CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

1. Commissioner Kaufman called the meeting to order at 1:36 pm.

2. Election of the Commission Chair
   
   Nominations were opened for the position of Commission Chair. Supervisor Don Knabe was nominated. Nominations were closed by unanimous consensus of the Commissioners present at the meeting.

   M/S (Neal Kaufman / Carolyn Wilder) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
   
   Supervisor Don Knabe was congratulated on his election as the Commission Chair.

3. Election of the Commission Vice Chair
   
   Nominations were opened for the position of Commission Vice Chair. Commissioner Marvin Southard was nominated. Nominations were closed by unanimous consensus of the Commissioners present at the meeting.

   M/S (Don Knabe / Evangelina Stockwell) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
Commissioner Southard was congratulated on his election as the Commission Vice Chair.

CONSENT CALENDAR: (Items 4 – 5)


M/S (Cynthia Harding / Evangelina Stockwell) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

(Chair Knabe abstained from voting on this item as he was not a Commissioner and was not present at the Commission Meeting of November 13, 2008.)


M/S (Cynthia Harding / Evangelina Stockwell) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

(Chair Knabe abstained from voting on this item as he was not a Commissioner and was not present at the Commission Meeting of November 13, 2008.)

COMMISSION: (Items 6 – 12)

6. Announcements by the Commission Chair

RECEIVED

Chair Knabe commented that he was looking forward to his third term as Commission Chair. He stated that it was his goal to be vigilant of Proposition 10 funding to ensure maximum accountability given the current State budget crisis. Furthermore, Chair Knabe stated that he looked forward to having a key role in the development of the Commission’s strategic planning process.

Chair Knabe asked Commissioners to submit their interests for the various open positions on the Operations Committee, Public Affairs Committee, and Joint Planning Committee to his office no later than January 30, 2009.

7. Executive Director’s Report

RECEIVED AND FILED

- Special Presentation: Ms. Josefa Salinas, a popular DJ and radio celebrity from HOT 92.3, was presented with a “Champion for Children” Award in recognition of the tremendous support she provided First 5 LA during November’s Early Literacy Campaign. Ms. Salinas was a spokesperson the Read Early, Read Aloud campaign because of her commitment toward the education of single mothers and children. As a campaign spokesperson, Ms. Salinas promoted the Read Early, Read Aloud messages and participated in the Time Warner PSA that aired during the campaign. In addition, she also spent the month of November leading read-alongs and sing-alongs for parents and children throughout Los Angeles County, participating in a half-dozen different literacy events.
In addition to the written report, the following item was highlighted:

- **State Budget Update:** The Governor has released a proposed budget detail that called for the elimination of the First 5 California Commission and a 50 percent reduction in revenue to County Commissions, including First 5 LA. The estimated $275 million in diverted Proposition 10 funds would go to support existing social service programs, although the Governor has yet to reveal which programs specifically.

The Governor’s Proposition 10 funding diversion proposal is similar to the one that was proposed by the State’s Legislative Analyst’s Office in November. Based on the information of the LAO proposal, First 5 LA would see an estimated reduction in revenue from $116 million to $73 million 2009-2010. The Governor’s proposal would need a two-thirds vote of the State Legislature in order to be placed on the ballot for voter approval.

In addition, the Governor also proposed a similar diversion of Proposition 63 funds. Democratic State Senate leader Darrell Steinberg has labeled that proposed funding diversion a “non-starter” and County Commissions are hopeful he realizes the need for a consistent position when it comes to Proposition 10 funding.

A top priority of Commission staff is to meet with Assembly Speaker Karen Bass and Senator Alex Padilla, who chairs a key budget subcommittee. First 5 Association leadership would also be invited to join in these meetings. Similarly, Kris Perry, the Executive Director of First 5 California (State Commission), has requested to meet with all Democratic members. The support of our stakeholders, from grantees to community groups and organizations like CSAC – the California State Association of Counties – will be more critical than ever in these outreach efforts.

At the conclusion of the Executive Director’s Report, Commissioner McCroskey asked for clarification on the selection process of the Best Start LA contractor. Specifically, Commissioner McCroskey wanted to know why Children’s Bureau had not been selected.

Executive Director Martinez stated that the contract was awarded through a competitive bidding process previously approved by the Commission. The process is transparent and in compliance with AB 109/SB 35 statutes. In this case, the applicant (Para Los Niños) with the strongest proposal and interview score was selected as the Best Start LA contractor.

Commissioners McCroskey and Kaufman requested that staff provide an update on the selection process in the awarding of contracts by the Commission.

Director Nuno commented that given the ongoing strategic planning efforts, Commissioners would be provided with detailed information on the Commission approved process for program funding at the February meeting.
8. Approval of $3,809,286 to Fund Health Care Coverage for Children Ages 0 through 5 who are New Enrollees to the Healthy Families Program (HFP)

Executive Director Martinez reported that this agenda item pertained to the Healthy Families funding shortfall being experienced at the State level, and as a result, the budget crisis has magnified the on-going problem of insufficient funding for the Healthy Families Program. The 2008-09 State budget fails to meet the increasing demand for the Healthy Families Program caused by the downturn in the economy and families’ increased need. Enrollment in the program is at an all-time high, currently reaching a record average of 27,125 children per month in Los Angeles County.

As a result, First 5 California (State Commission) voted in December to give the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB) an allocation of $16.7 million to help ensure more than 65,000 infants and young children receive health coverage during the state's budget crisis. This funding will pay health care premiums for children 0 to 5 who are new enrollees to the state's Healthy Families Program for the remainder of the fiscal year. Essentially, the State Commission has financed an expansion of Healthy Families. First 5 California has asked County Commissions to reimburse the State Commission for their share of the $16.7 million to cover new Healthy Family enrollees in their respective counties. In Los Angeles County, which has seen a 27 percent increase in Healthy Families Program enrollment, the amount of funds targeted for reimbursement to the State Commission is $3.8 million.

Executive Director Martinez stated that it was important to note that MRMIB administrators have indicated that this is a one-time request for assistance related to the lengthy State budget impasse last year, and do not anticipate a future gap of this magnitude in their funding stream.

Approximately, 47 County Commissions have submitted letters indicating they intend to present a similar request to their respective Board of Commissioners to help provide part of this funding.

M/S (Marvin Southard / Evangelina Stockwell) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

(Chair Knabe and Commissioner Harding abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest)

9. Approval of a One Year No-Cost Extension of the Healthy Kids Initiative from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 Utilizing Unspent Funds From the Original Allocation

Director Bosch reported that the Healthy Kids Initiative has had many positive impacts on children, including improvements in their access to and use of medical services and reductions in their unmet need for care. The Healthy Kids Initiative has also increased parents’ confidence in getting care, and their satisfaction with the quality of the care they received. There is also substantial evidence that Healthy Kids improved the health status (as perceived by parents) of children both in their first and into their second year of enrollment in the program. A broad range of evaluation activities conducted over the span of the Healthy Kids Initiative including case studies of implementation, parent focus groups, a longitudinal household survey and ongoing
process monitoring of the outreach, enrollment and service delivery systems collectively demonstrate the success of the Healthy Kids Initiative in Los Angeles County. Within its first four years, the Healthy Kids Initiative achievements are well documented not only in improving children's access and use of care, but also reducing parents' concerns about obtaining care for their children and ultimately improving the health status of enrolled children.

The anticipated reauthorization and expansion of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program or SCHIP (known as Healthy Families in California), in addition to an economic stimulus package, has placed health care reform on the immediate national policy agenda. Democratic lawmakers here in California are determined to secure health care reform legislation beginning with universal coverage for children. Proposed plans include utilizing First 5 funds along with foundation support to draw matching funds from the federal government to cover the cost of the coverage expansion.

Locally, the CHI has encountered the dilemma of balancing an overwhelming need for health insurance coverage for children in Los Angeles County with the harsh reality of limited funding. This has resulted in an enrollment freeze for the 6-18 age group for the past two years. Moreover, CHI funding for enrolled children 6-18 is only secured through March 2009. Children 0-5 will be impacted by this loss of funding as they will be unable to maintain coverage once they age out. Local concerns have been further compounded by the recent cut to state funding for outreach, enrollment, retention, and utilization (OERU) activities. In Los Angeles County, these cuts have resulted in the loss of $19.6 million dollars, thereby terminating 30 DPH contracts with outreach and enrollment agencies, additional training resources, and planned improvements to the DPH data system to collect countywide enrollment and utilization data. The cuts impacted 120 agency staff who were either forced to be absorbed into other non-OERU programs or laid-off. Given these cuts, First 5 LA is now the sole funder of OERU activities here in Los Angeles County.

A Healthy Kids Initiative funding decision needs to coincide with long-term strategic planning around children’s coverage and access to health care. The FY 2009-2014 Strategic Plan timeframe and decision process will take place over the next eight months with final approval occurring in June 2009. However, due to enrollment guidelines and restrictions of new children, L.A. Care Health Plan cannot enroll a child if six-months continuous coverage is not guaranteed. Additionally, the contracting process with both the Department of Public Health (DPH) and L.A. Care Health Plan requires a minimum of six months to process and authorize all necessary documentation. Therefore, it is essential that a final Healthy Kids Initiative funding decision take place in January 2009 to ensure no interruption or break in the enrollment process.

Given this, staff is recommending the approval of a one year no-cost extension of the Healthy Kids Initiative from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, utilizing unspent funds from the original allocation. In addition, a review of long-term multi-year funding of the Healthy Kids Initiative would be done as part of the FY 09-14 strategic planning process.

M/S (Marvin Southard / Corina Villaraigosa)  APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

(Chair Knabe abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest)
10. UPDATE: LAUP Performance-Based Contract

Director Bosch reported that the first Liaison Committee meeting with representatives from both First 5 LA and LAUP was held on December 4, 2008. The purpose of the initial meeting was to review the intent of the Liaison Committee, provide an overview and summary of performance based contracting, and review next steps for moving forward in developing a performance based contract with LAUP.

The Liaison Committee decided that staff from First 5 LA and LAUP would meet on a regular basis to draft recommendations, based on evaluation data, best practices, and lessons learned, about outcomes and metrics to be included in the performance-based contract. Staff will then report back to the Liaison Committee on a monthly basis, seeking consensus and approval first on the proposed outcomes and later on performance metrics. Director Bosch stated that at each Commission meeting, a summary of the process to date would be presented. In addition, staff would also request direction from the Commission at key points in the decision-making process. The intent is to bring a draft of the proposed performance-based contract to the May Commission meeting for discussion and seek final Board approval at the June meeting.

Commissioner Williams asked if there was funding available for summer programs.

Gary Mangifico, LAUP CEO, was in the audience and addressed Commissioner Williams’ inquiry. He stated that in the approved FY 2008-09 budget, there was no funding for summer preschool programs and that impacted childcare providers had already been notified. Additionally, Dr. Mangiofico commented that LAUP was projecting a $4 million budget surplus as of June 30, 2009; and suggested that such funding surplus could potentially be used to fund summer preschool programs.

11. UPDATE: Strategic Plan National and Local Level Environmental Scan

Director Nuno reported that on November 13, 2008, the Commission approved goal statements and priority measures for its next strategic plan (FY 2009 – 2014) as part of a series of decision points during this planning process. These statements and measures were intended to narrow the parameters of the Commission’s investments across the goal areas of Health, Safe Children and Families, and Early Learning over the next five years. They allow for the creation of benchmarks in order to define the success and impact First 5 LA desires to have in LA County.

- **Goal Statement #1:** Children are born healthy.
  - Priority Measure: Percent of Babies Born at a Low Birth Weight

- **Goal Statement #2:** Children maintain a healthy weight.
  - Priority Measure: Percent of Overweight Children

- **Goal Statement #3:** Children are safe from abuse and neglect.
  - Priority Measure: Number of Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect. [Note: Additional measure(s) being considered for this goal statement.]

- **Goal Statement #4:** Children are ready for Kindergarten.
  - Priority Measure: Percent of Children Reading at Grade Level at Third Grade
The next set of decision points will focus on how the Commission will work to impact these measures. Specific decisions include a determination about the family, community and/or systems factors the Commission will seek to change; the role the Commission will play in changing these factors; and the strategies it will employ.

The strategic planning staff-consultant team has conducted a national and local environmental scan. This concise scan begins with an overview of the current early childhood funding and public policy environment, as dominated by the economic crisis, and its implications for potential strategic planning decisions.

The scan continues by outlining what current evidence indicates about promising practices to impact the goal statements and priority measures. On a local level, the scan considers strategies currently being used by First 5 LA and other local funders to impact the measure, as well as what local policy and public education opportunities exist. An analysis of this information is meant to highlight the opportunities for the Commission to have a strategic impact in LA County and thereby inform decisions to be made about the role First 5 LA will play.

12. Public Comment

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission meeting adjourned at 3:43 pm to a Closed Session.

The next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be on:

   February 12, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.
   Multi-Purpose Room
   750 N. Alameda Street
   Los Angeles, CA  90012

Meeting minutes were recorded by Maria Romero.