COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

Ex-Officio Commissioners:
Jacquelyn McCroskey
Matt Rezvani
Deanne Tilton
Harriette Williams

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Commissioners:
Jane Boeckmann

STAFF PRESENT:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director
Victor Abalos, Director of Communications
Anthony Bellanca, Director of Finance
Lisa Brabo, Director of Grants Management
Armando Jimenez, Director of Research & Evaluation
Teresa Nuno, Director of Planning & Development
Maria Romero, Executive Assistant

LEGAL COUNSEL:
Craig Steele, Attorney-at-Law

STAFF PRESENTERS:

Marci Jo Aronovitz, Program Officer
Antoinette M. Andrews, Research Analyst
Angel Roberson, Program Officer
Gabriela Tovar, Program Officer

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

1. Chair Gloria Molina called the meeting to order at 1:46 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR: (Items 2 – 3)

2. Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2005

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

3. Approval of Monthly Financials

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

COMMISSION: (Items 4-13)

4. Announcements by the Chair

   RECEIVED

5. Executive Director’s Report

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

- **AB 109 (Chan)** – AB 109 passed out of the California State Assembly last week on a vote of 55 to 22. As passed, AB 109 contains amendments clarifying the type of information that must be reported by First 5 County Commissions to First 5 California as part of the annual report. First 5 LA and the Orange County Children and Families Commission contacted key legislators to enlist their support for the amended bill. The bill now moves to the Senate where it will be assigned to a policy committee in the coming weeks.

- **SB 35 (Florez)** – Similar to AB 109, SB 35 passed out of the California State Senate last week. Unlike AB 109, SB 35 has not yet been amended to include language clarifying reporting requirements by County Commissions to the State Commission. First 5 LA and the First 5 Association of California will work with Senator Dean Florez to amend SB 35 to mirror AB 109.

- **SB 34 (Florez)** – A third bill, SB 34, also dealing with increased oversight of First 5 County Commissions, was gutted completely and no longer is related to the First 5 County or State Commissions.

- **First 5 LA Connect Transition** – Meetings to discuss transition issues of First 5 LA Connect have been ongoing between staff from First 5 LA and NexCare Collaborative. More recently, First 5 LA staff scheduled a briefing meeting where Commissioners Nancy Au, Matt Rezvani and Jonathan Fielding participated in the discussion. Staff from 211 Info Line is currently being trained to ensure a smooth transition from First 5 LA Connect to 211 Info Line on July 1, 2005.

- **Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)** – The LAUP budget and business plan will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval at the July Commission meeting. The materials will be distributed to all Commissioners as soon as the documents are received by First 5 LA.


Director Anthony Bellanca reported that First 5 LA has adopted a new methodology in developing the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2005-2006. The approach taken by the Finance Department was one that included the direct participation of all department Directors. The Directors, along with their assigned staff accountant from the Finance Department, were responsible for developing and justifying all costs. The method is a “base line” approach with every line item having a written justification and support including justifying all current and To Be Hired (TBH) staff members. Once all departments completed this task, it was then reviewed by the Director of Finance and the Executive Director.

In reviewing the budget, Director Bellanca commented that new line items for the 2005-2006 budget include expenses to the building as First 5 LA is owner.

Commissioner Jonathan Fielding expressed concern over the presentation of the budget. He commented that there was no functional breakdown of expenses such as general public relations, communications, research and evaluation.

Executive Director Martinez stated that detailed budget spreadsheets, by department, would be transmitted to them electronically for their review.
Executive Director Martinez announced that as of July 1st, the Communications Department will no longer exist. In its place, the Department of Public Affairs will be created. There has been downsizing within the organization but the level of productivity continues to be the same.

M/S (Maria Veloz / Neal Kaufman) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

7. Approval of Child Development Media, Inc. as the Continued Distributor of the Kit for New Parents, with a Contract Not-to-Exceed $519,392 for Fiscal Year 2005-2006 and Authorize the Executive Director to Negotiate the Contract

Director Victor Abalos commented that during the last three years, Child Development Media, Inc. has expanded the number of Kit Providers to include more than 2,500 health, education, and social service agencies who in turn have distributed more than 500,000 Kits to young families in Los Angeles County. With 150,000 live births each year in Los Angeles County, distribution of the Kit to new and expectant parents is an ongoing need.

Child Development Media will continue to maximize the distribution of the Kit throughout Los Angeles to meet the Commission’s goal of providing all new parents with a Kit. In addition, Child Development Media, Inc. is proposing the expansion of Kit distribution strategies to work more directly within First 5 LA’s Communication’s Plan.

Commissioner Kaufman inquired about the $150,000 difference in budget from the previously approved contract. Director Abalos commented that such additional resources would be used for an evaluation component.

Commissioner Kaufman inquired about the value of the program (i.e., do the kits actually work)? Commissioner Kaufman further inquired about the benefits of the program, specifically if these kits have contributed to better parenting.

Director Jimenez commented that the kits that are being distributed by themselves may not yield as much benefit as those kits which are being distributed through comprehensive programs.

Commissioner Fielding made the suggestion of separating the evaluation component from the proposed budget and contract with an independent evaluator. Director Jimenez suggested contacting the State Commission to see if the sample from Los Angeles County was large enough to be representative of the impact that the kit is having on parents.

Commissioner Williams inquired about the diversity of the kit providers. For example, are the kits being distributed in hospitals, child care centers, and social workers? In terms of those families who are most in need and do not have VCRs to play the kit videos, is there an alternate way for providing the kit information to them.

Commissioner Au commented that with diminishing revenues, it may not be a wise decision to continue to fund the distribution of the kits. However, the Commission may want to invest in how we utilize these kits in a different way other than just direct distribution. Director Abalos commented that perhaps the Commission may want to develop its own kit.

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

8. Staff Recommends the Approval of a One-Year Contract Not-to-Exceed $1 Million for New Schools/Better Neighborhoods. The funds will consist of the balance of the 2004-2005 contract ($400,000) and an additional $600,000 allocation from the 2005-2006 budget. The new contract will include the completion of the existing scope of work to identify and facilitate the process to secure existing facilities located in high need areas to increase the number of child
Executive Director Martinez commented that the balance of the NSBN contract for 2004-2005 is approximately $400,000 and staff is recommending an additional $600,000 from the 2005-2006 fiscal year. The new contract would complete the existing scope of work from the 2004-2005 contract. First 5 LA would like to work with NSBN to identify and facilitate a process to secure exiting facilities located in high need areas to help the Commission increase the number of child care and preschool slots.

An internal assessment of NSBN’s alignment with the Next Five Strategic Plan shows significant value gained in building potentially long term relationships in a community building process where early learning projects are at the center. However, the recognition of a lack of critical data and the speculative cost benefits of this pilot project also indicate that the extent to which this partnership impacts the Commission’s priority goal areas cannot be fully determined at this time. The impact on the Commission’s goal areas cannot be determined until families and children access the services that result from facilities based on the Master Plans. Furthermore, the strength of these relationships and linkages across the sites also cannot be fully measured at this moment in time. Since this is a pilot planning project, the evaluation conducted was limited to the evaluator’s field observations and participants’ thoughts on the planning process. No services were delivered to children zero through five years old by the project and therefore, it was not possible to conduct outcome data. Taking the evaluation results into consideration, the assessment concluded that as a community planning project NSBN activities may not have an immediate impact but more of a distal effect on children and families.

There are many challenging aspects to this specific collaborative community building process which was aimed at piloting a mixed-use place making process toward the potential development of school facility construction while keeping an early childhood education component at the center. One challenge is the lengthy community-based master planning process which is time and resource intensive comprising only a small part of the successful development of multi-use facility development. The planning process allows for the potential of implementing multi-use sites to serve communities but does not ensure direct service delivery or access to services for at least three to seven years following the approval of the Master Plan. Although NSBN has engaged in up to nine (9) sites, after almost three years (as of May 2005) they have only facilitated approval and adoption by the respective school districts for three (3) of the seven to nine (7-9) sites that were specified in their scope of work. Another significant challenge for this process involves the overriding importance of the school districts’ political will which influences the willingness of communities to engage in the master planning process and their authority for the Master Plans. Finally, it is unclear whether the networks developed through the collaborative planning process are sustainable in the long run.

Based on the internal assessment, the evaluation, financial analysis, and overall implementation challenges, staff recommends that the Commission renew the strategic partnership with NSBN for an additional year. In addition, with NSBN’s lengthy master planning process and LAUP’s direct focus on facilities development regarding preschool spaces, staff recommends that the NSBN identify and facilitate the process to secure existing facilities located in high need areas to increase the number of child care and preschool slots.

Following Commission approval, staff will proceed with the appropriate integration of the evaluation results and findings including applying the lessons learned from NSBN’s place making strategies and collaborative community building activities to support the goal areas, objectives, and strategies outlined in the Next Five Strategic Plan.

Chair Molina commented that a pilot project should yield a model. She further commented that if the Commission should adopt this pilot project as being workable, then when such pilot project is
no longer operational it should leave a model in place that other school districts can use for future implementation of similar projects.

Commissioner Au requested that a more complete evaluation be done of all the partners and that some assurance is made that once the models are developed, that such models be implemented in the community. For the 6-month evaluation report, Commissioner Au expressed that she would like to require the inclusion of the existing community organizations to be partnered in the collaborative process, as well as working more closely with the Board of Supervisors so that they could facilitate in the building of better collaboratives to have more successes.

M/S (Maria Veloz / Gloria Molina) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

9. Approval of the Partnerships for Families (PFF) Implementation Plan

In August 2003, First 5 LA approved a conceptual framework for the Partnerships for Families (PFF) initiative, a secondary prevention initiative designed to increase the safety of children in Los Angeles County. The primary target population for the initiative was families with children five years of age or younger who had an inconclusive referral of child abuse and neglect with DCFS. Inconclusive cases are categorized as those referrals in which a family had been reported for an incident of child abuse and/or neglect, and upon investigation, there was insufficient evidence to verify that the alleged incident occurred.

In January 2004, First 5 LA contracted with Children’s Institute International and its collaborative partners, Community Development Technologies Center, and the Child Welfare League of America as the Partnerships for Families Coordinator to develop the planning and implementation plan. Following a year of planning, Children’s Institute International presented the PFF implementation plan to the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners for approval on February 10, 2005; however, the Commissioners delayed approval of the implementation plan submitted by the coordinating team due to new child abuse prevention initiatives in development throughout the County. This delay provided time for First 5 LA to assess possible collaborative opportunities with other entities and restructuring of PFF to prevent duplicating efforts and to maximize resources.

To explore possible collaborative opportunities, First 5 LA convened two special Workgroup Meetings on March 3, 2005 and April 20, 2005 to discuss four implementation-related policy decisions that would impact the Commission’s goal of moving forward with the initiative: 1) PFF target population, 2) initiative scope, 3) balance between direct services and community building, and 4) collaboration with other child maltreatment efforts and County government. Each of the policy decisions discussed in the March and April Workgroup meetings proved to be important determinants in making the most significant revisions to components of the initiative’s implementation framework and First 5 LA and staff is now prepared to move forward with implementation of the PFF initiative.

As suggested by several Commissioners, in implementing Partnerships for Families, we will partner with the Department of Children and Family Services to jointly provide a range of prevention services to children birth through eighteen years of age. Through this partnership, First 5 LA (for children birth through five years of age) and DCFS (for families with children older than five) will provide funding to the same set of geographic regions within each SPA to expand the range of prevention and early intervention services available for high risk families. The joint efforts will be located in communities surrounding eight (8) of the seventeen (17) regional DCFS offices.

Though the plan recommends a partnership with DCFS, it also highlights our unique contribution to child maltreatment prevention efforts. The remainder of this presentation will
focus specifically on what PFF will do to improve outcomes for children and families. We will discuss the target population, initiative components, program model, referral process, funding plan and timeline.

The target population has been modified slightly since the initiative was originally approved. The initiative now focuses solely on two distinct target populations:

- High Risk Pregnant Women identified by law enforcement, birthing hospital or domestic violence shelters.
- Families with children five years of age or younger that are considered to be at high risk for future abuse as identified by DCFS.

The initiative framework includes four components:

1. Quality Improvement
   - Refers to the Commission’s efforts to improve the quality of services available through training, technical assistance and other activities.

2. Evaluation, Research and Information
   - Refers to the evaluation and data work that we will be conducting to help us better understand the effectiveness of the initiative and why it does or does not work.

3. Policy and Advocacy
   - Refers to the development of new policies, leveraging and sustainability opportunities.

4. Community-based Prevention Services and Supports - These are the prevention services that we plan to fund for families:
   - Case management,
   - Concrete services for immediate needs such as food, emergency housing, medical and dental care,
   - Intensive services for special family needs such as substance abuse and mental health treatment,
   - Access to family support services such as early care and education, and
   - Referrals to other community supports such as housing assistance and job training.

Of the funds allocated to each program, approximately 80% will be used for direct services. The model will initially consist of six-months of services for families. However, throughout the first year of implementation, we will assess whether the length of services should be extended to better meet the needs of families. Fifteen percent (15%) of agency funds will be allocated to capacity building activities at the agency and community levels. At the agency level, strategies are related to improving the internal capacity of the organization through staff development and cross-training. At the community level, these strategies include finding ways to involve families in local decision making, developing effective outreach strategies to increase service utilization and the development of opportunities where parents, children, community residents and providers can positively interact. The remaining five percent (5%) of the funds will be used for activities that relate to performance monitoring and accountability so that programs can collect and learn to use client level data that will
help them and the Commission to assess what does and does not work and provide us information on how to modify the plan if needed.

The PFF lead agency will be responsible for providing and managing the delivery of services as well as working closely with the respective DCFS regional office, law enforcement agency, birthing hospital, and domestic violence shelters to coordinate referrals. To make sure that the DCFS referral process operates as smoothly as possible, we have been working very closely with Dr. Sanders and his staff. In addition, we will work individually with each lead agency to develop relationships and a referral process with the local law enforcement agencies, DV shelters and birthing hospitals in their surrounding areas. This is due in part to the number and diversity of law enforcement agencies, DV shelters and birthing hospitals in Los Angeles County.

In terms of governance, we have defined it in terms of contractual and fiduciary responsibility. Therefore, the formal governance structure is limited to First 5 LA, DCFS and our contracted partners. We understand that there are other stakeholders that will impact the successful implementation of this initiative; therefore, we plan to include these organizations or individuals on an Advisory Board to be developed in the future.

In terms of programmatic funding, we have limited the funding allocation to one year. We plan to allocate programmatic dollars to each agency in years 2-5 within the first year of implementation based on additional data regarding the target populations.

Commissioner Fielding commented that with respect to the target population of the PFF Implementation Plan, teen pregnancies should be included in the pregnant women target population because getting to women at the time of birth at the birthing hospital was good; but, not sufficient since outreach should be done earlier in the pregnancy.

Commissioner Tilton mentioned that the initiative would also include referrals from law enforcement agencies on high risk families. The referrals to PFF would be primarily from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) but if law enforcement agencies were called out to a case that was not serious enough for them to take action that such case could be referred to PFF.

M/S (Carolyn Wilder / Nancy Au) APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

10. Authorize Staff Not to Proceed with the C.A.R.E.S. Initiative Application to the State as Recommended at the Planning Committee Meeting

Director Teresa Nuno stated that staff presented an overview of the CARES Initiative and feasibility of participation in this round of State funding at the May 19, 2005 Planning Committee meeting. Commissioners in attendance agreed with the staff recommendation not to submit an application for funding. This decision was made based on the staff review and analysis, in collaboration with LAUP, of the extensive resources and limited leveraging opportunities needed to participate in the CARES Initiative as outlined below.

The challenges to participation include:

- The CARES Initiative does not permit a systemic approach to addressing workforce development.
- The programmatic requirements of the initiative do not offer enough flexibility to tailor workforce development strategies to meet the needs of our county. While the First 5 LA Early Learning Goal area and the UPK Master Plan share CARES goals, the programmatic strategies for implementation are somewhat different than those we would likely design independent of CARES participation.
Implementation of CARES will require the development of programmatic activities along five discrete tracks, each of which will need to be managed and monitored. The RFF was released May 3, 2005, with applications due June 30, 2005. Because the First 5 LA board made the decision not to continue participation in the CARES initiative, we do not have current programmatic activities and partnerships in this area upon which to build, making this timeline very intensive.

The State Commission has allocated up to $30 million for participating; 47 counties participated in the last round. Counties will receive a 1:4 match (i.e., if First 5 LA received 1/3 of the state’s allocation—$10 million—we would need to allocate $40 million to receive the match). It is very likely that the amount of money we leverage will not offset the operational and administrative costs of planning and implementing CARES.

Based on the staff presentation and subsequent Commissioners discussion at the Planning Committee meeting of May 19, 2005, it was agreed that the priority, at this time, is to focus staff resources on the launch of Universal Preschool and the determination of local efforts to address workforce development.

Chair Molina commented that she finds it troubling that the largest County in the State was not going to participate in this workforce development project of the State. However, after being briefed about the various components of the C.A.R.E.S. Initiative, she understood how complicated it will be to implement the five tracks.

Chair Molina suggested that a letter be drafted and sent to the State Commission explaining the reasons why First 5 LA has opted to not participate in the C.A.R.E.S. Initiative. Further, Chair Molina expressed her desire for the State Commission to include Los Angeles County, as the largest County in the State, in the development of such concepts.

Commissioner Renatta Cooper commented that the present configuration of the C.A.R.E.S. Initiative does not fit the needs of Los Angeles County in terms of workforce development.

Commissioner Carolyn Wilder expressed her commitment of working in collaboration with Los Angeles City College District, specifically West Los Angeles Community College, to develop a curriculum that would assist in workforce development potentially having classes on Saturdays and Sunday afternoon per the suggestion of Chair Molina to address the needs of the “Dona Cucas” who take care of children in the community.

Director Teresa Nuno asked for clarification on the directive being to staff on developing a concept paper. Director Nuno commented that it would be feasible for a concept paper to be developed in approximately one month.

Commissioner Matt Rezvani pledged his support for the undertaking of this project. He suggested that scholarships be made available to these students.

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

11. Approval of Al Osborne, Jr., Ph.D. to the LAUP Board of Directors

The LAUP Board of Directors has forwarded the name of Al Osborne, Jr., Ph.D. as a candidate to fill a vacancy on the LAUP Board of Directors. Dr. Osborne had been previously serving on the LAUP Board of Directors but resigned due to time constraints.

The Nominating Committee for the LAUP Board of Directors conducted a search for possible candidates to fill the Board vacancy. The Nominating Committee nominated Dr. Osborne, once again, and he has accepted this nomination.
12. UPDATE: Preschool For All

After several conversations with First 5 California staff and careful review of the PFA Request for Applications, the Commission determined that they would like an opportunity to obtain further clarification around some key issues affecting our decision to participate in the PFA demonstration projects. Specifically, Commissioners are interested in better understanding the implications of: 1) the evaluation framework and data collection requirements; and 2) the requirement to use the Desired Results System, in particular the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP).

The questions of interest to the Commission on PFA reflect the strong and collaborative partnership with the State Commission on several initiatives, including the School Readiness Initiative (SRI). As with SRI, in particular, our Board’s interest is based on clearly understanding the details and requirements of our participation in the PFA evaluation. This is especially important given First 5 LA’s development and implementation of Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP). As we develop our local preschool system, we need to ensure an alignment of our Universal Preschool system and related evaluation with that of the PFA demonstration project to promote and optimize a real time learning exchange.

13. Public Comment

Debbie MacKay, Reach Out and Read
Carolina Reyes, LABBC Center for Healthy Births

Chair Molina announced that Commissioner Maria Veloz will be resigning from the Board of Commissioners as the Board of Supervisors appointee for the First District. Her last day of service will June 30, 2005. Chair Molina thanked Commissioner Veloz for her leadership, dedication and service to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for:

July 14, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.
Multi-Purpose Room
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Meeting minutes recorded by Maria Romero.