

**First 5 Sonoma County  
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING - STRATEGIC PLANNING  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 17, 2020**

***NOTE: MEETING CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM PLATFORM***

**I. Call to Order:**

The First 5 Sonoma County Commission Special Meeting for Strategic Planning was convened virtually this date in regular session via Zoom. A quorum was present, Chair Oscar Chavez called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

**Chair Chavez** stated First 5 Sonoma County Commission meetings are being held by teleconference until further notice to comply with California Governor's Executive Order, N-29-20 and Sonoma County Public Health Officer's shelter-in-place orders.

**Commission Members Present:** Oscar Chavez, Jennielynn Holmes, Nora Mallonee Brand, José Morales, Socorro Shiels, Kelly Bass Seibel, and Michele Rogers.

**Absent:** Supervisor Lynda Hopkins and Karissa Kruse

**Staff:** Angie Dillon-Shore, Renée Alger, Natalie Kramer, Sandra Uribe and Zakiya Ramirez.

**II. Potential Conflicts of Interest**

Chair Chavez requested that Commissioners identify potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from discussing or voting on the identified matter. No conflicts were identified by Commissioners.

**III. Public Comment on Non-Agendized Items**

No public comment

**IV. First 5 Budgeting & Long-Term Financial Planning 101**

**Angie Dillon-Shore, Executive Director,** presented an introduction to how strategic planning is linked to the long-term financial planning and annual budget process.

**Strategic Plan**

The Commission sets goals and objectives around early childhood development and strategies to achieve those goals. The Strategic Plan is developed and updated through the process of accessing community needs, data trends, best practices and input from stakeholders. The plan was last updated in 2017 and First 5 Sonoma is now in the final year of the current Strategic Plan. An important component of the plan

is the set of allocated committed amounts of funding to various program areas that support First 5 goals in early childhood development, referred to as the multi-year investment plan. The Commission approved the plan in 2017 and adjusts allocations based on programmatic needs.

### **Long Term Financial Plan**

The Long-term Financial model takes a long-term view of the Commission's financial situation based on projected revenue and allocations of resources to achieve the objectives in the strategic plan. The model looks ahead at least 5 years, depicting the likely financial outcomes from combinations of expenditures levels, revenues projections, and use of fund balance. The fund balance refers to all the cash resources available to the Commission at any given time. The Commission built up reserves for the first 10 years of receiving tobacco tax revenue disbursements as a strategy to build and then sustain systems and programs in the future. The Long-term financial modeling allows the Commission to understand long term implications of decline of tobacco tax revenue, cost of administration, impacts of expanding or reducing investments.

The Finance Committee will meet in September prior to the Commission meeting to review the long-term finance model and will present to the Commission as part of adoption of the new Strategic Plan.

### **Budget**

The Commission uses the annual budget to plan specific use of resources in the short term. It is an annual spending plan including operational costs and strategic investments shaped by the goals in the Strategic Plan, which allocates resources for the specific fiscal year and is tied directly to the Long-Term Financial model that has been adopted. The preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year is presented to the Commission in spring and adopted in June. It is based on planned investments, staffing needs, operational costs, and any special goals that need to be addressed that year.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** asked about the accuracy of projections this year. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** responded that last year's revenue was higher than the conservative estimate in the long term financial model. A number of contracts are underspent due to COVID restrictions, most will be rolled forward into FY 20-21 projected expenditures. Staff is in the midst of closeout for the FY 19-20 year and actuals for FY 19-20, revenue and expenditures, will be brought to the Commission in September.

**Commissioner Michele Rogers** asked if rollover money remains unspent or will service be re-directed. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** responded that modifications of budgets and scopes for each contract for FY20-21 is in process. There is flexibility to modify the scope of work as long as services support the goals related to optimal early childhood development.

**Commission Chair Oscar Chavez** commented on the enormous drop in revenue indicated on the graph for years 2026 and 2027. He stated it is important to think about this as part of the planning for future strategy investments and a revenue plan beyond funding from Prop 10. Chair Chavez is concerned about declining revenue and stressed how critical it is to consider strategy that does not undermine future members of the community. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** noted that the annual tax revenue declines, but the annual

expenditure from the reserves is actually the stronger driver of declining resources.

**Commissioner Michele Rogers** commented that the Commission made the decision early on to put 50% of the Prop 10 revenue in a “rainy day fund” and the other 50% was expended. She noted that having reserves did create a situation where local Commissions had to defend the reserved fund balance from the state legislature.

**Ms. Dillon-Shore** noted that the Commission will discuss the topic more specifically in September when we will review revised projections and determine what are the investments that the Commission will make in the new Strategic Plan.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** asked if the Commission budgets are based on projections of where First 5 will be in 10 years. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** confirmed this is part of the strategic analysis and that the Commission is also planning around ongoing disasters and now, an economic downturn.

**Public Comment: Bryan Clement** asked about the reimbursement line dropping off in FY 21-22 and requested information about what the line item represents. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** responded that First 5 does not include estimates of revenue in the Long-Term Financial model unless they are assured. Reimbursements from the County for Triple P training and MediCal Administration are currently received from the County, but no assurance we will have these in future years.

**Commissioner Socorro Shiels** asked if the fire settlement money be invested in 0-5? **Ms. Dillon-Shore** responded that over 200 million in PG&E settlement will be received by our County, cities and towns next month. It is unknown at this time what the funds will be expended on or what methodology or justifications will be used to prioritize expenditures.

## V. Strategic Planning: Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

**Ana Lugo, Equity First Consultant**, presented on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging.

**Ms. Lugo** read and asked the Commission/staff to agree to the ‘*Stepping into a Brave Space*’ agreement. Then she moved on to the conversation of anti-racism based on the 3 pillars of Diversity, Equity and Belonging. Ms. Lugo stated, the active celebration and utilization of our unique and collective identities experiences, knowledge, and wisdom to transform and evolve communities, institutions and systems to meet our needs and provide resources in order to live full healthy thriving lives, be full participants of, and make demands upon the communities we live in. To merge the Individualism aspects of American society with the collective aspects of other societies. She defined “anti-racism” as an active process of changing systems, organizational, structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

**Ms. Lugo** opened up the group discussion with the question: *What does Ant-Racism bring up for you?*

**Commissioner Nora Mallonee Brand** commented that anti-racism is active behavior, to actively call out what you are seeing and actively working against racism. Many individuals benefit from systems that

actively oppress others and unless we stand up against those systems, nothing will change.

**Ms. Lugo** opened up the group discussion with another question: *What happens when we have to become anti-racist with our own families?*

**Executive Director Angie Dillon-Shore** stated that depending on the family, one may become unpopular or labeled a radical.

**Ms. Lugo** asked was it easier to discuss the topic of anti-racism within systems than amongst our loved ones. To truly be an anti-racist and an anti-racist organization, one must start with their personal lives.

**Commissioner Socorro Shiels** commented that every level presents an opportunity to push ourselves into a more uncomfortable position and examine the way we have been doing things. She feels there is a need to use proactive anti-racist language because now, more than ever, there is an opening to be a part of the active change process. She stated that it is important to push ourselves as a Commission for change.

**Ms. Lugo** explained that the word “racism” is not widely accepted in our community. Individuals are accountable for changing systems, practices, values and beliefs systems if hurtful to others. If we are not actively doing that, we are supporting racism. Anti-racism is actively working to dismantle beliefs system which create oppressive structures.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** shared thoughts on unconscious bias. He said we believe in ourselves more than anyone. The biggest blind spot is unconscious bias and that comes across in who we choose to trust, believe and credit more. He commented that we must examine and be honest within ourselves.

**Ms. Lugo** explained that it takes a major investment in ourselves and organizations to build that capacity. she opened up the group discussion with the question: *What is the number one thing white people are afraid to be called if they are not actually racist?*

**Commissioner Michele Rogers** commented that white people are afraid of being called hypocritical or insincere. It is difficult to join conversations on race when you are doing the best you can, but may then be referred to as “joining the band wagon”. Many people are quiet because they do not know how to join the conversation on the topic of racism.

**Commission Chair Oscar Chavez** commented that the dynamics of power are seldom recognized as a factor for engaging the workforce in these challenging conversations. Those in power create the authorizing environment to talk about the issues and can create the container to welcome people. A container is needed to hold challenging and difficult conversations in order to prevent people from being silent, pushback or not engage. Also, take a great deal of care in the way to craft the container to host conversations.

**Ms. Lugo** referred back to the “Stepping into Brave Space” agreement about owning one’s power and privilege, advising the Commission to be aware of who is saying ‘we are not ready’ and ‘this cannot happen in our organization’. If it is the front-line staff, it may mean that it is the responsibility of leadership to build capacity for staff to understand why the conversation is necessary and imperative for their well-

being. We must have the ability to hold on to two opposing points of view. People of color have mistrust due to violations from society, so it is important to create containers to have difficult conversations. When organizations work towards anti-racism, whiteness will attempt to shift boundaries to reserve its power and privilege.

**Commissioner Socorro Shiels** commented that change and transformation are uncomfortable, but a necessary prerequisite for change. Courage to take a risk is critical to understanding power and privilege. Ms. Shiels posed the question: *How do we make visible our blind spots of the institutional racism that is flowing through our systems in order to address and change it?*

**Ms. Lugo** noted that all have a duty to actively participate in the conversation. The more privilege and power we hold, the same equivalent duty to step back and allow the voices of others to be heard.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** asked how the Commission can apply this to strategic planning and how we will measure if we are successful?

**Commission Chair Oscar** commented that the Commission has elevated the idea to engage more in advocacy to support or oppose certain policies that further perpetuate racism and classism. We have a moral responsibility to help dismantle structures that harm and cause violence on communities. Systemic policy change creates behavioral and belief system change.

**Ms. Lugo** presented the lenses of systemic oppression created by the National Equity project and how these beliefs systems, attitudes, and interactions become structural pieces to intuitions. All the pieces of oppression are interconnected and must work on all levels for change.

**Individual Oppression:** A person's beliefs and actions that serve to perpetuate oppression

**Interpersonal Oppression:** The interaction between people both between and across differences.

**Systemic Institutional:** Practices and policies at the organizational level that perpetuates oppressions.

**Systemic Structural:** How these effects interact and accumulate across institutions and across history

**Ms. Lugo** opened up the group discussion to the next question: *How are you digging down to the root causes in a way that can truly inform the ways in which our individual actions lead to systemic inequalities?*

**Executive Director Angie Dillon-Shore** commented that First 5 is in planning processes with the Strategic Planning Advisory team, the Quality Counts consortium, the Leadership Advisory Roundtable and we are looking at disparity data. However, we have not discussed the structures that create those disparities and our role in dismantling them. Perhaps we ask this question: *What is our role in addressing structural barriers, how can we dive deeper into the institutionalized and structural racism piece and how can we fund strategies while also working on dismantling structural oppression?*

**Ms. Lugo** opened up the group discussion to the next question: *Are we doing equity driven work when organizations that we fund pay minimum wage to people that are actually doing the work and are part of this community? How are we holding organizations accountable that are exploiting communities by paying minimum wage so they cannot survive within their county?*

**Executive Director Angie Dillon-Shore** commented that indeed, wages are paid through contracts that First 5 agrees to fund. We are complicit in this.

**Commissioner Jennielynn Holmes** commented that as a non-profit provider, this has always been a challenge. The personnel cost in the budget does not grow as the cost of living grows. Nonprofits struggle to meet deliverables with a higher cost of goods and the need to increase wages. This must be a system change because it disempowers people.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** asked if the Commission is able to advocate for an increase in minimum wage for all Sonoma county? **Ms. Dillon-Shore** affirmed that First 5 can determine its own advocacy platform, as long as the policies support optimal early childhood development.

**Commissioner Nora Mallonee Brand** commented that there is a gap in the ability to do root cause analyses, because the tables where questions are asked and decisions are made are not necessarily inclusive of people with lived experience. **Ms. Lugo** commented that there should be flexibility to want to learn and do it better, to create space to learn on both sides and be able to mobilize and shift for the well-being and betterment of the community.

**Commissioner Kelly Bass Seibel** wonders if the conversations are happening in the right places. Does our advocacy work help lead other funders into conversation? How does the Commission welcome those into the fold of conversation? Who has not been a part of the conversation that can help dismantle oppressive systems? It can be difficult to bring new faces to the table that have not traditionally been a part of First 5's conversations, but it is necessary if we want to create change.

**Ms. Lugo** asked, *How are you leading in a way that moves our society toward anti-racism through Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging?* She challenged the Commission to take a look at their leadership and see how it aligns with Social Justice Leadership.

At this point in presentation, **Executive Director, Angie Dillon-Shore** suggested that the Commission continue current conversation with Ana Lugo and work on Equity statement and that the next agenda item be tabled to the August Commission meeting. The Chair and other Commissioners indicated agreement.

**Ms. Lugo** opened up the group discussion to the last question: *What do you need in order to build communities of belongings?*

**Commissioner Michele Rogers** commented she would need methods to operationalize. For example, an organization would ask itself, who is not on staff and why. **Ms. Lugo** responded that the work of operationalizing, determining metrics and operating principles is being done, resources exist.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** commented that the Commission should consider everything being said to understand any bias in the point of view and believes that the Commission must take risks, that funding in an inclusive manner will mean getting out of a comfort zone.

**Commissioner Nora Mallonee Brand** commented the Commission should think about defining metrics.

By assigning certain metrics, we can shift the value in another direction. She suggested to explore ways to measure value and capture metrics as we work on operationalizing equity and belonging.

**Executive Director, Angie Dillon-Shore**, read the *DRAFT Statement of Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging*. She explained that the goal is to build out an actual framework that operationalizes how it will be implemented in organizational practices, funding practices, capacity-building for CBOs, as well as metrics.

*First 5 Sonoma County believes that equity is just and fair inclusion in a community and society where everyone can fully and safely participate, prosper, and reach their full potential, regardless of their race, where they live, immigration status, their family's economic status or any other defining characteristic. Many children 0-5, families and communities experience disparate opportunities due to historic patterns of exclusion based on race, immigration status and multigenerational poverty, among others.*

*First 5 Sonoma County operationalizes equity by focusing programs and investments on the people and places in our county that face the greatest barriers. We are committed to actively advocating and promoting public policy that seeks to create safe and equitable communities. We are taking an active role in eradicating poverty and inequity as a means to achieving the mandate of First 5, that all children in Sonoma County are born healthy, develop optimally and reach their full potential. We are building capacity to more fully understand cultural responsiveness in order to integrate and weave into the fabric of First 5 values, ideas, and practices key to the families we serve. This requires the strategic and creative use of our investments, programs, partnerships, engagement with parents and communities, and advocacy for policy and systems change.*

**Commission Chair Oscar Chavez** stated that the statement should provide a lens that can be applied to a potential investment to consider whether it addresses structural barriers and serves the most vulnerable communities.

**Commissioner Nora Mallonee Brand** suggested the statement should be more acceptable to broader audience and that race is mentioned in 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, but not in 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. She recommended using more equity language and to consider the level of clarity the Commission want to achieve.

**Commissioner Socorro Shiels** recommended the statement use crisper language to state that First 5 believes that equity is both a value and a strategy for the necessity of our community to thrive.

**Commissioner Nora Mallonee Brand** recommended to use an alternative word to “belief” that emphasizes factuality. The term “belief” perpetuates the idea that there is an alternative, when there is not.

**Commissioner Jose Morales** recommended the statement be a living document that will continue to grow as the challenges evolve in the future.

**Commissioner Michele Rogers** recommended that the Commission consider questions they want answered about anti-racism practices by agencies they fund, not make assumptions or simply require an equity statement.

**First 5 Program Director Renee Alger** stated that it will take the commitment of time, energy and resources to dive into the root issues and how to dismantle them. This includes a framework for staff, Commissioners, and partnering organizations. Ms. Alger agreed that we must measure goals differently to understand how we make a difference.

**Commissioner Kelly Bass Seibel** asked how could this be applied to First 5 work moving forward and asked for clarification around who might be the audience. **Ms. Dillon-Shore** responded with the Equity Statement audience is any and all stakeholders of First 5 Sonoma County, including organizational partners, parents, elected officials, business partners.

**Strategic Planning Consultant, Moira Kenney**, revised the statement to read *“First 5 Sonoma County commits to building a community and society where everyone can fully and safely participate, regardless of their race, where they live, immigration status, their family's economic status or any other defining characteristic. Children 0-5, families and communities should not be excluded from opportunity based on race, immigration status and multigenerational poverty, among others. We will work to dismantle racism in our own operations, and partner with organizations that are also able to commit to anti-racism.”*

**Angie Dillon-Shore** recommended that staff and consultants work to refine the statement based on input and then bring back to the Commission in August to approve the actual statement and framework as a critical component of the strategic plan.

**Commissioner Socorro Shiels** recommended the statement read *“First 5 Sonoma County will be part of a community and society where everyone can fully and safely participate, regardless of their race, where they live, immigration status, their family's economic status or any other defining characteristic.”*

## **VI. Strategic Planning: Preliminary Priorities**

Angie Dillon-Shore recommended to table this item to the August Commission meeting. The Chair affirmed.

## **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 am.