



MINUTES –REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, December 10, 2003

1. Call to Order, Establish Quorum, Public Comment

Commission Chair Julie Bear called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. in Bishop. A legal quorum was present with Commissioners Julie Bear, Martha Mendez, Lara Andersen, Michele Dossey and Margaret Peterson in attendance. Also present were Kathy Peterson and Jackie Randall (First 5 Inyo County Commission staff), Bill Michael (Inyo County Libraries), Melanie Bridges (Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action), and Verna Sisk (Inyo County Office of Education, Child Development).

Commissioner Bear opened the meeting for Public Comment.

Bill Michael, Inyo County Libraries, provided a report to the Commission on recent activity on the Big Pine Library rebuild project:

- Proposal to install a new modular building on the Big Pine School campus. The proposed building is slightly larger than the existing Big Pine Library (similar to Lone Pine School's modular library building).
- Consolidate the two libraries (public and school) into one centralized facility.
- Provide a joint use multi-purpose room, open separately from the main library area, for community activities (i.e. School Readiness activities, Raising a Reader activities, meetings, and other events). Per application guidelines, the multi-use area must be *available* for 20 hours per week before and/or after school for joint use.

The Library will be applying in March 2004 to the State Allocation Board (SB 1795) for a portion of the funding; they are looking for partners to co-fund the project and for joint-use agreements. The school district has committed to participate in funding, and projected additional funding available from a fire insurance settlement (amount undetermined at this time). The Library has looked into other cost-saving options, but they estimate they are about \$60-70,000 short to complete the project. Total project cost is estimated at \$350,000. Project awards are approved annually in July.

The Commission discussed and identified other potential partners the Library could contact (Commissioner Andersen: Altrusa; Commissioner Bear: Berger Foundation; Commissioner Dossey: Big Pine Indian Education Center). Bill thanked the Commission for the input. Kathy asked if the committed \$20,000 School Readiness funds could be used as match. Bill reported that match funding cannot be considered on this application per its guidelines, but it will strengthen the joint-use narrative portion of the application.

Bill thanked the Commission for the upcoming \$20,000 funding from the School Readiness program to fund the purchase of early childhood books.

Commission Chair Bear thanked Bill for his report and directed Staff to agendize a Commission discussion regarding use of unallocated Commission funds, which entities are interested in the funds, and how to handle granting of funds (e.g. RFP, etc).

There was no additional public comment.

2. Commission Membership

Commissioner Bear announced that on December 9, 2003, the Board of Supervisors approved the reappointments of Commissioner Lara Andersen for the term expiring December 1, 2006; and Commissioner Martha Mendez for the term expiring December 5, 2006.

The Commission discussed the need to fill one remaining vacancy, reviewed the unfilled designated categories of representation, and the desire to continue to have cultural diversity on the Commission. Staff is working with the Board Clerk regarding legal notice on the vacancy and the open notice period. The Board Clerk suggested the Commission do advance recruitment for the position before a legal notice is placed, therefore increasing the chance of receiving applications during the open period.

The Commissioners identified several people (Joann Poncho, Harriet Harrison, Marilyn Bracken-Independence, or Jeff Griffith-Foster Parent, Bishop) who might be interested in serving on the Commission who fell within the following unrepresentative categories:

- educator specializing in early childhood development
- representative of a local child care resource or referral agency, or a local child care coordinating group
- representative of a local organization for prevention of early intervention for families at risk
- representative of local medical, pediatric, or obstetric association or societies

3. Inyo County Professional Development Program (PDP)

a. The Commission discussed target group and recruitment strategies for the upcoming third-round PDP for FY 2003/2004. Verna Sisk asked for clarification of contract definitions and asked for direction from the Commission.

Verna reported that Big Pine, Lone Pine and Death Valley are low provider target communities; Big Pine, Lone Pine, Olancho/Cartago are School Readiness target communities. In the past the program has been a seamless operating program blending the three funding sources (AB212, First 5 Inyo, First 5 California). All three funding sources have different program requirements. Total funding has been reduced in the past years, with increased applicants and eligible recipients. Past stipend payments have been reduced across the board for all recipients to allow for stipends to be paid to all eligible applicants rather than paying full stipends to fewer participants. ICOE must do all payouts at once.

Commissioner Bear expressed concern that “exempt providers” are a deficiency countywide and hopes this program will encourage their participation in all communities, not just the target communities. Verna explained different tier levels of stipend payouts, and clarified that all eligible applicants are required to complete the same minimum coursework (8 hrs CPR, 15 hrs total) to receive a stipend. An additional amount can be received if more than the minimum training requirements are completed within the program period. Exempt providers must agree to apply and achieve licensure by the second year of participation in the program. Licensure generally takes a minimum of 6 months. Allowing a longer application period will give time to provide intense recruitment in the target communities before the program is offered countywide. To date there has been minimum participation in the program from the target communities, but previous programs followed different guidelines, and exempt providers have been newly added to this year’s program. ICOE has many classes scheduled for January through April 2004. Additional courses can be taken out of the area, through the Community College, or online.

Commissioner Dossey asked how exempt providers are identified. Verna explained that many are in the subsidized childcare programs. They actively network with other agencies to identify childcare providers. Although extensive training is offered in the Bishop area, CPR has only been offered quarterly in the past making it difficult for some of the outlying areas like Death Valley. However, online and other course options can meet some of these obstacles.

The Commission clarified that “full participation from the priority areas” doesn’t necessarily mean full funding to those target areas. Target communities should have higher priority and more intense recruitment over the remaining countywide program communities.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion, contingent on approval of First 5 California CCRI Program, to collapse the program timeframe from 2 years to 18 months (application period closes January 2005), with stipend payments issued in June 2005 (to meet ICOE fiscal needs). Benchmarks will be set for new exempt providers to remain in compliance with the program, and all stipend payouts will be made in the 2005 to address the potential problem of an applicant beginning the program but not becoming licensed within the stipulated timeframe (by the second year). Seconded by Commissioner Mendez. Motion approved unanimously.

Staff was directed to check with First 5 California regarding the proposed modifications, and if approved, prepare an amended contract with Inyo County Superintendent of Schools for Board of Supervisor approval.

b. *Press Release* - Staff reported that the draft press release on informal care, prepared by Rogers and Associates at the Commissions request, would be blended with additional information about the PDP program as a lead in to strengthen recruitment. This article was written to offset some of the negative feedback on the Universal Preschool for All ads so prominent in the newspapers and on television recently.

4. IMACA Project REACH

The Commission discussed the creation of School Readiness and Countywide Home Visiting contracts with Project REACH. Staff proposes to cancel our existing REACH contract, and roll any unexpended funds remaining in the contract into a new countywide Home Visiting Program. Funds from unallocated funds in the account could be committed to the new contract to cover additional associated program costs. There will be a separate contract for the School Readiness Program (in Big Pine, Lone Pine, and Olancho/Cartago).

Melanie provided the Commission feedback on the Parents as Teachers (PAT) training completed recently by IMACA staff. Feedback was positive, and staff are excited to be using the program. IMACA is checking into adding both hearing screening and vision screening modules to the program, and has information on new equipment available (University of Utah) for testing on infants.

The PAT Program projects each home visit averages to 2.5 hrs (preparation, travel & visit). The draft School Readiness contract, based on the State approved proposal, specifies an objective of 30 families per month (total of 60 visits occurring semi-monthly) per month per FTE (full-time equivalent partner) equating to 150/hrs per month for PAT, leaving only 10 hours to do all other associated activities. Melanie requested the Commission consider accepting a reduction in the number of home visits per visitor. The PAT program will also be used in the Countywide Home Visiting Program with one visit per month rather than bi-weekly. Melanie reported that IMACA is still considering options for serving Tecopa residents. The Commission asked Melanie to modify the numbers and work with Kathy on the draft Final contract.

A Commission Ad Hoc committee was formed (Margaret Peterson and Michele Dossey - Julie Bear as backup) to review the objective numbers (i.e. 24 rather than 30 visits per FTE per month), and costs. The Ad Hoc Committee will make a recommendation to the Commission at the January meeting. Staff will continue working with Melanie and Norm Allred (IMACA) on draft Final contracts, and work with the Ad Hoc committee to prepare draft final contracts for the Commission’s review and approval at the January meeting (both Home Visiting and School Readiness).

The Head Start model would be a good guideline to follow for time planning. Their base is 10-12 visits per FTE (48 per month). Objectives set in the Scope of Work should be reassessed either semi-annually or annually, and Commissioner Peterson suggested a time study be done during the contract year tracking actual task time requirements.

Commissioner Andersen made a motion to have Staff pursue canceling the current contract, continues working with IMACA to write new contracts for School Readiness and a Countywide Home Visiting Program. Commissioner Mendez seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Technical Assistance / Training

a. *Fiscal Mapping Training Results* – This topic will be brought back to a future Commission meeting for discussion (due to time constraints at this meeting).

b. *Regional Technical Assistance Group Training* - Staff reported that they have been working with the TA Regional Committee and that Inyo has been slated as the site for Informal Care from the Matrix Topics presented at previous Commission meetings. We have up to \$10,000 State funding to use on this topic. Although originally proposed for late 2004 (November or December), ETR has indicated an interest in holding their Informal Care training in Inyo County in early Spring 2004 using their State funding. (First 5 Inyo County would act as facilitators.) Details and facilities are being investigated, and Staff will continue to provide feedback to the Commission. Commissioner Dossey asked if Commissioners could participate in other Regional TA Group Activity trainings. Kathy reported that Commissioners are invited to participate, and that the Committee is looking into possible distance learning environments so that attendance can be accomplished without travel out of Commission home areas. Staff will provide the Commission with more information as it is received (dates, agendas, locations, logistics, etc).

6. Evaluation

This topic will be brought back to a future Commission meeting for discussion (due to time constraints at this meeting).

7. Set dates for Commission Meetings - 2004

The Commission discussed possible future meeting dates and set the fourth (4th) Wednesday each month, 9 a.m. to noon. Staff is looking into alternate locations (i.e. Toiyabe) and will bring information back to the Commission. The next three meetings will be January 28th, February 25th, and March 24th.

8. Commissioner Updates

Nothing to report due to time constraints at this meeting.

9. Staff Report & Discussion Items

a) Information on requests to Board of Supervisors re: new Budget Units

Staff reported they are working on modification of the existing Commission budget unit 643000 to bring it into alignment with confirmed funding increases and known contract requirements based on the new funding. In addition, new budget units are being requested for reporting purposes to the State Commission and The California Endowment. The Five-Year Fiscal Forecast tool is being updated to include new information and add the new budget units for future reporting purposes.

b) Update on Inyo County Children Services Council projects regarding anti-bullying efforts

Staff reported the Inyo County CSC is proposing a training or workshop on Child Abuse Prevention utilizing funding they have remaining in their budget. The Commission will table discussion of possible co-sponsorship of this proposed workshop until the CSC provides more details.

- c) Project REACH Parent and Child Survey – letter and distribution update.
Staff reported that the ARC compiled results have been distributed throughout the County. Copies can be obtained from Staff if additional requests for the data come in, or the information can be accessed on the ARC website.
- d) Outcome of the Board of Equalization meeting in November
Staff reported that the Board of Equalization voted in accordance with the First 5 Association's recommendation regarding the Prop 10 backfill of Prop 99.
- e) Commissioner Advocacy request
Not discussed at this meeting due to time constraints.
- f) Mini Grant presentation video taping
Staff reported on their efforts in obtaining costs to convert the presentation prepared for the Board of Supervisors from PowerPoint to VHS as requested by the Commission. Depending on the vendor used and the conversion process used, costs could run \$200-250. Verna Sisk (ICOE) provided the staff with the name of an additional vendor (VideoOccasions; Paul Robles) who might provide this service.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion that the Commission approves expending up to \$250 to convert the presentation to VHS format. Commissioner Mendez seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Ex-Commissioner appreciation

Commission Chair Bear thanked former Commissioner Gail Zwier for her active participation on the Commission during her tenure as a Children & Families Commissioner for Inyo County. Gail was presented with a personalized ceramic plate in appreciation for her service on the Commission.

Gail also updated the Commission on her work with Cerro Coso Community College regarding continuation of the Health & Human Services Certificate Program. Cerro Coso will offer only one course in Spring 2004. Due to major funding cutbacks, the College must have 15 active students enrolled to hold this class to continue the program. Many current students enrolled in the program have already completed the course being offered (Case Management). Gail asked the Commission to spread word about this valuable class and encourage enrollment.

11. Approval of Minutes

Staff has prepared a master calendar that will be kept in the Commission office. Staff will track dates of availability/unavailability for each of the Commissioners for meeting planning purposes.

Commissioner Mendez made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 29, 2003, with noted change (meeting start time change from 9:15 am to 6:00 pm). Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

NOTICE: The next Regular Commission Meeting will be Wednesday, January 28, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. in the HHS Conference Room, 1351 Rocking W Drive, Bishop.