



LASSEN COUNTY
CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION
Unapproved Minutes, June 29, 2006, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
1345B Paul Bunyan Road
Susanville, California

Present: Sheral Thorlaksson, Kathy Colvin, Jan Irvin, Mae Sherman, Doug McCoy, Analuisa Orozco, Lillian Arnold, Robin Gibbs, Jennifer West-Lucchesi, Michelle Urrutia, Dennis Wilkes, and Laura Roberts

Call to Order: Chairman Doug McCoy called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. Everyone was welcomed by the Chairman and introduced.

Public Comment: Lillian Arnold commented on the home visiting program, expressing her disappointment that staff were terminated and not just smoothly moved to another program. She recommended that requests for proposals should be issued rather than just assigned to another agency. She expressed concern that staff from Big Valley would have to drive to Susanville to see families and not be compensated for their mileage. She stated that BVFRC is interested in applying for a home visiting program for the Big Valley area. The Chairman stated that there is miscommunication about the mileage and driving and that the commission is trying to work out the details of program transition to prevent disruption in services to children and families. Commissioner Brawley stated that because ComPAC is not being purchased by another entity that staff had to be laid off and offered employment with another agency. Commissioner Malone asked if the HV program was a FRC program. Home Visiting is not an FRC program. Lillian commented that she provided direct supervision of the home visitors, received referrals from the FRC, and housed the home visitors. Chairman McCoy stated that it was a hope and dream that programs such as the home visiting program could become integral parts of an FRC but with the transitions, that is not possible. This item will be discussed fully at a later item on the agenda.

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Dahle moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Brawley seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

Information and Consent Calendar: Commissioner Brawley moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Commissioner Malone seconded the motion. There was discussion. The motion passed. The items approved are as follows:

- 4a. SUBJECT: Approval of Minutes LCCFC Meeting of June 1, 2006
- 4b. SUBJECT: Approval of Fiscal Report
- 4c. SUBJECT: Approval of Transfer from Trust Account for July and August Expenses in an amount of \$82,121.24
- 4d. SUBJECT: Approval of payment of \$1,000 for CCAFA Dues for 06/07

Authorize Signing Contract For Executive Director Services: Extension of the contract with Laura Roberts for one year was granted at the last meeting. The form of the agreement is presented with a request for authorization for the Commission Chairman to sign. Commissioner Malone moved to approve the form of the contract and authorize signing. Commissioner Sherman seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Two

Approval Of Evaluation Plans For CARES And Behavioral Health: This is an item brought forward from the June 1 meeting. The development of the plans was delayed by the Family Support Network planning process. The evaluation plans for CARES and Behavioral Health were presented for approval. It was explained that the logic models contained in the plans are reflective of the scopes of work contained in the contracts that govern these programs. Advisory groups have reviewed and revised the logic models. Commissioner Sherman made a motion to approve the evaluation plans as presented. Commissioner Irvin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed.

Authorize Negotiation of Scope of Work for Extension of Oral Health Contract: It was stated that the contract has been with Northeastern Rural Health and it expires in November of 2006. The funding has been leveraged over the past 3 years by Northeastern having acquired an Oral Health Demonstration Project, and a Rural Health Demonstration Project. This contract, ending in November, is out of timing with the new grant making process detailed in the strategic plan. It was requested that the contract be extended until June 30, 2007 and that the executive director update the scope of work. It was mentioned that the budget needs to now include a line item for hospital dentistry supplies, as well as some start up costs for the van that is being transferred from Lassen County to Northeastern for a mobile dentistry service. The time lines of the various projects were questioned. It was explained that the contract extensions would allow each program to synchronize with the fiscal year time line. It was clarified that this request is to authorize negotiations with Northeastern for a revised scope of work for a contract extension. Commissioner Dahle moved to authorize the negotiations. Commissioner Irvin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed. Laura is to negotiate with Northeastern and bring back a proposal.

Approve Scope Of Work And Extension Of Evaluation Contract With Social Entrepreneurs: The Chairman explained that SEI has been performing evaluation services for the Commission for the past 3 years. Their proposal builds on their previous work, and additionally provides technical support for transition away from PEDS software to a more user-friendly data tracking software such as Lake County. Laura Robert explained what she had learned about the Lake County Software from a demonstration that she and SEI had participated in. SEI is familiar with the software and can provide technical support to transition existing data if the Commission elects to use that software. Commissioner Dahle asked if we had to act on this proposal at this time as he did not receive the packet in enough time to fully review the proposal. It was explained that the SEI funds for the proposal need to be encumbered to be sure that we do not exceed the amount of funds that we can have on hand as unencumbered. Too much unencumbered funds on hand disqualifies the Commission from receiving the administrative augmentation. Additionally it was explained that a portion of the technical supported proposed is for the analysis of data to be included in the annual report which is due in draft to the Commission at their September meeting. It was suggested that the proposal be approved and the funds be encumbered. If at a future date we needed to negotiate a change with SEI,

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Three

that can be accomplished. Commission Malone moved to approve the proposal and agreement with SEI. Commissioner Sherman seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Commissioner Dahle abstained from voting. The motion passed.

Lake County Software: Lillian questioned whether this would take the place of PEDS and SEI. It was stated that it will replace PEDS and SEI. Our current data will be converted to the Lake software. The Lake software is a web based software and is more user friendly than PEDS. The cost is a one-time fee of \$1,000. It was stated that additional funding needs to be authorized up to \$4,000 to help adapt the software to our Lassen specific needs, and also to cover the cost of the time it will take for the Lake Software staff to convert our data. Commissioner Brawley moved to authorize the expenditure of funds for of Lake County Software. Commissioner Dahle seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed.

Home Visiting Contract, Scope of Work and Budget: Chairman McCoy explained that ComPAC is no longer able to perform the program and in an emergency effort to sustain the program and continue to serve clients, that an urgency contract was issued to Pathways as interim solution to keep the program going until an RFP could be prepared and publicized for all who are interested in submitting a proposal. The changes happened in such a short time that it is important to transition the program quickly to avoid interruption in services. The scope of work and the proposed budget were presented. The budget is less than the program that had been performed by ComPAC. The current budget presented is a six-month budget as it covers the remaining time of ComPAC's program (through December 31, 2006).

Laura Roberts explained that the staff had to be terminated as employees of ComPAC and have to rehire with a different agency. There is no other way to do this. Each line item of the proposed budget was explained. The scope of work is the logic model of the existing ComPAC program. It was suggested that the time line of this program be made consistent with the fiscal year and RFP process proposed in the revised strategic plan of the commission. The centralized location of the program was questioned. Laura Roberts responded that for now it is proposed to be centrally located because home visitors in Susanville have full case loads with waiting lists, while in outlying areas, some home visitors do not have a full case load. Lillian stated that they have a caseload of 14 families being served. It was clarified that 7 are Lassen families.

Commissioner Dahle asked for information on Pathways and for some assurance that Pathways would stay in business and not go the same route as ComPAC. Laura Roberts explained that there is no guarantee that Pathways will stay in business either. The programs that it administers are all publicly funded and just by the nature of the funding, the organization is as vulnerable as the type of funding that it has. The line items of the Pathways proposal were stated, and the 9% indirect overhead rate was referenced. The program does not have enough funding to pay the usual 12% indirect overhead. It was stated that the only source of funding that a non-profit can keep and utilize for their cost of operations, is the indirect fees charged to program or independent fund raising efforts. It was reiterated that this is an emergency contract to stabilize the program.

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Four

It was acknowledged that the travel to Susanville for north county home visitors would be a burden. In an effort to stabilize the program in north county Laura Roberts suggested that the existing contract between TEACH and ComPAC be turned around and an additional \$10,000 be allocated by the Commission to contract with TEACH to hire the north county home visitors to provide services for Lassen County children. It was stated that ComPAC also put \$5,000 of their own funding into the program. Lillian Arnold stated that she does not see the reason for all of the sudden changes in the home visiting program. She wanted a chance to administer the home visiting program and questioned that Big Valley staff would have to be in Susanville. She indicated that she has provided supervision of home visiting staff, has had consistent staff and has had the home visiting program in her family resource center for three years. Lillian questioned the extreme conditions for changing the home visiting program. She indicated she had not been contacted about the program changes. She indicated that the severe changes do not need to be made in the home visiting program and that the emergency changes to the program were not wise. She wants a chance to offer services.

Commissioner McCoy reflected from the Commission's standpoint that home visitors are from time to time utilized to staff and perform family resource center functions as opposed to being fully engaged in home visiting. Commissioner McCoy commented on changes made in the past by the commission regarding the target families. With the change in the target families to those with specific high-risk conditions, there is a need for a more intense type of supervision of home visitors to support them as they help high-risk families address their many challenges.

Laura Roberts explained that home visiting services have been part of the school readiness program concept that not only involved family resource centers, but it also involved oral health. The current application for school readiness funding, while it is provisionally granted and begins July 1, 2006, it is for a term of 4 years and family resource centers are not currently funded for the same length of time. The Board of Supervisors has paid for certain types of activities inside of family resource centers such as parent education, parent child interaction groups, resource and referral, etc. Home Visitors provide the same types of services. While there is no long-term commitment from the Board of Supervisors to fund family resource centers, there is also no permission from the Board of Supervisors to blend their funding with the Commission's school readiness funding among family resource centers. Thus the only type of funding for the Westwood FRC was school readiness funding and it is not economically feasible to fund an FRC as the school readiness mode of service delivery in Westwood as it would not be able to provide services to persons other than the birth to five-aged population.

Commissioner McCoy indicated that the school readiness reapplication funding is a 4-year funding commitment and the Board of Supervisors is not currently able to allocate that level of funding to family resource centers. While it may have been a vision of the Commission to have a one-stop-shop concept in outlying areas and have worked during the last 3 years to establish that type of network, it is currently no longer a network. Jennifer West-Lucchesi of Fort Sage Family Resource Center commented that it is very important to not disrupt services to families and whatever the Commission can do to stabilize services should be the focus. Lillian Arnold of the Big Valley FRC expressed frustration that the Commission is funding Pathways, a new non-profit, to provide services.

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Five

Commissioner Brawley asked if it is the intent of Pathways with a centrally located program, to not provide home visiting services in the Big Valley area. Laura Roberts stated that it is not the intention to remove home visiting services from the north county. It is an employee supervision issue and a caseload issue. Some families are on waiting lists in some areas of the county, while home visitors in other areas do not have a full caseload. Commissioner Dahle asked if TEACH is aware of the discussions today. Laura Roberts indicated that they are aware, and have expressed willingness to provide home visiting services for Lassen County children in North County. They are currently engaged in the provision of home visiting services and have been providing that type of service for several years. Without an additional allocation of funding from the Commission the Lassen Home Visiting program will be down by one staff person. Commissioner Dahle asked where the funds would come from for a contract with TEACH. It was stated that it could come from a line item in the existing budget. He expressed concern that it is important to keep the existing home visitors in North County employed so they don't find jobs elsewhere. The Chairman summarized the item as the need to approve the scope of work, budget, and contract with Pathways for one year rather than six months. Commissioner Brawley moved that we approve the scope of work, the budget, and an extension of the home visiting program for one year with the condition or knowledge that the home visiting program will be put out for bid in the grant cycle in March of 2007 so anyone can bid. Commissioner Sherman seconded the motion. Discussion: Brian asked for confirmation that the program is a countywide and is basically the same as what we were doing before with only a minimal pause in services of a week or so as the program transitions. This was confirmed. Commissioner Irvin abstained. Motion passed.

Authorize Home Visiting Services For Northern Lassen County Families: Commissioner Brawley moved to authorize home visiting for Northern Lassen families via a contract with TEACH for one year for the sum of \$10,000. Commission staff is to identify the best line item to move funds from and inform the commission. Commissioner Thorlaksson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

Chairman McCoy commented that this has been a difficult time for everyone. Everyone is hurting. The Commission has a vision that we share that we want to serve families, and to not leave families alone. We want to empower areas in our county. We want everyone to work together. This is a year of transition and we are learning from these difficult times. He added that he is hopeful that we can all work together again.

Approval of Annual Audit Proposal from Bartig, Basler & Ray: The annual audit fee from Bartig, Basler, and Ray is \$4,000 this year. Commissioner Dahle moved for approval of the proposal from the audit firm. Commissioner Brawley seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

Encumbrance of Funds: The funds proposed for encumbrance are \$160,000 for home visiting, \$45,000 for oral health, \$37,162.50 for Social Entrepreneurs for 06/07, \$15,458.10 for Social

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Six

Entrepreneurs for 07/08, and Bartig, Basler and Ray for \$4,000 for the 05/06 annual audits. It was explained that the Commission needs to encumber these funds to assure that we will be under the required dollar amount so as to not risk loss of the administrative augmentation funding. Commissioner Dahle moved to approve the encumbrances in the stated amounts. Commissioner Malone seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed.

Public Hearing on Policies and Procedures: Adopting policies and procedures is a new requirement of the State Children and Families Commission. The guidelines surrounding what types of policies and procedures that the local Commission has to have in place have been evolving for several months and were finally stated during late spring of 2006. The local policies and procedures have been developed and have been presented for review. The policies and procedures document was posted on the website as well as at the Courthouse for public review. A public hearing is required on the document prior to its adoption. The public hearing was declared open at 3:17 p.m. There was no comment. The hearing was closed. There were no questions of commissioners.

Adoption of Policies and Procedures: Commissioner Malone moved that the policies and procedures document be adopted. Commissioner Sherman seconded the motion. It was stated that when legal counsel reviews the document, if any refinement needs to be done the policies and procedures could be amended as needed. There was no further discussion. The motion passed.

Transition of Home Visiting to be the School Readiness Program: It was explained that the home visiting program qualifies as a school readiness program. It may need to have a stronger early literacy component. The school readiness program that was submitted to the State First Five Commission for refunding was dependent upon blended funding and a countywide network of family resource centers. Because of the local changes in the family resource center network, and without a longer-term commitment from the Board of Supervisors, as well as permission to blend funding, it is necessary to make changes in the school readiness model. Currently the match funding for the school readiness programs comes from the funds that the Commission expends on oral health, behavioral health, and home visiting. Westwood was originally the only area of the County with a low API score. Their score is now at a 4, while other schools now have a low API score of 2 or 3. School readiness services have to be maintained in Westwood, while considering how to expand school readiness services in the other eligible areas. Commissioner Dahle asked why the scores are dropping in other areas. Barbara Malone responded that the scores might not be reliable because a low number of children were tested.

There could be many issues affecting scores and that is why it is important to have a relationship with the Kindergarten teachers in order to know what the deficits of children are who enter Kindergarten. If this is known, then school readiness efforts can be targeted to a multitude of school readiness areas, including the deficit areas. Commissioner Malone indicated that each school district differs and there is no generalized statement that can be made as to why the scores have dropped.

LASSEN COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2006

Page Seven

Commissioner Brawley asked if the home visiting program were modified to be the school readiness program, would children 0-5 living in school districts other than Fort Sage, Shaffer, Big Valley and Westwood, not receive home visiting services. It was stated that the home visiting program would continue to be county wide. Extra outreach in the low API score areas would have to happen to involve childcare providers, Kindergarten teachers and school districts in the process of identifying deficits and solutions. Further discussion surrounded how the API scores are developed and whether they fairly represent children in small rural areas. Commissioner Dahle questioned whether low API scores are the fault of the parents and how would modification of the home visiting program address this. It was agreed that family dynamics are a part of the issue.

Chairman McCoy commented that the enhanced home visiting program would target high-risk families, which most likely are presenting children at the age of 5 to Kindergarten not ready to learn. The home visiting redesign committee has been working hard to identify ways to enhance/expand the home visiting program. The School Readiness funding, as a four year commitment, combined with the Commission's home visiting funding commitment would allow additional home visitors to be hired to expand the capacity of the program to serve more high risk families county-wide. Laura explained that the application would have to be modified and resubmitted to the State for approval. Chairman McCoy indicated that the action requested is to authorize Laura to modify the application for school readiness funding to reflect home visiting as the modality for the delivery of school readiness services. Commissioner Malone made a motion to approve modification of the home visiting program to be the school readiness program. Commissioner Brawley seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed.

Laura Roberts presented a quilt to the Commission. The quilt was made by Laura and donated on behalf of the Lassen County Children and Families Commission to the State Children and Families Association Foundation to help raise funds for their services. The quilt was purchased back from the fund raising auction and brought home for the Commission. The quilt represents the benefit of collaboration and working toward a vision. Without coordination and collaboration the quilt would just be a pile of scraps so it represents well the potential of working together. Commissioner Malone read the label on the back of the quilt: "This quilt was donated by the Lassen First 5 Children and Families Commission to the First 5 Association for the benefit of the California Children and Families Foundation. This quilt represents and commends the local and statewide First 5 efforts to piece together a comprehensive coordinated system of services to help children enter school ready to learn. Best wishes from the Lassen First 5 Commission." The Association Foundation received a nice donation to their fundraiser and the quilt was brought home for the Commission.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura J. Roberts, Executive Director