CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

1. Chair Burke called the meeting to order at 1:49 pm.

In honor of Patriot's Day, the Commission observed a moment of silence.

CONSENT CALENDAR: (Items 2 – 3)


   M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Carolyn Wilder) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

3. Approval of Monthly Financials – June, 2008

   Director Bellanca commented that financial statements reflected an adjustment to the LAUP allocation to reflect the accurate accounting of cash advances. The financial statements also reflect the Commission being solvent and within budget.

   M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Corina Villaraigosa) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
COMMISSION: (Items 4 – 10)

4. Announcements by the Commission Chair

RECEIVED

In addition to the announcements made by the Chair, the following announcements were publicly noted:

- John Hill, Chief of Staff, was introduced to the Commission. He will be attending future meetings of the Commission, replacing Miriam Long who has accepted the position of Deputy Mayor of Education.

- Commissioner McCroskey announced that the Joint Planning Committee will not be meeting in September.

- Commissioner Kaufman announced that the Baby Futures Summit was going to be taking place at The California Endowment on Friday, September 12th. The summit is expected to be well attended by child advocates as well as representatives from the private and public sectors. First 5 LA is a major sponsor of the summit.

- Due to the Yom Kippur holiday, the Board of Commissioners meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 9th was rescheduled to Thursday, October 16th. The meeting will be from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm in the Multi-Purpose Room.

- As a result of the rescheduling of the Board of Commissioners meeting, the Joint Planning Committee will also meet on October 16th from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

5. Executive Director’s Report

RECEIVED AND FILED

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

- **Strategic Planning Process:** In response to the Commission's question about process, the Commissioner Liaison Group will be meeting with key Planning & Development and Research & Evaluation staff, along with the consultant team, every 4-6 weeks during Phase II. These Commissioners would support staff presentations to the larger Commission and/or the public as these elements evolve. These meetings will use the same format as the Joint Planning Committee where all Commissioners can attend, without violating the Brown Act, and the public is able to provide feedback. The first meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2008.

- **State Budget Update:** There is still no approved State budget. Nonetheless, it is heartening to note that, despite earlier efforts by Republicans to borrow from First 5 County Commissions, there has apparently been little or no mention of doing so in recent discussions involving the Big Five. None of the failed budget proposals mention diverting First 5 funding to assist the State deficit.

- The Governor and Democratic legislative leaders have been adamant about not borrowing from First 5 County Commissions. Assembly Speaker Karen Bass has
expressed an especially strong commitment to keeping First 5 County Commission funds local. Commissioner Williams and Commissioner Villaraigosa helped in outreach efforts to Speaker Bass’ Office.

- **Media Coverage:** *La Opinión* ran an editorial strongly opposing a diversion of First 5 County funds to fill the State budget gap. The editorial ran shortly after the Editorial Board editor met with Executive Director Martinez and other senior managers to discuss the budget situation. A strong case for keeping First 5 funds local was made and they were obviously receptive to the points presented.

The *Sacramento Bee’s* daily blog carried a report on the letter by State-wide Latino First 5 Commissioners to the Legislature’s Latino Caucus. The report hit the day after the letter, urging First 5 funding to remain intact was delivered to the office of all Latino legislators. Commissioner Villaraigosa and Commissioner Stockwell were among the 43 Commissioners who signed the letter.

- **Emergency Loan to Grantees:** Given the State’s budgetary crisis, local agencies are being impacted. Commission Williams inquired about the possibility of First 5 LA designating an emergency loan fund to provide assistance to local grantees in order to avoid the elimination of services. Legal Counsel Steele was asked if staff could be directed to explore the possibility of providing fund advances to grantees that are being impacted by the State budget crisis.

Legal Counsel Steele commented that the Commission had two options since this item was not on the agenda for formal action:

1. Add the item to the agenda and direct staff to move forward with the development and implementation of a program.
2. Direct staff to develop a proposal with two scenarios, loans vs. cash advances, and present it to the full Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting in October.

Given the critical need of the issue, Commissioner Kaufman proposed that this issue be added to the Commission agenda as an action item so that a discussion could take place on the potential relief of grantees experiencing cash shortages due to the State budget crisis. Commissioner Fielding was supportive of Commissioner Kaufman’s proposal and voiced a second to the motion.

**M/S (Neal Kaufman / Jonathan Fielding) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED**

Commissioner Fielding then proposed that be staff directed to assess the financial situation of current First 5 LA grantees and to consider possible advances in payments to help prevent closure or suspension of services. The Operations Committee was given delegated authority to work with staff in developing criteria and a process for the provision of cash advances to current grantees. Staff would also report back at the October meeting what other First 5 County Commissions are doing to assist grantees and regional centers impacted by the State budget crisis.

**M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Neal Kaufman) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED**
6. Approval of up to $1,011,000 for Investments as Noted Below

1. Up to 20 Individual Family Place Libraries.
2. The Conversion of the Carson Family Place Library Into a Training Center for Other Libraries.
3. The Development of a Strategic Partnership with the County of Los Angeles Public Library.

Director Nuno reported that Family Place Libraries (FPL) is a national program intended to transform libraries into community hubs for healthy child and family development, parent and community involvement, and lifelong learning beginning at birth. Los Angeles County currently has 25 Family Place Libraries, one of which, the Carson library, was recently selected by the California State Library for use as a training center for all libraries in California.

Family Place Libraries (FPL) aligns closely with Best Start LA’s identification of place-based strategies as well as outcomes at both the family and organization-level (see attachment for additional information regarding the FPL program). Based upon conversations with the Best Start LA Commissioner Liaisons, staff mad the following three recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Based upon recommendations from the Best Start LA Commissioner Liaisons, staff is proposing that the Best Start LA demonstration communities drive the initial selection of libraries for Family Place implementation. Therefore, it is recommended that libraries existing within the five demonstration communities initially be targeted for Family Place implementation. It is estimated that on average two libraries within each of the five Best Start LA demonstration communities may be available to select as Family Place locations.

In addition to the ten libraries within the Best Start LA demonstration communities, staff is proposing selection of an additional ten libraries in non-demonstration communities to provide a comparison between communities with more and less intensive community networks. This would result, including demonstration and non-demonstration communities, in the funding of up to 20 libraries’ adoption of the Family Place model.

First 5 LA’s investment in individual libraries would encompass the sustainable core components of Family Place, including the training of library staff, enhancements of a family-welcoming space within the library, and expansion of the collection of books and materials related to early childhood, parenting, and child care. The libraries would be responsible for securing any additional staffing necessary for implementation. In addition to the start-up costs associated with Family Place implementation, First 5 LA would support annual costs associated with implementation for two years following the initial Family Place training for each library.

- **Recommendation 2:** While the California State Library will be funding the new materials for the training center in Carson, the source of their funding, the federal Library Services and Technology Act, restricts funding for physical enhancements necessary for the conversion of the Carson Family Place library into a training center for California libraries. It is therefore recommended that First 5 LA utilize this
opportunity for a sustainable one-time investment in the building enhancements needed to enable continued training and expanded implementation of the Family Place model in libraries throughout the County beyond libraries supported through First 5 LA’s potential investment. It is important to note that the center’s meeting space may be additionally utilized by First 5 LA and other family-focused organizations as a multi-use community resource.

**Recommendation 3:** As indicated previously, the County of Los Angeles Public Library has already shown success in Family Place implementation, and is currently the only library system within LA County invested in the model. Their investment not only includes the 25 existing FPL sites, but also the employment of County-level staff specifically dedicated to oversee the implementation of the program. A partnership with the County Library would facilitate implementation of Family Place in locations throughout the County beyond the First 5 LA investment.

Because of the unique strategic position of the County Library and its reach across LA County, County libraries will be prioritized for selection among the 20 potential First 5 LA-funded Family Place locations. However, should any of the Best Start LA demonstration communities be selected in locations lacking a County library, partnerships with city or independent jurisdiction libraries will be established on a per library basis.

The existing assessments of Family Place as a model present promising results (see attachment for additional information on Family Place outcomes). However, little evaluation of the program exists that utilizes the rigorous methods that First 5 LA would prefer. Therefore, staff recommends an investment approach that recognizes the program as innovative and promising, and as a scalable model. The timing of the proposed investment presents several exciting opportunities in relation to the evaluation of Family Place. First, the County Library has recently upgraded its data collection and analysis system, allowing for ease of access to data regarding library use by age and subject of book borrowed. The County is additionally in the process of developing a library card specifically for use by preschool age children, and has indicated interest in First 5 LA’s evaluation to inform their own programming. Second, the California State Library has selected a highly qualified evaluator specifically for the Family Place program. The evaluator is an expert in both library evaluation and early childhood literacy.

Staff intends to utilize a partnership with both the County and State evaluation staff to assess Family Place outcomes related to families’ satisfaction and knowledge gains from the parent-child workshops, the level of coordination of community resources, the success of outreach conducted to underrepresented families, the improvements in the skills of library staff in relation to family engagement, and finally the increases in use of library space and materials by families with very young children.

It should be noted that personalized data will be difficult to attain and analyze due to the privacy restrictions within library systems, most likely limiting the ability of evaluation to attribute behavior change among parents to the Family Place model. However, it is anticipated that the evaluation results identified above will inform Best Start LA’s ongoing implementation, as well as future funding and FPL program improvement. Given the scalability of the FPL model, staff intends, based upon evaluation results, to return to the Commission following the five year implementation.
for the consideration of further funding for the expansion of the model to additional libraries within LA County.

It is proposed that funding be allocated for up to 20 libraries to be converted over the course of three years (in coordination with the timeline for demonstration community selection), with each library allocated two years of additional annual funding for replacement materials. The start up costs identified on the following page include fees for membership and training, travel costs (to be significantly reduced following the opening of the Carson training center in Fall 2009), early childhood and parenting materials, parent/child workshop equipment, enhancements for the children’s room in each library, story time kits, and printing costs. Annual costs include replacement materials, training for new staff (assuming a 25% turnover rate), and ongoing printing costs. The costs associated with building enhancements to the Carson training center are estimated at $156,000.

Chair Burke expressed her support for Family Placed Libraries. She also commented that these libraries would further encourage literacy among children and parents.

Commissioner Kaufman echoed Chair Burke’s comments and believed Family Placed Libraries was a noteworthy and the almost “perfect project” for the Commission to engage in because it was scalable and cost-effective.

Commissioner Fielding raised concern that given the lack of existing research on Family Place as a national program, how the Commission would ensure this was a good investment. Staff and County Library staff, Penny Markey responded that evaluation had not thus far been a part of library culture, but that all parties were excited to have this program evaluated rigorously, and that the state had already selected a very highly qualified evaluator specifically for Family Place. Commissioner Fielding expressed a further concern that given the reality of the state budget, was it realistic to expect the state would be able to make this investment in evaluation. Staff responded that the funding being used by the state was actually federal funding - the Library Services and Technology Act, which has been secured by the state.

M/S (Neal Kaufman / Nancy Au) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

7. Approval of the Addition of L.A. County Centralized Case Management’s Magnolia Place Geographic Area as the Boundary for the Pilot Demonstration Community

Director Nuno reported that the purpose of the pilot is to test integrated strategies at the community level. Testing these strategies will assist the Commission in promoting broader adoption of these strategies by communities at a County-wide level.

Following implementation of the pilot, there will be a brief period to apply a feedback loop to improve the implementation strategy in the second and third demonstration communities; and a somewhat longer period for the fourth and fifth demonstration communities.

Through demonstration and sustainability efforts, the Commission will continue to assess strategies for expanding Best Start LA. It is expected that strategies for scaling and sustaining the various components may differ based on existing resources and strengths within communities and related institutions, as well as policy solutions within
the commission and countywide. Giving context to the recommendation that staff is being made are two previous Board approvals.

In September 2007, the Commission approved the initial budget for the pilot demonstration community. At that time, the Commission also approved the utilization of criteria to partner with entities currently involved in any one of the three types of collaboratives represented within the Healthy Births Initiative. To this end, the Commission also approved a partnership with the LABBN to assist in the implementation of the Welcome, Baby! component of the Best Start LA Pilot. Activities related to Workforce Development and Sustainability were also approved.

In June 2008, the Commission approved the inclusion of the presence of the County's Centralized Case Management project as criteria for selecting the Best Start LA pilot community.

As background, the Centralized Case Management project is being implemented by Los Angeles County. The Service Integration Branch within the Los Angeles County CEO's office began key steps to implement this new approach of offering County services in the Spring, and included identification of three sites for testing the model.

Centralized Case Management will play a very important role in the success of our earliest implementation of BSLA. The BSLA approach is a universal, non-intensive, non-clinical approach, with outcomes that focus on areas common to families across the county. In order to enhance the Commission's opportunity to be successful with BSLA's three strategies, it is important for families to have a safety net when there are more sensitive issues that families would like to address, such as basic needs, maternal depression and domestic violence. Welcome, Baby! will benefit particularly from this safety net as the staff of Welcome, Baby! will have a series of one-on-one encounters with participating families.

The Centralized Case Management project is intended to address these objectives in order to increase the effectiveness of County departments to serve families by co-locating staff from across various County departments, including DPSS, DCFS and the Child Support Division. These co-located staff will create an Integrated Assessment Team. This team will serve families based on a single integrated intake system. This will reduce the amount of times families are asked for the same information and allow ease of navigation for families among the various systems they may desire and/or need to interact with. Further, special programs from within the Department of Public Health and the Department of Mental Health will also be present in this particular Centralized Case Management site.

Upon approval of the pilot project, an RFP and RFQ will be released to identify two community-level partners. One partner will work with us to implement the Welcome, Baby! within this geographic area and one partner will work with the Commission to implement the community-level strategies.

The approach of the demonstration communities is to transform the environments that have an impact on the development of young children: Prenatal, Primary Caregiver, Family, Early Care Environments, Early Development Environments, Neighborhood and Community. Key responsibilities for the Commission's partners in the demonstration communities will include the developing of a local governance and coalition structure needed to implement the identified strategies, the implementation of
CBAR process to facilitate joint decision-making at the community level around policy, community mobilizing and place-based activities and implementation of the identified issues and strategies.

M/S (Jonathan Fielding / Nancy Au) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

8. UPDATE: Highlights of the First Year of the First 5 LA Policy Agenda

Commissioners were provided with a description of key activities and progress related to policy goals as specified in the First 5 LA Policy Agenda approved by the Commission on September 20, 2007.

Outreach to existing and potential allies has been an important focus. An expanded Prenatal through Three Policy Roundtable has been convened twice in the past year, successfully creating a shared platform: The Community-Wide Prenatal through Three Policy Agenda. This agenda significantly informed the development of the First 5 LA Policy Agenda.

Staff is active on a variety of coalitions and policy networks to ensure that opportunities to forward First 5 LA’s goals are optimized. The policy agenda has been presented to numerous groups including the County’s Child Care Policy Roundtable, the Early Identification and Intervention Collaboration, the Alliance for Better Communities, Public Counsel, and First 5 LA grantees and funding applicants. In addition, a presentation was made at the 2008 First 5 California State-wide Conference to share lessons learned, thus far, in the policy arena with rest of the First 5 County Commissions.

9. UPDATE: Marketing and Communications Outreach Efforts During FY 2007-08

First 5 LA’s 2007–08 marketing and communication strategy was developed primarily to reach parents in our predetermined target market (Latino, African-American and Asian families earning less than $40,000 annually) and stakeholders in the 0–5 community with public education messages to ensure that children in L.A. County grow up to be healthy, safe and ready to learn. Efforts included outreach and communication activities such as conference/event funding and attendance, the enhancement of the weekly e-newsletter (The Monday Morning Report) as well as, Summer Safety and Early Literacy campaigns.

The challenges in executing the 2007–08 marketing and communications efforts included spreading messages to a diverse audience in an over-saturated media market; maintaining the integrity and consistency of messages across various efforts; planning and executing on a limited budget; and responding to changing political and economic conditions with messages that resonate with integrity and simplicity. The Commission looked at the opportunities within these set of challenges and were able to identify and implement creative strategies (PSAs, diverse collaboration, word of mouth); leverage resources and partnerships throughout campaigns; use cost-effective media outreach and earned media; and build relationships with both mainstream and ethnic media. Ultimately, these efforts lead to increased recognition and value of First 5 LA’s name among grantee and community partners as they conduct their own outreach efforts.
For FY 2008–09, the marketing and communications efforts performed on behalf of the Commission will continue in our primary objective of promoting the importance of early education, health care and safety issues for children 0–5. In doing so, we will continue to work with the Commission and with First 5 LA staff to promote the programs, initiatives and partnerships that the Commission has instituted, and will continue our efforts to inform and educate our target audience, the 0-5 stakeholder community and the general public about First 5 LA's mission and vision.

10. Public Comment

Cecilia Sandoval, The Sandoval Group

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission meeting adjourned to a Closed Session at 4:43 pm.

The next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be on:

   October 16, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.
   Multi-Purpose Room
   750 N. Alameda Street
   Los Angeles, CA  90012

Meeting minutes were recorded by Maria Romero.