

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

AMENDED and APPROVED: 03-08-12

FIRST 5 LA

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
Commission Meeting
February 9, 2012

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Commissioners:

Nancy Au
Jane Boeckmann
Jonathan Fielding [Vice Chair]
Alma Martinez
Christopher Thompson [Alternate]
Antronette Yancey
Zev Yaroslavsky [Chair]

Ex-Officio Commissioners:

Patricia Curry
Duane Dennis
Deanne Tilton

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Commissioners:

Neal Kaufman [Excused]
Marv Southard [Excused]

STAFF PRESENT:

Craig Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer
Yolanda Bosch, Chief Administrative Officer
Antonio Gallardo, Chief Program Officer
Tracey Hause, Director of Finance
Elizabeth Iida, Director of Program Development
Armando Jimenez, Director of Research & Evaluation
Teresa Nuno, Director of Community Investments
Maria Romero, Executive Assistant

LEGAL COUNSEL:

Nancy Takade, Principal Deputy County Counsel

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

1. Chair Yaroslavsky called the meeting to order at 1:47 pm. Quorum was present.

CONSENT CALENDAR: (Items 2 – 4)

2. Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes – Thursday, January 12, 2012

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Zev Yaroslavsky)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

3. Approval of the Monthly Financial Statements for the Month Ending December 31, 2011

Director Hause presented the regular monthly financial statements for the Commission's review.

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Vice Chair Fielding asked how long the State had to file an appeal of the AB 99 lawsuit decision. Interim CEO Steele responded that the deadline for the State to file an appeal was March 12, 2012.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Alma Martinez)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

NOTE: The agenda items were discussed out of order. The following represents the order in which items were discussed during the meeting.

9. Adopt Resolution 2012-01 Approving Mid-Year Amendments to the FY 2011-12 Operating Budget

Director Hause reported staff was requesting the Board to adopt Resolution 2012-01 approving the mid-year amendments to the FY2011-12 operating budget. On June 9, 2011, the Board of Commissioners adopted the FY 2011-12 operating budget and directed staff to maintain the same level of operating spending, or less, from the prior year. The total adopted budget for FY 2011-12 was \$15,382,568 or \$26,078 less than the FY 2010-11 operating budget.

The Commission also indicated that if additional resources were necessary, staff should return at mid-year and request additional resources. Staff has thoroughly analyzed its operations for the first six months of the fiscal year and has determined that additional resources are necessary. While there have been some reductions in some areas of operations, additions in others are proposed and do exceed the recommended reductions. These increases are both summarized in detail in the documents provided in the Board packet.

Per the adopted policy of the Board of Commissioners, the CEO has the authority to make budget adjustments to the operating budget line items not-to-exceed \$25,000. However, in an effort to ensure all operating budget adjustments are transparent, staff is providing detail on all of the proposed adjustments, including adjustments under \$25,000. Further, as recommended by the Harvey Rose audit, a standardized approach to recording and maintaining records of the Board's approval of the changes in the operating budget has been illustrated in the documents provided detailing every adjustment to each line item. These documents will be included as part of the process and will become part of the internal budget and accounting records.

Approximately, \$490,000 or 80 percent of the proposed adjustments are a result of the change in leadership, AB 99 litigation, and the cost of the Harvey Rose & Associates special audit report. Staff is recommending an additional \$605,226 for operations for the remaining fiscal year, bringing the total of the operating budget to \$15,987,794. These additional resources will come from the general fund.

Interim CEO Steele commented this item reflected two policies that the Commission has adopted in response to the Harvey Rose audit. All of the budget adjustments will be done by resolution which will be permanently maintained as a record of the

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Commission. The Executive Secretary will retain these resolutions. Secondly, each of the modifications is detailed on the budget form approved at the January Commission meeting. Whenever a modification is made, such modifications will be detailed on the approved form and kept as permanent records; so, there will be no questions as to how the item was approved, who approved it, and what it was for.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Nancy Au)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

10. Adopt Resolution 2012-02 Implementing the Proposed Mid-Year Amendments to the FY 2011-12 Program Budget

Director Hause reported staff was also recommending that the Commission adopt Resolution 2012-02 implementing the proposed mid-year amendments to the FY 2011-12 program budget. The Board of Commissioners adopted a detailed program budget in the amount of \$177,774,110 on September 9, 2011. When the budget was adopted, staff indicated that if revisions were necessary during the fiscal year, the proposed adjustments would be brought forward as the need arose or at mid-year. Since then, the Board has approved three amendments to the budget outlined in the staff report included in the meeting packet.

Staff has also analyzed program expenditures for the first six months of the fiscal year and is recommending the additional adjustments outlined in the resolution. Exhibit A of the meeting packet provides a detailed analysis of the recommended modifications. If the Commission adopts the resolution, the programmatic budget will increase by \$2,162,259 and the additional resources will come from the general fund. Staff may return before the end of the fiscal year with additional adjustments, if necessary.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked if these adjustments were needed to reflect actions that have been previously taken by the Board. Director Hause responded in the affirmative.

NOTE: Vice Chair Fielding abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest.

**M/S (Nancy Au / Alma Martinez)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS APPROVED WITH ONE ABSENTION**

After the vote was taken, Chair Yaroslavsky introduced Dr. Christopher Thompson as the most recently appointed Commissioner alternate for the Department of Mental Health.

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4. Approve New Contracts and Proposed Amendments for Existing Contracts and Grant Agreements in Support of Initiatives Approved as Part of the FY 2011-12 Programmatic Budget for the Period of March 1, 2012 to March 31, 2012 and Authorize Staff to Complete Final Contract Execution Upon Approval from the Board

CPO Gallardo reported that as part of the monthly practice, a list has been provided with 23 new contracts for execution and five amendments for existing contracts and grants for this reporting period. Information about all contracts and grant agreements, including scopes of work and budget are available on the website.

**M/S (Alma Martinez / Zev Yaroslavsky)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

5. Announcements by the Commission Chair

Chair Yaroslavsky commented that Committee assignments have been proposed based on the input received from Commissioners.

Chair Yaroslavsky said he was mindful of the extra time that Commissioners spend on Committees in addition to their other responsibilities. For this, he thanked all Commissioners for their cooperation and willingness to serve on Committees aside from the Board.

Chair Yaroslavsky also announced that a copy of the Committee assignments have been provided to each Commissioner in the FYI folder and will be voted upon under Item 8.

Chair Yaroslavsky presented a plaque to Alma Martinez in appreciation of her service to the Commission from 2010 to 2012. She will be resigning from the Commission effective February 29, 2012.

6. Interim Chief Executive Officer's Report

In addition to the written report, the following items were highlighted:

- **State Budget:** At the request of Commissioners, an analysis of the Governor's budget proposal for FY 2012-13 and its effect on First 5 LA's portfolio of interests has been provided as part of the Interim CEO Report. At the present moment, the budget does not propose to take any First 5 LA funds. The proposed budget does refer to First 5 LA as a resource for local governments that are experiencing cuts in other areas.
- **Workplan for Implementing Harvey M. Rose Audit Recommendations:** In response to the Harvey M. Rose audit report, staff has developed a workplan. The most recently updated staff workplan has been included in the FYI folder. All of the findings of the Harvey M. Rose audit have been evaluated and specific tasks have been assigned. The recommendations made by the Harvey M. Rose audit report have been adopted in every case and staff is working toward

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implementing all of the recommendations. The staff workplan is a public document, will be distributed to Commissioners every month, and will also be posted on the website.

- **FY 2012-13 Budget Process:** As part of the FY 2012-13 budget process, staff will be putting together a very detailed budget for review by the Commission. It is the intent of staff to have both an operations and programmatic budget approved prior to the start of the fiscal year.

There will be two Commission meetings during the month of June. Commission meetings will be taking place during the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. The first meeting will focus on the adoption of the FY 2012-13 budget. The second meeting will focus on the approval of contracts and grants that depend on adoption of the budget.

- **Program & Planning Committee:** The agenda for the upcoming Committee meeting is included in the FYI folder for review.

7. Approval of the Proposed Bylaw Amendments Changing the Ad Hoc Executive Committee into a Standing Committee of the Commission; and Creating the Budget & Finance Committee

Interim CEO Steele reported that the bylaw amendments were distributed to Commissioners pursuant to the Commission's regulations of at least 21 days in advance. The first amendment amends the definition of the Executive Committee and creates the Executive Committee as a standing Committee of the Commission. The significance of this change is that the Committee will have regular and continuing jurisdiction. This Committee will also conform to the Brown Act. All Commission members will receive copies of the agenda and meeting minutes for their review.

The second bylaw amendment creates the Budget & Finance Committee as a standing Committee of the Commission subject to the Brown Act. The charge of the Committee is to meet and discuss the internal control of financial reporting as well as the draft annual business plan and proposed annual budgets prior to Commission action.

Interim CEO Steele also reported that neither of these Committees have formal ability to make decisions on behalf of the Commission. These Committees are advisory in nature. The Commission makes all the decisions of the Commission.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Antronette Yancey)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

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8. Appointment of Committee Chairs, Committee Members and Liaison

Chair Yaroslavsky proposed the following Committee appointments.

Executive Committee

Jonathan Fielding – Chair
Nancy Au
Neal Kaufman
Marv Southard

Budget & Finance Committee

Marv Southard – Chair
Jane Boeckmann
Philip Browning
Antronette Yancey

Program & Planning Committee

Neal Kaufman – Chair
Philip Browning
Patricia Curry
Alma Martinez / 1st District Appointee
Deanne Tilton

Public Affairs Liaisons

Duane Dennis
Deanne Tilton
LACOE Appointee

Best Start Liaisons

Nancy Au
Antronette Yancey
LACOE Appointee

**M/S (Zev Yaroslavsky / Jonathan Fielding)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

11. Approve the Award of a Contract for Executive Search Services in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$110,000 to Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Associates, Authorize the Interim CEO and Commission Chair to Negotiate the Contract and Issue a Notice to Proceed, Subject to Commission Ratification of the Contract at the March 2012 Commission Meeting

Director Martinez reported that following the Commission's approval to release a RFQ to identify an executive search firm back in December 2011, an RFQ was prepared and released in accordance with Commission policies and procedures. Following the RFQ release, the Ad Hoc Committee that was established by the Commission interviewed two finalist candidates and has moved forward a firm for consideration by the Commission in terms of approval of costs and expenses. This firm is Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Associates.

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Staff is seeking the approval of a contract for services in an amount not-to-exceed \$110,000 to Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Associates and to authorize the Interim CEO and the Commission Chair to negotiate the contract and to issue a notice to proceed subject to the Commission ratifying the contract at the Commission meeting to be held in March.

Chair Yaroslavsky thanked the Ad Hoc Committee that interviewed the candidates—Commissioners Yancey, Au and Southard. Chair Yaroslavsky stated he thought two great interviews were conducted and also thought that a great search firm was being recommended under the leadership of Ed Hamilton. Chair Yaroslavsky thanked everyone for their work in getting the Commission to this point.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Antronette Yancey)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

12. Approval to Negotiate Contracts with Five (5) Organizations to Implement the Tot Parks and Trails Investment in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$8 Million Distributed County-Wide

NOTE: Commissioner Martinez recused herself from participating in the discussion and vote on this item due to a conflict of interest.

Director Iida reported that staff was seeking approval to award and negotiate contracts with five organizations to implement First 5 LA's tot parks and trails project. The total of the five awards are not-to-exceed \$8 million and enables First 5 LA's investment to be distributed County-wide. The project was approved by the Commission on November 18, 2010 with the allocation of \$10 million to create opportunities for non-profit organizations to develop, upgrade or improve playgrounds, place-bases and stroller trails for toddlers. Through the Tot Parks & Trails RFP, First 5 LA sought proposals from applicants with demonstrated public and private partnership qualifications to develop tot parks and trail projects in each Supervisorial District with funding of up to \$2 million per district for a period of up to three years.

Eligible private-public partnerships were required to designate a qualified non-profit organization as lead, have one government partner, and at least one community-based organization. Public-private partnerships were encouraged to propose a variety of place-bases for young children, including indoor, natural, shaded, rooftop place-bases, and splash pads. First 5 LA received eight proposals; three from District One, two from District Two and one each from Districts Three, Four and Five.

The application review and selection processes were included in the meeting packet on pages 210 and 211. Outcomes of the external reviewer scores were presented at the bottom of page 210. The maximum score possible for each applicant was 90 points. Based on the external reviewer analysis and scoring of each application, and

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First 5 LA's Finance Department reviews, staff recommends the awarding of one applicant each, in Supervisorial Districts Two, Three and Four at approximately \$2 million; and two applicants in District One to share the \$2 million allocation given the tie score. Thus, a total of \$8 million will be award to these five applicants to support the development of a total of 33 parks County-wide; 16 of which are in the Best Start Communities. Staff is still reviewing District Five's application and their \$2 million allocation, and will report back to the Commission on a later date. Upon Commission approval, staff will move forward and extend award letters to these applicants and begin contract negotiations.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked for the locations of the parks. Director Iida referred the Commissioners to a map that had been provided noting the location of the parks.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked if there were specific addresses for the parks. Staff responded in the affirmative. Chair Yaroslavsky asked that a list of addresses be provided to him.

Vice Chair Fielding asked for clarification on the distribution of parks within and outside the Best Start Communities. Staff responded that out of all of the 33 proposed projects, there were 14 LA Conversation projects along the river ways. The work the LA Conversation proposed were trails with toddler play equipment alongside and adding shade structures to make it a more family-friendly environment. Vice Chair Fielding said that the connectivity was very important.

Commissioner Au commented that in looking at the map, in terms of those Best Start Communities that did not have a tot park project, were there any submissions by the communities to build a tot park. Staff responded that if there was a tot park submission, staff aimed to fund that project. There is some need to discuss District Five's submission, which was in a Best Start Community.

Commissioner Au asked if that particular proposal was still being considered. Interim CEO Steele responded that particular proposal was still under review and would come back to the Commission at a later time. Staff did not want to delay the approval of the tot parks in the other Districts while the District Five submission was still being worked on by staff.

Vice Chair Fielding commented that he wanted to make sure that all the things that are being done not only have good partnerships as indicated in the staff report but also have good prospects for ongoing maintenance because this was one of the issues with parks over time. He asked if this had been looked at as part of the review process and if staff felt comfortable that there were adequate accommodations made for this.

Staff responded in the affirmative. Furthermore, staff made one of the requirements of the RFP to be that of having a sustainable plan. Some plans included partnerships with the Jobs Corp organization; some included partnerships with other non-profit organizations that needed the service. The criteria were very firm about the need for partnerships with cities and non-profits and community members. The relationship with the community members is what was going to allow that park to be maintained.

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Commissioner Yancey commended staff on the work done on this project. She mentioned that it was evident that staff had given a lot of thought to the types of partnerships with other organizations that First 5 LA could engage to get the maximum benefit of investment.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Nancy Au)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

After the vote, Commissioner Au commented that she was privy to some of the information from a parent meeting funded by First 5 LA. In terms of the parents' priorities, it was clear that green space or access to a safe place for them to play with their children was a high priority. She said she was quite excited about this project and thanked the staff.

13. Approve Allocation and Authorize Staff to Initiate the Process to Contractually Obligate the Award to Los Angeles Parks Foundation for a Partnership to Develop, Construct and Maintain Three Neighborhood Parks in the Broadway-Manchester and Pacoima Best Start Communities as Part of the City of Los Angeles 50 Parks Initiative in the Total Amount of \$1,050,000 for FY 2011-12

Director Nuno reported that in accordance with the Community Investment Department's work to identify, link and leverage opportunities that support the Commission's priorities goals, and per the Commission's directive to bring such opportunities to the Board's attention, approval was being sought to become part of a public-private partnership on the 50 Parks Initiative with the City of Los Angeles Parks Foundation. This investment is within the Community Investment framework and criteria. It will leverage more than \$1 million in fiscal resources at a 1:1 match rate. It will provide a concrete opportunity for community engagement which is an effort that Community Investments is looking to enhance and expand across investments. It will also create additional green space in park poor neighborhoods to promote exercise in addition to healthy living that directly links to the Commission's priority goal that children maintain a healthy weight.

Director Nuno reported the partnership requires a new allocation to the current programmatic budget in the amount of \$1,050,000 and it also requires the authorization to contract with the Los Angeles Parks Foundation for the creation of three new parks in the Best Start Communities.

Following Director Nuno's remarks, staff made a presentation highlighting key point of analysis on the leveraging opportunity.

Vice Chair Fielding asked if staff was confident with the proposed deadline. Staff responded that it was confident in meeting the proposed deadline as well as the City Foundation and City Parks Department who were part of the partnership.

Vice Chair Fielding commented that this was an excellent example of where the Commission can take advantage of leveraging opportunities. He said the Commission has not been clear, as it should be, with staff on how it is looking for

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opportunities that clearly leverage priorities that are already being funded in other ways. This proposed partnership certainly corresponds very well to that. Vice Chair Fielding applauded staff's efforts.

Commissioner Yancey asked what the difference between this proposal was and the proposal the Parks Foundation submitted for the competitive piece under the tot parks and trails project. Secondly, Commissioner Yancey asked if there was a similar sort of accommodation for the zero to five population so the Commission can be assured that this will be a hot spot for activity of this age population, not just sitting.

Staff responded that the City Foundation and City Parks Department could partner with Best Start Communities; also, because of First 5 LA funding, they understand that the focus should be a zero to five park. These two entities have a ready body of parents who are interested and engaged. This provides great opportunities for communities to participate in something and it is a physical site that the community can be partners with. Community members will be heavily involved in the design. A preliminary assessment of community members was done to see if they would want parks in these sites. Some sites did fall out because the community did not want parks.

Regarding the differences between this proposed project and the Tot Parks & Trails Initiative is that the initiative will redevelop, refurbish and enhance existing space whereas this opportunities will create new green space.

Commissioner Yancey commented that \$55,000 did not seem to be a huge amount of money in the grand scheme of construction. She asked if this amount was enough or if other funds were going to be leveraged.

Staff responded the amount was based on a formula provided by the City Parks Department. This was an estimate based on the commitment from the Housing Department.

Commissioner Martinez commended staff for their efforts and momentum toward green space. She said this was an example of staff taking ownership of a project she had proposed, making progress, talking to stakeholders, and learning from lesson learned. Commissioner Martinez commented that \$8 million was a great financial commitment and also made a great step forward in recognizing that where people live and exercise are just as important as the programming that is done. She mentioned the Commission would get a lasting branding opportunity County-wide. She hoped that additional dollars could be committed in the future for this type of work.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Zev Yaroslavsky)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

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Public Comment:

Lorenzo Briceno, Office of Councilman Bernard Parks
Paloma Perez, Office of Councilman Tony Cardenas
Elisa Venzor, Pacoima Body Guidance

14. Approve Agreements with Richards, Watson & Gershon to Provide Legal Services and Interim CEO Services Effective December 1, 2011

CAO Bosch reported that at the request of the Commission, Craig Steele has assumed the role of Interim CEO for First 5 LA. As a result, the legal services contract needs to be revised to reflect this change. Staff is recommending that both the contract for Interim CEO services and the contract for legal services be approved as presented effective December 1, 2011.

Commissioner Yancey commented that she thought the Commission was contracting with the County for legal services during the time that Mr. Steele was serving as Interim CEO. She asked why \$7,000 per month was being paid for legal services to Richards, Watson & Gershon.

Interim CEO Steele responded that there were some services that his colleagues at the firm would continue to provide including, most notably, labor and employment services and some ongoing matters. The contracts separate out the services that would continue to be provided separate from the services that County Counsel would provide. He did not want to have an hourly rate because he did not want to be accused of running up the billable hours. There are ongoing matters that Richards, Watson & Gershon have been a part of and should not be transferred to County Counsel; most notably, the employment matters.

Commissioner Yancey asked how much was being paid by the Commission in legal services. Interim CEO Steele responded that under this contract, there was a \$7,000 per month fee in legal services which was less than the average bill over the past few years. The County Counsel office will be providing hourly bills on a monthly basis; this will vary depending on the services provided.

Commissioner Yancey asked was the last month's bill. Interim CEO Steele responded that a bill had not been received.

County Counsel Takade said that a financial relationship with the Commission had not been established. The Office of County Counsel would be coming back with a budget. The role of County Counsel at the Commission is quite different than the ongoing role that Richards, Watson & Gershon had in advising in all of the other legal matters involving the Commission.

Chair Yaroslavsky commented that County Counsel now advises the Commission because Mr. Steele needed to be extricated from a potential conflict where he would be advising himself on matters related to the Commission's operations.

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Commissioner Yancey stated she was confused because in Section 2c on page 221 of the contact, it stated that Richards, Watson & Gershon would attend all Commission meetings. She thought this was what County Counsel was doing.

CAO Bosch said that it was her understanding that this language was included in the contract because it is at the direction of the Chairman of the Commission. Interim CEO Steele commented that language referred to having a closed session on an employment item, where the employment lawyer would be in attendance to advise the Commission.

Commissioner Dennis suggested that when County Counsel came back with their proposal, the Commission should have a discernment of what County Counsel would be doing and what would be done by Richards, Watson & Gershon. Commissioners should be clear on what each will be doing before voting on the motion.

Chair Yaroslavsky agreed with Commissioner Dennis' suggestion.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Jane Boeckmann)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

15. Approval of Motion to Include Families that are Homeless and/or at Imminent Risk of Homelessness as Priority Populations for First 5 LA Funding

Commissioner Martinez reported that based on public comment from a few months back about First 5 LA's limited activities so far, with regard to homeless children ages zero to five, she went back and checked to see how First 5 LA was doing in this area. Commissioner Martinez felt that First 5 LA could probably be using more of its resources to help leverage this community. She highlighted that there were 51,000 people who were homeless currently and 20 percent were families with very young children. Commissioner Martinez stated that she would consider this group to be the most vulnerable and sensitive population and wanted to see if staff could start looking at opportunities where First 5 LA could do one-time or capacity building opportunities. Commissioner Martinez commented that she was not thinking about extensive programming opportunities. She felt First 5 LA could be strategic and could provide opportunities for people who are doing this good work to access more resources. The First and Third Districts have done a lot of work and have some best practices with regard to how work can be done with families in this situation.

Commissioner Martinez said this was a general motion but a way to demonstrate support for this population and see if the Commission could come with a funding strategy that might help leverage some resources in this area.

Commissioner Dennis commented that DPSS had responsibility for the homeless families in Los Angeles County. He said that it was good that Philip Browning was joining the Commission because this could provide the Commission some opportunity of working with DPSS in a different way. Commissioner Dennis suggested that if the motion was approved, that the Commission could closely work with DPSS.

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Commissioner Au commented that before moving forward, she stated that she still needed more information. One of the things that she has learned over time is that oftentimes, the Commission hears anecdotal reporting. Commissioner Au stated that she felt the Commission could not make really good strategic decisions unless some semblance of hard data was provided.

Commissioner Au commented that she had a wonderful presentation by the Research & Evaluation Department staff when she was briefed on the Accountability & Learning Framework. She asked for information on what was currently occurring in the Skid Row area regarding children and to have a trend mapped out on how the economy has impacted that population. Commissioner Au wanted to know where the Commission has captured or failed to capture the homeless population among all the funded programs—Partnerships for Families, Best Start Communities. Further, Commissioner Au requested to have a dialog with the staff who was working with the Best Start Community in the Skid Row region to see what efforts have been made in addressing this particularly vulnerable population.

Commissioner Martinez clarified that her motion did not just address Skid Row. The problem of homelessness is County-wide. Districts One and Three are currently working within these communities to address the problem.

Commissioner Martinez stated that the intent of her motion was to ask for a report on the state of affairs with this population to see if the Commission could help advance some of the good work that was going on there.

Chair Yaroslavsky agreed that getting information on this population would be helpful. Based on the expertise of the Executive Director of the Alliance to End Homelessness, the focus should be on the homeless population as there are not enough resources to address those who are already homeless and much less if those at imminent risk of homelessness are included.

Chair Yaroslavsky suggested that when staff come back with a report, that an estimate be provided on the difference between youth and imminent youth to get read on this. If the span covered homeless as well as those individuals at imminent risk of homelessness, the number would increase exponentially and it would be pointless. Chair Yaroslavsky asked for a response from staff when returning with the report. He felt that the objectives of the motion would be best served by focusing on those who are already homeless as there will be plenty to do without enough resources.

Chair Yaroslavsky commented that the rumor mill among stakeholders is that some this funding is earmarked for them. He stated that he wanted to make sure there was a process for everybody who is in this field and for them to have an equal opportunity for funding.

Chair Yaroslavsky stated this was a great issue. The number of kids and families who are becoming homeless is increasing. This is one of the fast growing demographics of the homeless population. He felt this was a great time to have

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DCFS on the Commission so that the Commission can leverage funds with DCFS funds to really make a huge dent in this issue. He thanked Commissioner Martinez for bringing this issue to light.

Commissioner Yancey also commented that definitions of priority populations should be included in the staff report. She wanted to make sure that the Commission weighed out everything together.

Vice Chair Fielding commented that he was pleased to have this issue on the agenda. He felt it was definitely a priority but was trying to understand how it fit into all of the other things the Commission was already doing versus this being something new and different. Vice Chair Fielding hoped that staff would come back with a report, after consulting with DPSS and DCFS, which outlined opportunities consistent with the Commission's priorities that might be considered as opposed to having staff running off and finding something that may or may not be connected. Vice Chair Fielding said that he did not have preconceptions but certainly agreed that this deserved priority attention.

Commissioner Curry commented that she appreciated Chair Yaroslavsky's comments about the Commission having its hands full with those who are already homeless. This does not necessarily have to be through Commission funding but somewhere the Commission needs to find a way to help those who are imminently at risk of becoming homeless. If the Commission does not do this as a preventive measure and help these individuals to keep them from homeless, then they will be homeless and that number just keeps increasing. She felt there needed to be a balance with the preventive side because ultimately, if someone becomes homeless, it will cost a whole lot more dollars to get them back in the workforce and in the home. Commissioner Curry said the Commission needed to realize both sides of this issue were a priority and agreed that helping those who are already homeless should be the priority. However, somehow in the City or County, a way needed to be found for preventive work.

Chair Yaroslavsky said he did not disagree with Commissioner Curry; but, there was no way the Commission, and frankly, the County of Los Angeles, which has a much bigger budget than the Commission, could step into that breach. This is the job of the President of the United States and both Houses of Congress and all the agencies of the government. This is an issue of the national economy and that bears on whether a family is in or out of their home. Chair Yaroslavsky commented that although the Commissions had tens of thousands of dollars right now, it could easily spend this money, quickly, in addressing this issue.

Commissioner Curry stated that she did not disagree with Chair Yaroslavsky but wanted the Commission to be mindful about coming up with creative ways or partnerships with the community as it is really important to do the preventive piece.

Commissioner Martinez commented that she has made it very clear to the stakeholders that the intent is not to have a Healthy Families Program situation where the Commission becomes responsible for funding the budget shortfall. The purpose of the motion was to be strategic and leverage. She asked Director Nuno for her department to look at this to see what could be done to advance an agenda but

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also not to be the day-to-day funder of this issue. A lot of the stakeholders may not have funding to think through some of the ideas.

Chair Yaroslavsky said that the Commission needed to know what the scope was going to be. He suggested staff come back with a limited scope, a medium-sized scope, and a big scope because the way the motion was written, without a dollar amount attached to it although premature, the Commission did not know what it was talking about in terms of scope, scale and size.

Commissioner Au commented that this conversation be dealt, with all its complexity, and funding being a major part it, within the limited sphere of the Commission; and for the Commission to be strategic. She suggested this item be referred to the Program & Planning Committee where some real conversation and give-and-take can occur. Experts from the field could be invited to the conversation including people who are dealing with this issue personally to enlighten the Commission. The Program & Planning Committee could then come back to the Commission with some really solid information for the Commission to then make the tough decisions.

Interim CEO Steele suggested a three-stage approach—short-term, intermediate term, and a long term approach. In the short-term approach, the Commission agrees that there needs to be a baseline established with data being provided by staff to help Commissioners make informed decisions about the scope of the problem in Los Angeles County. This is something that can get done in the short term. In the intermediate approach, staff can be looking at opportunities to provide some assistance in two ways: (1) within the existing projects that are moving forward, there might be a way to cross the lines and include this particular population as part of that process; (2) the Community Investment Department can be looking at quicker opportunities to leverage funding and take advantage of them. In the longer term approach, the Program & Planning Committee can explore the Commission's larger role in the issue. If the motion is approved, staff can move forward with the short-term and intermediate term approaches and the channeling of the energy to make sure that all are aware of the Commission's policy intent. If opportunities are found, such opportunities will be presented to the Commission for consideration.

Vice Chair Fielding suggested modifying the motion to reflect Interim CEO Steele's suggestion and for the focus to be on families that are homeless and not families who are at imminent risk of homelessness. Commissioner Martinez was agreeable.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked for clarification on the reporting back of data to the Commission. Interim CEO Steele said the reporting back would be done to the Commission in the short-term with staff working with the Program & Planning Committee on the long-term approach if the Commission so wished.

Chair Yaroslavsky commented that he felt comfortable with this compromise that seemed to address everyone's concerns.

Commissioner Dennis suggested that in the current initiatives, there were probably some folks who are already homeless when looking at Best Start Communities, Family Literacy, School Readiness Initiative, and Healthy Births. There are

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probably families in the Commission's current initiatives that need to be really identified who fall in this population to see what the Commission is already doing.

**M/S (Alma Martinez / Antronette Yancey)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS MODIFIED
USING THE THREE-STAGE APPROACH**

After the vote was taken, Commissioner Tilton said that in looking at potential collaboration and resources, one population that was very much over represented in the homeless community and on Skid Row was the American Indian population. The reality is that they have a whole different set of rules and regulations and bureaucracy. It is much more difficult for these families to get the services they needs. She suggested that, perhaps, the Commission could decipher for this population how they can access these resources, without allocating resources, which would be enormously helpful to this population.

Public Comment:

Daniel Fisher, Los Angeles Homelessness Services Authority
Ruth Schwartz, Shelter Partnership, Inc.
Diann Viox, Community Development Commission

16. Adopt Resolution 2012-03 Allocating \$41,000 to Fund the Infant Safe Sleep and Abusive Head Trauma Pilot Project at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Commissioner Yancey reported that approval of this item would invest \$41,000 to support the completion of the pilot project at Harbor-UCLA medical center that engages nurses and social workers in training new parents in safe sleeping practices. This was already approved by the Commission earlier.

The Commission voted on November 15, 2010 to approve a \$1.5 million investment in a campaign to improve safe sleeping. On August 16, 2011, the Board of Supervisors voted to direct the Department of Health & Human Services to develop the two-year program based on a pilot program in Baltimore that was very successful. On February 7, 2012, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas to send a formal request to consider this allocation. By way of data, this is a major problem with about 70 deaths a year. This was about twice as many deaths as child abuse and neglect. According to one survey, about 40 percent of parents said they sometimes engage in these unsafe sleeping practices. Only about 23 percent, less than a quarter, said that they never engage in them. The allocation is a small amount and is highly leveraged.

Commissioner Au expressed support for the motion but asked if this motion would comply with the Commission's AB 99 policies in terms of awarding funds through a competitive process.

Interim CEO Steele said that a contractor was identified in the motion because it was already an approved program that had gone through a process at the County. This would be the AB 99 exception.

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**M/S (Antronette Yancey / Jane Boeckmann)
WITH NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION,
THE ITEM WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

17. Receive and File the Draft of the Revised Accountability and Learning Framework

Director Jimenez reported that the staff report outlined the framework in detail and the Commissioner briefings have allowed Commissioners to get a sense of what the Commission wants to do and how to go forward.

The word revised in the framework means that changes have been made. The reason for doing this is because the Commission has made some changes since the last strategic plan was adopted. A series of new projects have been introduced. A new series of investments have been introduced that the Commission needs to account for. There has been an opportunity to engage with experts from across the nation who come together and provide ideas and input on how evaluation work should be approached. This information has been incorporated into the revised accountability framework.

In an effort at being responsive to the Harvey M. Rose audit, the recommendations made are being incorporated into the framework.

Director Jimenez emphasized that four components of the framework are interconnected and all work together, feeding off of each other, and being responsive to each other. The framework has an increased emphasis on the utilization of existing data. Administrative data that has already been collected will be used. There is an enormous amount of information that exists within County departments and within other large institutions that will help the Commission answer some of the questions that need to be answered like, "Did the Commission's investments make changes in the way it wanted?" The Commission will continue to build upon those partnerships with agencies.

There are some areas where the Commission needs to invest to build better County-wide systems for data and also being able to look at things that do not exist today. One of the other things that is part of this framework and different from the framework the Commission has been operating under is the new set of tools to move forward with communicating results.

Director Jimenez commented that he received input from the Commissioners on mechanisms that can be used to describe the results—dashboards, reports. Efforts that can show the public and stakeholders that investing in early childhood development is an important thing to do. These are the things that will be stressed in this framework as well.

Ultimately, one of the challenges is that there is a significant variety of investments. One of the things to do is to organize thinking by clusters. The hope is that these clusters will allow the Commission to understand the relationships between the types of projects the Commission is investing. One of the important things of this framework is to be able to understand how well the Commission's projects can and

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should be working together. One of the challenges is to be able to understand how the clusters are interconnected or working amongst each other.

All of the tools that been built and all of the accountability systems that are in place, and all the ones that are being proposed, can only work and help the Commission be accountable if one thing is done—to define success prior to investing in a program. This is something the Commission has not done consistently. The Commission has found itself in a situation of providing for programs, going through the programs, coming back at the end of program, and finding out that the outcomes being presented may not have resonated with all of the Commissioners, the partners and grantees. The Commission then finds itself with the difficult decision of what to do moving forward.

One of the ways of preventing this is by being clear of what success means from the very beginning. This allows the Commission to focus, to know the respective roles of the partners when working with them, and it is much easier to communicate to the stakeholders and public about what First 5 LA is all about. In the past, there have been experiences in trying to describe what First 5 LA is. Oftentimes, the Commission find itself describing the activities. When success is defined, those are the things that are easier to communicate.

This is an important, critical step in the accountability framework moving forward. This is something the Commission must do and the staff is committed to work on. It will be a process. Defining success may be easy in some situations and it may take time in others as there will be discussion to reach consensus. This is something that must be done in order to move forward and be accountable for the dollars that are being invested in the community.

Director Jimenez encouraged further participation from Commissioners and the public. He mentioned the framework would be presented for further discussion at the Program & Planning Committee on February 16.

At the Program & Planning Committee, draft policies will also be presented. In order for the Commission to get used to the practice of defining success—what does it mean, how to include it in the Commission's work, how to include it in the motions, how to include in the contracts and grants awarded. Staff will then return in March for formal approval.

Commissioner Yancey applauded staff's work in trying to bring structure. She echoed that bodies such as the Commission that make policy changes and enforce them have sweeping change in society.

Vice Chair Fielding said that it was critical to have partnerships and to look at sustainability issues as the Commission's dollars decrease. The goal is for the Commission to receive a lot of money and that none of it be from tobacco tax. He also agreed with Commissioner Yancey in this being the right step to define success in meaningful ways to the stakeholders and others before funding a program. The Commission needs to be very clear on how funded programs fit with the Commission's priorities. Vice Chair Fielding applauded this effort.

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Commissioner Au commented that by moving forward in adopting this new framework, it will help to substantiate the Commission's understanding of the Theory of Change or maybe even debunk it and look at other theories that are much more applicable.

WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION, THIS ITEM WAS RECEIVED AND FILED

18. Receive and File the Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Kindergarten Readiness Committee

Director Iida reported the staff report was the Ad Hoc Kindergarten Readiness Committee's proposal related to First 5 LA's three new investments to help prepare young children for kindergarten. As a way of background, the Ad Hoc Kindergarten Readiness Committee was established at the June 23 Program & Planning Committee meeting following the Commission's discussion to continue funding the School Readiness Initiative. The Commission expressed interest to establish a First 5 LA kindergarten readiness investment that incorporated standardized programmatic components and that would allow for a robust evaluation. Commissioner Dennis, Harding and former Commissioner Stockwell were appointed as the Committee members.

The proposal in the packet on pages 259 through 270 includes the Ad Hoc Committee's accomplishments from August of last year to date. Two updates were presented to the Program & Planning Committee at the September 5, 2011 and the January 19, 2012 meetings. At last month's Program & Planning Committee meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee presented an overview of three investment recommendations, the prioritized outcomes, key factors and rationale that were considered in deriving at each of the investments' recommendations, and additional planning activities to further develop each investment plan. In addition, the Program & Planning Committee asked that the proposal and presentation include the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation and rationale to continue funding the Family Literacy, Family, Friends & Neighbors, and School Readiness initiatives in light of the new investments under consideration.

Staff made a presentation highlighting key points of the Ad Hoc Committee's proposed recommendations regarding First 5 LA's kindergarten readiness investments as instructed by the Program & Planning Committee with the intent of incorporating Commissioner feedback and returning with an action item at a later Commission meeting, if the Commission so chose.

Interim CEO Steele reported that as the staff report indicated, staff is seeking direction on how to proceed. There is no budget allocation currently either for the extension piece being proposed or for the new part that remains to be developed. Given this fact and the other work that is being done, Interim CEO Steele suggested these two pieces of the proposal be brought back, if it is the Commission's pleasure to consider it further, in the context of the budget discussion. Interim CEO Steele felt it was important for Commissioners to look at these proposed investments in context so that Commissioners can see all of the investments in early childhood

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education and other areas. Seeing investments in the context of a complete budget will allow the Commission to prioritize the staff work that would need to be done.

Interim CEO Steele suggested that if the Commission wished for staff to continue working on the item that it be brought back to the Commission in the context of the full budget discussion so that everything is looked at together.

Chair Yaroslavsky restated the two issues: (1) does the Commission want to look at this proposal further; and (2) if so, does the Commission wish to do it in the context of the budget.

Chair Yaroslavsky recommended that the Commission accept Interim CEO Steele's recommendation to do it in context with the budget.

Commissioner Dennis asked if the budget discussion would take place in March. Interim CEO Steele responded that it would not.

Commissioner Dennis stated that many of these grantees will have to start making decisions because all of the impacted programs will sunset as of June 30. If the Commission cannot have this discussion in March, the same situation that took place last year would occur.

Commissioner Dennis stated the Commission really needed to decide sooner as opposed to later on the extension piece and then have the discussion and the debate around the program development piece.

Vice Chair Fielding stated he strongly disagreed. He said the Commission has kicked this can down the road for a lot of years and does not seem to be ready to make any decisions about sunseting any programs. Vice Chair Fielding said it was about time the Commission does this as it keeps saying that it does not want to supplant programs. When the State stops funding, the Commission continues funding for a very heterogeneous program and a program that is not the most cost-effective. He said he was not prepared to continue to extend funding unless there was a very strong likelihood, in a few places, that these programs would be picked up under Best Start Communities. If these programs are strong enough and have a good cost-effectiveness ratio in terms of reach and value, they can be offered as part of a menu of services in the Best Start Communities.

Vice Chair Fielding apologized for being blunt but the Commission has been over this issue three or four times.

Commissioner Au asked if there were any unspent dollars where providers may potentially have unspent dollars in place on June 30 that would allow them to continue on their current contract and buy the Commission more time. Director Hause said that she did not think so because those contracts were extremely tight. She said this was not a realistic option.

Commissioner Yancey stated that she really agreed with Vice Chair Fielding. She said that however cost-effectiveness is defined, the small scale evaluation data available at this point, given how long this investment has been going, are not

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adequate to justify it. At some point, the Commission needs to grapple with this. The Commission cannot always deal with issue politically and need to grapple with the science of it.

Commissioner Dennis suggested that if the Commission is at this point, the Commission should vote on this or make it public next month. These programs will sunset in June. If this is the direction the Commission is taking, it needed to be clear because, most importantly, the community needed to understand that they needed to close shop in the family literacy and school readiness programs. The sooner these grantees are made aware, the better. He felt the Commission needed to be a lot more definite and directional whereas the Commission has not been like this in the past as has entertained grantees coming before the Commission and moving this out. To that effect, the Commission asked the Ad Hoc Committee to go back and develop a program that dealt with some of the best practices of many of those projects. That was the charge of the Commission to the Ad Hoc Committee. This is why the work was done. The Commission is now making a change because at the time, the Commission wanted a different program but now is not suggesting that it does not.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked what was the pleasure of the Commission regarding this issue—to delay discussion until the budget process or not pursue this issue.

Chair Yaroslavsky said that there will be some kind of indication in April, at the initial budget discussion, as to what direction the Commission is taking. A signal can certainly be sent in April as to where the Commission is headed on the continuation of the program. Chair Yaroslavsky said that he did not believe that no one needed to layoff anyone in April for something that expires on June 30. If grantees cannot figure out a way to avoid this, then the Commission should not be funding them because there is something wrong. It was understandable if this happened in May but not in April.

Interim CEO Steele said that the Budget & Finance Committee would be meeting in April with a full discussion taking place in May.

Chair Yaroslavsky said that the Commission should have an indication as to what direction to take in May. The other option is to kill the program in April and not have worry about. He also said that grantees need to help the Commission make this work. As could be heard from the conversation, there was no consensus to continue the program at all.

Commissioner Martinez clarified that the programs are both very different. The School Readiness Initiative did not get continued by the State and the Commission was going to cut it off but there was pressure from the Supervisorial Offices. It was the consensus of the Commission that the Family Literacy Program was absolutely fantastic and wonderful. The School Readiness Initiative got cut off and there were always questionable results. The Family Literacy Program was a great program but it was expensive. The Commission knew this and the program did not have the reach the Commission wanted. The Commission was interested in continuing to do something with family literacy but also wanted to talk about creating an express or down-sized program that could be managed and funded with the most reach.

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Providers were very happy to work with the Commission on this. At some point, Commissioner Kaufman and staff approached her about combining both. At the time, Commissioner Martinez was not in favor of combining both programs because of the issue of supplanting with school readiness and the questionable results. Family Literacy was great but a different model needed to be created. She was convinced by Commissioner Kaufman and others that this was the most efficient way of handling this issue.

Commissioner Martinez said that now it was coming back and family literacy was being clumped in with a program that did not have the same stature from the Commission in terms of future funding. The Commission wanted to fund Family Literacy with the idea that they would scale down and would not lose any momentum because the Commission wants this program in the Best Start Communities. Family literacy was willing to do this.

Commissioner Au said that the other part of the conversation that led the decision to combine both programs was to address the goal area of kindergarten readiness because the Commission did not have a clear program other than LAUP to deal with that particular goal that was adopted in the strategic plan. The combining of these two programs was to address how best to move toward that goal and looking at what the Commission had in place. The Commission knew it would be looking at apples, oranges and bananas. That is why the move through the Ad Hoc Committee to look at what investment areas that Committee could dwindle it down to integrate all those programs.

Commissioner Martinez said that if needed, the two programs should be separated. The family literacy community has been working with the Commission to create a new dynamic and a new paradigm for doing this kind of work. The Commission would really be cutting their legs by telling them that after nine months of work and creating a new model, they will be defunded.

Commissioner Dennis said that the School Readiness Initiative communities have been working with the Commission as well. As a Commission, there is a total reversal. The Commission charged the Ad Hoc Committee to look at a program model that First 5 LA would take on, integrating family literacy and the school readiness initiative. In addition, the Program & Planning Committee asked the Ad Hoc Committee to look at license-exempt care. The Ad Hoc Committee has worked for the last five months on this and it was now before the whole Commission. If the will of the Commission was to reverse its position, the community should be notified with enough time so that they can shut down whether it is family literacy or school readiness initiative or license-exempt providers. Commissioners would not have been working on this issue had the Commission given this charge to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Vice Chair Fielding commented that the Program & Planning Committee asked the Ad Hoc Committee to do this work; it was not the Commission. Chair Fielding said that there was a difference between programs. There was nothing in the proposal that showed him there was a different model for family literacy. He said that loved family literacy programs but would vote against them because he does not think they are cost-effective. It is not a scalable program. Furthermore, he stated that it

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was worth reconsidering if family literacy programs would have similar effects with lower costs.

Vice Chair Fielding said the Commission would consider programs in the Best Start Communities but does not see any link to the Best Start Communities in the recommendations other than kicking the can down the road.

Interim CEO Steele said that he did not intend, in any way, to drive the policy decision one way or the other. He had no dog in the fight. However, there are three important questions that have to get answered in this discussion and they have to get answered in context.

If the Commission wants to continue to fund these programs for another year, Interim CEO Steele believed they have to continue them in context by allocating money out of the Commission's budget that has not been done. The Commission should also know that if somebody is administrating these programs for another year, they will not be administrating something else or someone will need to be hired to administer these programs.

If the Commission wants some to create a new model going into the next year, this was a fine and appropriate decision for the Commission to make; but in context, somebody who is doing something else will have to find a way to get the new model designed or the Commission will have to hire somebody to do it.

The Commission will have in June community plans for the Best Start Communities. Some of them are going to say, in Interim CEO Steele's assumption, that they want to have these services continued, some will want to have different kinds of models; there will be all kinds of different proposals in these areas. If the Commission decides to fund programs for another year before seeing those community plans, there may be overlap or gaps. In his view, this was not a good way to make a decision, recognizing the impact that it may have on grantees because the decision this large has to be made in context with the rest of the things the Commission is trying to get done.

Chair Yaroslavsky asked if these programs were year-long. Staff responded that it varied between school year and year-long.

Chair Yaroslavsky suggested that for those grantees that incur expenses in July, the Commission would agree to reimburse expenses through July 15 or July 30, as appropriate if the Commission decides to extend funding. If the Commission decides not to extend funding to one or more programs, then the Commission would only be liable for the period beyond June 30.

Vice Chair Fielding said that if there was an alternative model that factored into the Commission's thinking, the Commission should be made aware. There was no evidence of this in the materials presented.

Commissioner Au said that she did not have clear picture of what the School Readiness Initiative programs look like without the State funding because they

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operated with just First 5 LA dollars and must have had some major adjustments. She asked for this to be also presented.

Chair Yaroslavsky said that regardless of the direction the Commission wishes to take, there is no interim layoff or personnel requirement on the part of the agencies. There will be a seamless transition one way or the other.

Chair Yaroslavsky stated that between now and April, more information should be provided for the Commission to make a decision. He also asked how much money was being spent on family literacy. Staff responded that \$2.3 million was being spent in total for the past year. He then asked how funding was distributed and how many families were served. Staff responded that funding was distributed through schools and agencies. The number of families served range from 600 to 900 families.

Chair Yaroslavsky said that he would like to get the history of this issue prior to the April discussion.

Vice Chair Fielding asked how many sites were in Best Start Communities and its associated cost. He also asked if staff felt these models were sufficiently robust, cost-effective and should be part of the menu of services for Best Start Communities to adopt. If there was a third different model, what was that model. He asked if there were any other criteria that staff would want to have such as funding in partnership rather than the Commission being the sole funder.

Commissioner Dennis also suggested looking at those programs that are in the non-Best Start Communities as well because the Best Start Communities have a certain degree of services that the non-Best Start Communities perhaps should have. In addition, areas in the non-hot LAUP zones should be looked at as well because then there would be kindergarten readiness in those communities.

Chair Yaroslavsky commented that non-Best Start Communities, such as Van Nuys, do not have the infrastructure that would be required to provide family literacy or anything else. This is one of the problems with the way Best Start Communities and place-based efforts have happened. There is no question that the Best Start Communities are challenged but there are a lot other individuals, communities and sub-communities that are also challenged and are thrown under the bus. This is something that needs to be re-visited. There needs to be a whole discussion of the scale of the Best Start Communities and whether it is even realistic.

Commissioner Au commented that part of the requirement of the Best Start Communities is that they are to address how they are going to achieve better outcomes in the area of school readiness because that is one of the Commission's three goal areas. The other piece to this is that based on a parent forum, sponsored and paid for by First 5 LA, parents were engaged in terms of what were their priorities. The number one priority for all of the parents was academic achievement of their children. This is a priority for not only Best Start Communities but for most families across the County. However, there is a challenge with the sustainability piece. Wanting to recognize and acknowledge Vice Chair Fielding's concern as well, the Commission needs to perhaps use this opportunity to re-think school readiness

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or academic readiness. It may not be School Readiness Initiative programs, it may not be family literacy programs. It may be something else; but the Commission needs to address that particular goal area which is school readiness; and the Commission needs to do it in a different way. There is a County-wide structure that needs to be in place; and, in looking at the partnership piece, many of the family literacy programs are in partnerships with LACOE. LACOE is a County-wide entity and the Commission may want to engage in a different level of conversation with LACOE when talking about a County-wide infrastructure and system that would support family literacy for all children, not only in the Best Start Communities.

Chair Yaroslavsky stated that this discussion would be continued to the April Commission Meeting. Prior to April, work would be done on the transitional issues to avoid any unintended consequences while the Commission makes a decision.

WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION OR OBJECTION, THIS ITEM WAS CONTINUED TO THE APRIL COMMISSION MEETING

Public Comment:

Roberta Lanterman, Long Beach Unified School District
Ivette Pineda, North Valley Caring Services

13. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Maria Peacock, LACOE

ADJOURNMENT:

With the conclusion of the agenda, Chair Yaroslavsky adjourned the meeting.

The Commission adjourned at 4:28 pm.

NEXT MEETING:

The next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be on:

March 8, 2012 at 1:30 pm
First 5 LA
Multi-Purpose Room
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Meeting minutes were recorded by Maria Romero, Secretary to the Board of Commissioners.