and Families Commission
Advisory Committee
Wednesday, April 16, 2008
1:30 p.m. – 2:55 p.m.
Mt. San Jacinto College

I. Call To Order

The regular business portion of the meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m. by Advisory Committee Member Donna Greene.

Advisory Committee: Dr. Carla Lidner (arrived at 1:20 p.m.), Donna Green, Lynne Craig, Nancy Wood, LaShawn Butler, Betty Folsom, Judy Wood

Advisory Committee Absent: Donna Johnston, Dr. Shafai, Georgann Koenig

Staff Present: Harry Freedman, Executive Director; Stella Smith, Deputy Director; Lynn Stephens, Executive Assistant/Commission Secretary

Sandi Schwartz, Parent-Educator for Mt. San Jacinto College's First 5 Grant

II. Mr. Freedman reported that the timeline for one time funding will be presented to the Commission at the April meeting.

III. Approval of February 13, 2008, February 20, 2008 and February 28, 2008 Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Lynne Craig moved to approve the minutes from the February 13, 2008, February 20, 2008 and February 28, 2008, Special Meetings. Betty Folsom seconded the motion. Following is the vote of the Advisory Committee members present: [Six (6) in favor (LaShawn Butler, Lynne Craig, Betty Folsom, Donna Greene, Judy Wood and Nancy Wood), Four (4) absent (Donna Johnston, Dr. Shafai, Georgann Koenig and Dr. Carla Lidner), zero (0) opposed]

IV. One Time Funding Recommendations – Harry Freedman

A. Mr. Freedman reported on staff discussion around the possibility of hiring a consultant to coordinate the Healthy Habits for Life project versus issuing an RFP. Mr. Freedman explained that in the past, the Commission has been reluctant to have First 5 engage in direct service provision, and has encouraged the practice of contracting services.

He added that expanding the Child Care Consortium current scope is an option. There are a few other applicants that could potentially take the lead in coordinating the provision of services related to the project. All requirements will be covered in the RFP. The application should take minimal time to complete compared to other RFPs.

Staff will take recommendations to Commission at the next meeting proposing to RFP the One Time Funding recommendations.

Donna Greene asked how New Parent Kits are distributed. Mr. Freedman replied they were previously distributed through hospitals only. Currently they are distributed through childbirth classes and school based sites were assistance to pregnant mothers. Ms. Smith added that the initial distribution through hospitals was designed to include an education component. The concept was not successful as hospital staff did not have time to provide the educational component to the mothers and staff turnover made it difficult to maintain current training. AmeriCorps members are able to speak with the mothers in childbirth classes and cover the information contained in the kit.

Mr. Freedman reported that F5R is unsure if the AmeriCorps program will exist next year. Many issues have surfaced with the State Commission and they are no longer inclined to support the current AmeriCorps concept. Discussions with First 5 counties are taking place. Administration costs for AmeriCorps are also expected to be increase.

(Dr. Carla Lidner arrived at 1:45 p.m.)

B. Agency Site Visits

Ms. Smith distributed draft letters to Advisory Committee review for use when conducting site visits to funded agencies. She asked the Advisory Committee how they would like to move forward with a timeline to schedule site visits. She also offered staff support in preparing the letters and assist with scheduling if needed. Advisory Committee are to contact Lynn Stephens for assistance. Lynne Craig volunteered to begin her visits the week of April 21. She reported she will be visiting Rubidoux Child Care Center and will provide feedback to the Committee.

Dr. Lidner expressed she felt the Advisory Committee is ready to begin site visits. Ms. Smith requested comments relating to the visits be sent to her. The Commission Secretary will send out childcare lists to Advisory Committee Members-who will follow up with Lynn regarding the preparation of the introductory letters. Nancy Wood suggested waiting until Advisory Committee knows their schedule for the summer months. Donna Greene added she is busy until June, however she will coordinate with Georgann Koenig and her schedule so they do not duplicate visits since they are in the same district.

It was noted the current grants end June 30, 2009, so visits should be completed before then. Dr. Lidner noted she will be gone quite a bit in the summer and suggested if a member is busy they can look to swap centers in the district with another member.

Dr. Lidner would like to have something to report at each Commission meeting. Comments submitted from the visits will be a part of her monthly report. Nancy Wood asked if there is a criteria sheet to look at during the visits. Mr. Freedman replied there wasn't and F5R wants to be very clear with agencies that the Advisory Committee visits are not an evaluation or meant to put the agency under pressure that they are being reported on. The agency will provide a tour and show advisory members their program. These visits are not to be confused with visits conducted by First 5 staff.

Mr. Freedman requested Advisory Committee provide each agency enough notice so they have time to prepare for the visit. Ms. Smith added that F5R staff should be contacted with the schedule so that staff is aware and can coordinate any planned visits around the Advisory Committee visits if possible. Advisory Committee will provide small reports via e-mail.

V. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair – Stella Smith (This item was taken out of order of the Agenda to allow Dr. Lidner to be present.)

- A.** Ms. Smith provided overview of Chair and Vice-Chair position. Lynne Craig nominated Dr. Lidner, Betty Folsom seconded the motion.
- B.** Nomination for Vice-Chair was held. Lynne Craig nominated Georgann Koenig. Donna Greene would be willing to accept the Vice-Chair position if Georgann Koenig would not. Nancy Wood made a motion to approach Georgann Koenig to see if she would be interested in accepting the nomination for Vice-Chair. If she does not wish to accept the nomination Donna Greene will accept the Vice-Chair position.

Following is the vote of the Advisory Committee members present: [Seven (7) in favor (Dr. Carla Lidner, LaShawn Butler, Lynne Craig, Betty Folsom, Donna Greene, Judy Wood and Nancy Wood), Three (3) absent (Donna Johnston, Dr. Shafai, Georgann Koenig), zero (0) opposed]

VI. Staff Report – Harry Freedman

A. Executive Director Report – Harry Freedman

Mr. Freedman highlighted several items from his Executive Director report. Mr. Freedman distributed the Outcomes and District Fact Sheets. He reported meetings with legislative representatives are being held at the State and local level. The State Commission has expressed the need to deliver a consistent message among all county First 5 agencies. The counties are concerned that it will take too long for the State Commission to come up with a message so they are working on getting their own messages out as it best relates to their individual county.

Mr. Freedman reported his meetings with Senator Ducheny and Assemblyman Benoit went well. Senator Ducheny is Chair of the State Budget Committee. She is supportive of the services First 5 provides, particularly the Healthy Kids program. Senator Ducheny asked if First 5 would be willing to invest in services that can draw down federal match dollars and questioned what areas of need First 5 can help with in this regard. She also suggested First 5 provide childcare for children if the new law passes to place children into kindergarten at an earlier age.

Legislators have introduced bills that would delay the kindergarten entry and is expected to result in a saving of Prop 98 dollars. The Senator did not feel this would be the best thing for kids. She suggested First 5 could back fill that group of children and provide preschool services for children who would not be in kindergarten if the bill passes. Riverside is last in the state now as it relates to providing child care services. To increase the need and expect F5R to fill the gap could result in increasing a need that is currently not being adequately met. Mr. Freedman pointed out that legislator's he has met with all are concerned with the First 5 fund balances.

The Executive Summary from the First 5 Evaluation Report was shared. It was noted Mosaic compiled the document.

Mr. Freedman reported meeting with Supervisor Ashley this morning. He acknowledged the local district fact sheets are assisting in getting the word out about First 5.

The Advisory Committee expressed the Executive Director is doing a good job in increasing F5R's visibility in the community.

Public Information Specialist, Jamie Ayala was hired in February. She is working with Johnathan McDannell, Administrator, Outcomes Management in developing the fact sheets. Ms. Ayala did a press release on the F5R Evaluation Report. Dr. Lidner suggested that Advisory Committee should work with Ms. Ayala on their presentation for visits to service clubs such as Rotary and other clubs/committees. Mr. Freedman agreed that would be a good idea.

Lynne Craig reported she has forwarded correspondence from Harry regarding the Cox Bill to school boards who have expressed support for First 5.

(Guest Sandi Schwartz arrived at 2:10)

Ms. Smith announced the Southern CA Region put together a Literacy Month in November 2007. F5R was not able to participate due to the Public Relations position being vacant at that time. Ms. Ayala has been hired to fill the spot and now is working on an event to stress the importance of early literacy with Linda Dilday, Customer Relations Manager at Barnes and Noble at the Galleria at Tyler. The event, "Big Book Bash for Little Readers", will take place 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 3, 2008. This event is designed to familiarize parents with taking their children to libraries and purchasing books. For every

purchase made, a percentage of the proceeds will go to F5R for the purchase of books.

Childcare centers that need supplies are being considered to receive some of the proceeds from the event. Mr. Freedman will be sending an email requesting volunteers to read to the children every half hour beginning at 10:30 a.m. He added that raising awareness of literacy and of First 5 would be beneficial. Ms. Smith added Ms. Ayala is looking for local authors to participate in events.

VII. Public Comment

Donna Greene introduced Sandi Schwartz, Parenting Teacher Coordinator for the Mt. San Jacinto parent education program. Ms. Schwartz was hired through a F5R grant. She reported on her goal to make sure every parent has guidance on how to connect with themselves and how to learn to bring practice discipline with their children in a way that is loving and reduces spanking and yelling. These strategies help children learn how to think and take what they learn and transfer to other situations. She noted that mothers are now bringing their husbands and grandparents to the classes. Grandparents have also expressed learning from the classes. People are making recordings for family members who cannot attend the classes and are discussing them at home. She thanked First 5 for providing the funding that allows her to help get the message out.

Cheri Andelkovic, Board Assistant suggested that Ms. Schwartz make a DVD. Ms. Schwartz reported she adopted the "1-2-3-4" curriculum and tweaked it. She would like to increase the numbers of attendees that benefit from the courses by making more parents aware of the curriculum. Advisory Member, Donna Greene added that Mt. San Jacinto College has discussed having the Multi Media Department produce a video, but this may cause conflict if the department does not release the information in the same way the grant has intended.

Lashawn Butler added Val Verde has students in the continuation school that may be available to film the DVD. They are eligible to receive college credits for filming. Prevent Child Abuse or RCOE were also suggested as resources for filming. It was asked if the curriculum is copyrighted. Donna Greene is researching this. Nancy Wood added libraries are great places to host the training. Ms. Schwartz reported she is proposing a suggestion to request providing childcare in the next grant. The parenting class is open to anyone in the community. Mr. Freedman added the Volunteer Center's Resource Center for Non Profit Management would be a good place for Ms. Schwartz to contact for assistance.

Dr. Lidner suggested expanding this program by creating similar programs. Mr. Freedman added that consistency with judges and DPSS recommending parenting classes is important and contributes to the attendance of classes of this nature.

Cheri Andovolic, Board Assistant, expressed interest in participating in the visits to local community clubs and agencies to help provide awareness of First 5 and what programs it supports.

Ms. Schwartz took Advisory Committee and staff to childcare center for a tour of parenting class location and childcare facility.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

IX. Advisory Committee Adjournment

Adjourned at 2:55 p.m. to the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 16, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. at:

Riverside County Children and Families Commission Office
2002 Iowa Avenue, Suite 100, Conference Room A
Riverside, California 92507