COMMISSION MEETING – FEBRUARY 10, 2005 – PAGE 1

FIRST 5 LA
SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES
Commission Meeting
February 10, 2005

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Commissioners:
Nancy Au
Jane Boeckmann
Renatta Cooper
Jonathan Fielding (Alternate)
John Hatakeyama (Alternate)
Neal Kaufman
Gloria Molina (Chair)
Maria Veloz (Vice Chair)
Carolyn Wilder

Ex-Officio Commissioners:
Chuck Hurewitz
Jacquelyn McCroskey
Matt Rezvani
Deanne Tilton

STAFF PRESENT:
Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director
Victor Abalos, Director of Communications
Anthony Bellanca, Director of Finance
Casey Beyer, Director of Government Affairs
Lisa Brabo, Director of Grants Management
Armando Jimenez, Director of Research & Evaluation
Marilyn M. Morton, Director of Management Services
Teresa Nuno, Director of Planning & Development
Maria Romero, Executive Assistant

LEGAL COUNSEL:
Craig Steele, Attorney-at-Law

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

1. Vice Chair Maria Veloz called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR: (Items 2 – 3)

2. Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes – January 18, 2005
   M/S (Jonathan Fielding / John Hatakeyama) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

3. Approval of Monthly Financials
   M/S (Jonathan Fielding / John Hatakeyama) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

COMMISSION: (Items 4-16)

4. Election of Chair

Nominations for the position of Board Chair were opened. Commissioner Gloria Molina was nominated. There were no other nominations.

   M/S (Maria Veloz / Jonathan Fielding) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

Newly elected Commission Board Chair, Gloria Molina, thanked the Commissioners for her election and welcomed their support. Chair Molina commented that she looked forward to working with everyone.
5. Election of Vice Chair

Nominations for the position of Board Vice Chair were opened. Commissioner Maria Veloz was nominated. There were no other nominations.

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

Newly elected Board Vice Chair, Maria Veloz, thanked the Commissioners for her election and welcomed their support during her second term of office as Board Vice Chair.

6. Announcements by the Chair

**RECEIVED**

In addition to the announcements made by Chair Molina, the following announcements were also made.

- Commissioner Wilder commented that she conducted a site visit of the Hawthorne Family Literacy Center.
- Commissioner Cooper distributed information on the “The Outdoor Classroom Project," a project funded by a CDI Small Grant.

7. Executive Director’s Report

**RECEIVED AND FILED**

In addition to the written report, Executive Director Martinez commented on the following Commission-related issues.

- **All About the Kids Day** - First 5 LA will be one of eight Southern California County Commissions attending the “All About the Kids Day” on February 16, 2005. The day-long event will include meetings with key legislative offices for the various counties, a luncheon with the State Finance Director, and an evening reception.
- **Health Access for All Children Project** - The State Commission approved our proposal for the Health Access for All in the amount of $12.5 million over the next four years.

8. Approval of First 5 LA Connect Funding Recommendation

Director Lisa Brabo provided background on information First 5 LA Connect. The conclusion of the initial three-year project is providing the Commission with the opportunity to re-evaluate the need and objectives for this service, particularly in light of the recently adopted Next Five strategic plan.

Due to its multiple components, First 5 LA Connect was phased in over the term of the three-year contract. The selected contractor was successful in developing the infrastructure during the planning phase (April 1, 2002 - December 31, 2002). The infrastructure included the creation of an expansive database, the establishment of a state of the art call center, and the hiring and training of qualified staff among other key activities necessary to launch the service. The steadfast commitment of NexCare Collaborative and Commission staff on this project has lead to the attainment of a unique and prominent call center service for parents and caregivers in Los Angeles County.

The service has met the Commission’s expectations, especially in the health insurance enrollment capacity, which was not an original component of the service. Added service components such as this have necessitated additional budget expenditures.
The Next Five Strategic Plan outlines the priority goal areas of early learning, safe children and families, and health. Within each goal area specific initiatives, activities and objectives are detailed. The strategic plan also includes specific key programmatic strategies—capacity building, systems improvement, and sustainability that will strengthen and interconnect the three goal areas.

One of the first steps in implementing the plan is determining the integration of current First 5 LA initiatives into the Next Five strategic plan. To help make these decisions, staff developed an internal decision-making procedure, keeping closely in line with the objectives and strategies outlined in the Next Five strategic plan, to assess initiative integration into the priority goal areas. First 5 LA Connect is the first of the Commission’s investments to which this review process is being applied.

The assessment resulted in concluding that the activities of First 5 LA Connect address objectives in each of the priority goal areas identified in the Next Five strategic plan, however, the specific service objectives for First 5 LA Connect could be changed to more directly support the goal areas and activities adopted in the plan. In addition, First 5 LA Connect has the potential to be more integrated into existing community systems, which would increase its effectiveness. The activities of First 5 LA Connect also serve different levels of accountability, such as:

- For the children and families of Los Angeles County, one of the many strengths of First 5 LA Connect is their ability to serve as a resource and referral network for families and communities by connecting them to information about services provided in their area. By contributing to the information base of the community and developing and enhancing resource networks, First 5 LA Connect may be an important part in strengthening and supporting communities existing social capital.

- For the Commission, this timely information would better inform planning and development of First 5 LA’s future activities.

- For the systems of care of Los Angeles County, the information resources of First 5 LA Connect can link community resources and skills into a learning process through collaboration and strategic partnerships through First 5 LA’s expansive networks. Through this information sharing and leveraging, First 5 LA and other Los Angeles County agencies will have an increased ability to identify the needs and assets of their community. The activities of First 5 LA Connect activities will support the achievement of First 5 LA’s desired outcomes through information and referral services.

Service objectives for the proposed five-year contract period, specific to each goal area, were outlined in the First 5 LA Connect 5-Year Scope of Work that was provided to the Commissioners. Call volume is set at 250 daily callers (inbound calls) and 300 daily follow-up calls, with the hours of operation 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days per week. The types of services to be provided include telephone information, referrals and assistance; website information and referrals; and family resource advisory services. The target population is identified as expectant parents and parents of children up to age five throughout Los Angeles County. “Throughout Los Angeles County” is defined as being proportionate to the First 5 LA target population, and specific language requirements are identified. Additional topics addressed in the scope of work include staff training, advisory board/committee, referral database, data analysis/final report writing and consultation.

The marketing activities for First 5 LA Connect will be overseen by the First 5 LA Communications Department. The goals are to generate call volume, inform and educate the public and First 5 LA stakeholders about First 5 LA services and programs, and strengthen First 5 LA brand identity.

Commissioner Hurewitz commented on the positive impact that First 5 LA Connect has had on the community through increased enrollments in Healthy Kids, education of new parents, and referral services.
Commissioner Au commented that she had no personal history of this project except for anecdotal comments. However, Commissioner Au stated that based on her fiscal conservatism, she wanted to know what was the desired legacy of the Commission as it pertained to this project and what the Commission is getting as a fair return on its investment.

Commissioner Fielding expressed strong concerns about the utilization of resources. He further inquired about the role of CareNex LLC and asked what the staff recommendation was in regards to the funding of First 5 LA Connect.

Chair Molina asked that if First 5 LA has created a model of community services, then why was the County not making an investment in this model? Further, Chair Molina commented that it was troubling for the Commission to make a five-year investment totaling $17 million when the County had already made a similar investment in the 211 Info-Line Service.

Chair Molina commented that perhaps the County could be asked to incorporate the First 5 LA Connect services into the 211 Info-Line.

Executive Director Martinez stated that other County Commissions (Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Sacramento) are implementing the 211 Line effective July 1, 2005.

Commissioner Veloz commented that she was pleased with the use of services being provided by First 5 LA Connect and wanted to see a plan of action for the First 5 LA Connect equipment, if such services were to be incorporated into the 211 Info-Line. Commissioner Veloz expressed concern about a possible lapse in services.

Commissioner Boeckmann commented that a lot of money has been invested in this project by the Commission and would like further options for consideration.

Commissioner Fielding requested to have clearly defined performance standards of First 5 LA Connect. He expressed concern about spending a lot of money for low volume of calls with constant marketing.

It was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners that staff re-assess the services provided by First 5 LA Connect and bring more options for consideration. The following questions are to be specifically addressed at the March Commission meeting.

1. What is the feasibility of creating a hybrid between the County’s 211 Info-Line and First 5 LA Connect?
2. Is the County willing to underwrite the effort of First 5 LA Connect?
3. What performance standards of First 5 LA Connect will be outlined in the proposed contract?

9. Approval of the Prenatal through Three Focus Area Development Plan and Implementation Activities

The integration of the Prenatal through Three Focus Area into First 5 LA efforts is a result of a nine-month information gathering process which included several special planning meetings and Board discussions. During this planning process, staff conducted research and obtained extensive feedback from Commissioners, the public, key informants, and an expert panel. All of the information staff collected led to the creation of the Prenatal through Three Conceptual Framework and concept paper. Based on the information gathered, the Prenatal through Three Focus Area activities were organized into four components: (1) direct services; (2) data and evaluation; (3) policy; and (4) community capacity building.
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1. **Direct Services:**

A review of the information gathered led staff to identify comprehensive screening, assessment, and follow-up for children and families as the direct service component. Comprehensive family screenings, assessments and follow-up services are critical to address the needs expressed by parents.

Screening and assessment make up the first aspect of this component. Based on what has been learned through our own initiatives as well as from similar programs across the state and nationally, families have expressed their interest in having these services available. In every one of these models, family participation is voluntary and in our discussions with different staff from model programs, they told us that a majority of families assessed utilize at least one of the services in the menu of options offered to them.

Linkage is the next key step in this component. All of the First 5 LA initiatives propose to link families to resources. Specifically related to the goals of this focus area are the Healthy Births Best Babies Collaboratives, the Partnerships for Families networks, Healthy Kids, as well as UPK, and First 5 LA Connect. However, there is no comprehensive assessment point to determine the resources and supports families countywide may want or expect. The Prenatal through Three Focus Area has the potential to build comprehensive screening, assessment, linkages and follow-up for children and families at preterm, birth and other developmental milestones into current First 5 LA initiatives at various locations such as community based setting or medical providers offices. Assessments can serve as a strategy by which families will be introduced to First 5 LA services as needed.

Follow-up is a crucial aspect within this component. Families will be offered a screening to establish if there is a need for a full assessment which determines the appropriate services and supports that are identified by both the family and the provider. Screening the child in the context of their families, acts as a preventive measure that draws attention to those factors that put the child at a future risk for health problems and/or challenges to reaching developmental milestones. Families would then be offered voluntary follow-up services in accordance with the individual circumstances of the family.

2. **Data and Evaluation:**

There is currently no central source for comprehensive data on the complete developmental health of young children in LA County. A data collection system is fundamentally linked to the direct services component such that screenings and assessments of families cannot begin without the development of a uniform screening tool and process by which families' information is collected and aggregated. This aggregated data will be used to improve and increase services. By developing this "registry" for young children's developmental data the Commission would be building the infrastructure for long-term improvements in policy, service delivery, sustainability and evaluation. Specifically, we will be developing an information collection system that is substantial and reliable enough to inform community capacity building, and yet does not threaten the protection of the family's privacy.

3. **Policy:**

The role of policy and advocacy within this focus area as it relates to sustainability, and the opportunity to impact this population on a universal level is a priority. Therefore, under this policy component First 5 LA will advocate for best practices and the
improvement of resource gaps related to infants and toddlers within the parameters of prop. 10 legislation.

Through this component the Commission will enhance its convening and facilitating functions to support countywide existing community coalitions and establish new ones, as necessary, to increase investment in these areas by other funders, both governmental and private sector.

4. **Community Capacity Building:**

Community Capacity Building is the cornerstone because it allows the commission the opportunity to build on families’ abilities to create resources and supports that are appropriate to their communities. This will be critical in the screening and assessment services that are being planned.

Any type of universal assessment program, even while circumscribed to certain target areas, will identify resource gaps. Organizations conducting assessments will not always be able to link families with all services they need, due to an inadequate level of services. So one function of capacity building is to help neighborhoods and communities identify gaps in resources and services and build on their unique strengths to fill those service gaps.

**M/S (Maria Veloz / Jonathan Fielding) APRROVED AS RECOMMENDED**

10. Approval of the Partnership for Families (PFF) Initiative Implementation Plan

Director Nuno introduced Mary Emmons, Lead PFF Consultant who provided background information on the Partnership For Families Initiative (PFF) and the an update on PFF activities over the last nine months.

In 2003, First 5 LA approved a five-year initiative to prevent child abuse and neglect. This initiative, called Partnerships for Families (PFF), would address the Commission’s longstanding commitment to the County’s youngest children by strengthening families, as well as the communities in which they live. PFF represents an historic effort to transform the way that families, communities, and government agencies participate in increasing child safety. The main goals of PFF are to: create a web of accessible services and supports for families; improve the capacity of communities to support families; and engage in county-wide systems reform to prevent child maltreatment.

- **Target Population.** PFF is a secondary prevention initiative developed to support families recognized as being at risk for child maltreatment. As such, the primary target population for PFF is families with children through five years of age that have an inconclusive child maltreatment referral with the Department of Children and Family Services. PFF will also serve families with other risk factors associated with child maltreatment, such as substance abuse or domestic violence. By targeting this population, we anticipate that PFF will ultimately improve safety and permanency outcomes for children and families who might otherwise be at risk for entering the child welfare system.

- **Community Networks.** Communities will play a central role in developing solutions for protecting and nurturing children based on their unique strengths, opportunities, needs, and existing assets. First 5 LA will foster the development of 15 community networks county-wide that consist of informal and formal child maltreatment prevention services and support. To facilitate service coordination and community building, PFF will be implemented at a local community level.

- **Dual Competency Coordination.** PFF provides an unprecedented opportunity to unite the fields of community building and child welfare – two sectors that have historically approached the
needs of families and communities from very different perspectives. Community networks will be
organized by Co-Leads, one community-building organization and one family and children’s
service organization. Selected through a competitive funding process, Co-Leads will coordinate
activities based on the guidance and direction of its Network members and its Community
Network Board.

- **Community Network Core Components.** Each network will be required to include a set of Core
Components that they will build upon to respond to locally identified needs and opportunities. The Core Components are:
  
  - **Network Structure**
    - **Community Network Board:** The Community Network Board is the leadership body that is
designed to ensure authentic representation of the community in a shared decision-making process that guides
the network structure and activities. Each network will include representation of parents, community resident leaders,
community development agencies, social service agencies, local businesses, faith-based organizations, and
others.
    - **County-wide Network Roundtable:** The PFF Coordinating Team will host a Network
Roundtable comprised of representatives from each community network to facilitate
information sharing and education among networks across the County.
    - **Neighborhood Family Centers:** Each network will support one or more culturally
sensitive, family-friendly locations that serves the functions of engaging community
residents, providing information and education, and coordinating family activities.
  
  - **Community Building**
    - **Resident and Community Engagement:** Networks will develop activities to recruit
community organizations, businesses, and community residents to participate in network
activities.
    - **Leadership Development and Advocacy Training:** Networks will develop leadership
training programs that empower residents to act on their own behalf and advocate for
their communities.
    - **Community Education:** Networks will increase community knowledge and awareness of
child maltreatment by creating activities to promote community education and
awareness.
    - **Community Development:** Networks will coordinate activities that will begin to establish
the community resources to eventually strengthen the quality of life for residents.
    - **Natural Helping Networks:** Each network will develop a set of activities to support
families in enhancing their natural helping networks.
  
  - **Network Services**
    - **Coordinated Family Services Planning:** Networks will work to coordinate family services
within the network and also across networks.
    - **Family Screening, Assessment, and Individualized Family Plans:** Each network will be
responsible for screening all families entering the PFF network and, as is necessary for
families with indicators that are associated with child maltreatment, conducting family
assessments and developing Individualized Family Partnership Plans.
    - **Required Network Services:** Each network will be required to have the capacity to link
PFF families to the following services: domestic violence, substance abuse, mental
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health, parenting education, home-based services for the most vulnerable families, and early childhood services.

- **Linkages to Auxiliary Services and Supports:** Networks will also develop connections to auxiliary services and supports for families, such as perinatal support services, fathers’ programs, health care, and adult education.

  - **Network Management**
    - **Data Collection and Evaluation:** Networks will collaborate with the PFF Evaluation Team to gather data and support the evaluation of PFF.
    - **Accountability:** A comprehensive accountability structure will be implemented for PFF focusing on accountability for all levels of the initiative.

- **Coordination with Public Entities.** PFF requires extensive planning and collaboration with public entities, particularly the Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Mental Health, Department of Health, and the County’s Chief Administrative Office. These public agencies will serve an integral role in the sustainability, coordination, and implementation of PFF through the development of policies, leveraging of funds, referrals, and service provision.

The applications for the Community Planning Grants will be released in April 2005. Selected networks will be funded for the activities required during the six-month Assessment and Planning Phase, which will include identifying and mapping local assets, mobilizing network members, and developing a Community Plan to articulate the network’s plan for implementing the PFF Core Components. Pending First 5 LA approval of the Community Plan, funds will awarded to the networks to support the implementation of the Community Plan.

Changing the way that families, communities, and County agencies work together in the prevention of child maltreatment is no small feat. The PFF initiative endeavors to break down existing silos and build bridges among a broad array of stakeholders to ensure that children and families who are at direct risk for child maltreatment receive the supports and services they need. The guiding assumption is that child maltreatment prevention is the responsibility of everyone in the community. As such, collaboration and inclusion will be integral to the success of this initiative. Ultimately, it is our hope that PFF will establish a comprehensive and accessible system of preventative services and supports, keeping our County’s children safe for years to come. First 5 LA looks forward to launching this landmark effort, and to a meaningful partnership with families, communities, and the County departments charged with responding to the needs of families.

Chair Molina asked how the proposed PFF Implementation Plan differed from the County Family Preservation Program. In her opinion, there seems to be a duplication of services already being offered through the County.

Commissioner Veloz commented that she did not understand how a child who has been abused can be helped out by this initiative. Specifically, if the system has failed the child, how can parents be held accountable and compelled to participate in a voluntary program?

*It was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners to convene a public meeting prior to the March Commission meeting. The proposed planning grants would be placed on hold until clearer information on the implementation plan was further discussed.*

11. Approval of the Development and Early Implementation of a 10-Year Universal Preschool Accountability Plan for an Amount Not to Exceed $2.5 Million Over the Next 2 Years

M/S (Renatta Cooper / Jonathan Fielding) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
12. Approval of the 55 Recommended Applicants, as Outlined in the CDI Small Grants Funding Recommendation Report, for an Amount Not to Exceed $1,255,553 and Authorize Staff to Proceed with the Grant Agreement Negotiation Process

M/S (Renatta Cooper / Jonathan Fielding)  APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

13. Approval of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (FMM&A) as the Contracting Firm to Conduct a Public Attitudes and Opinions Survey for First 5 LA and Authorize the Executive Director to Negotiate a Contract for an Amount Not to Exceed $150,000

M/S (Maria Veloz / Renatta Cooper)  APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

14. Approval of First 5 LA Position on Proposed Senate Bill 34 and Assembly Bill 109 Legislation

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

15. Approval of Design and Tagline for First 5 LA Brand Reinforcement Project

M/S (Maria Veloz / Renatta Cooper)  APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

16. Public Comment

Angela Carter, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
Margaret Dunkle,
Victor Franco, Telemundo Channel 52
Roberta Gerarde, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)
Roy Jensen
Javier LaFianza, Crystal Stairs
Maribel Marin, Info Line of Los Angeles
Carolina Reyes, Center for Healthy Births
Cecilia Rojas, Crystal Stairs
Sandy Sladen, Tapper Associates
Gina Tapper, Tapper Associates
Trisha Zaglia, Five Acres

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for:

March 10, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.
Multi-Purpose Room
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA  90012

Meeting minutes recorded by Maria Romero.