Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2020

[NOTE: Due to the public health advisories regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19, this meeting took place by phone via Zoom.]

*Prior to the formal start of the meeting, a discussion was taking place about healthcare issues related to the Coronavirus/COVID-19. Please see the end of the minutes for a summary of that discussion.*

I. CALL TO ORDER

Kristen Seatavakin, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at First 5 Marin at 5:35 p.m.

Commissioners Participating online:
Kristen Seatavakin - chair  
Gabrielle Auguste – vice chair  
Kari Beuerman  
David Bonfillio  
Lisa Leavitt MD  
Lucia Martel-Dow  
Supervisor Dennis Rodoni

Commissioner/s Excused
Amy Eisenmann  
Juan Rodriguez

Staff Present
Amy Reisch  
Michelle Fadelli

Guests
Jill Casey, The Luminare Group  
Jara Dean-Coffey, The Luminare Group

II. MEETING MINUTES

Kristen Seatavakin, commission chair, asked if there were changes, additions or corrections to the commission minutes for the last meeting on February 19, 2020. The minutes of February 19, 2020 were unanimously approved.

III. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Rodoni announced that the Marin County Health and Human Services (HHS) website is the best source for up-to-date information regarding Coronavirus/COVID-19. (See www.coronavirus.marinhhs.org.) He added that the next Board of Supervisors meeting (on March 24th, 2020) would include an ordinance modifying evictions in Marin County as an emergency order; the cities are in agreement. He also announced that the County of Marin will be partnering with the Marin Community Foundation on response to the Coronavirus, each contributing $500,000.
Commissioner Beuerman said the focus is on essential services. Marin HHS is prioritizing child and adult protective services and In Home Support Services (IHSS). There are no relaxed guidelines from the state or federal government at this time, so all mandates remain. Phone assessments are being utilized, but home visits are taking place where important. Other work like write ups are being done remotely. She added that requests for public assistance have skyrocketed; previously there may have been 45 applications per week, HHS is now receiving that per day. Food resources are in flux; massive increases in need are expected. There are more than 22,000 seniors (65+) in Marin who live alone.

- Commissioner Leavitt noted that the Marin Community Clinics are still providing food pantries at the weekly “Health Hubs” (Wednesday in San Rafael and Thursday in Novato); food will be distributed on a drive-through basis only.

Commissioner Beuerman also noted that HHS is mapping resources and needs in five main areas of the County: the Canal, San Rafael, Marin City, Novato and West Marin. Many restaurants are offering food donations and there are lots of volunteers; it just needs coordinating.

- Executive Director Amy Reisch mentioned attending a Coronavirus/logistical meeting at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), with a primary focus on distance learning for K-12—quite a challenge with 19 different school districts. In the ECE community, there are plans in the works to provide child care for healthcare and hospital workers and first responders, with a focus on infant and toddler care. The effort is being coordinated by MCOE and the EOC staff and the subsidized centers, Head Start and a number of family care providers are working together to open by Friday. They will be expanding to “essential workers” soon—if the workforce is available…and willing.

-In news from First 5 California and the First 5 Association, the Governor has asked for a proposal regarding additional resources needed in terms of policy changes, ECE providers and subsidies for those who don’t currently, qualify for subsidized child care. A 58 county call was held today to solicit on the ground input from all 58 Commissions.

- Commissioner Leavitt asked about messaging regarding sheltering and work. What about pay for hourly workers like housekeepers and landscapers? This is still being clarified.

Commissioner Martel-Dow reported on Canal Alliance. Their emergency team has taken hundreds of calls. They went fully-remote in two days. 200 calls on Tuesday. Lots of request for help with unemployment applications; website keeps crashing. Their food pantry was cancelled, as there was no system in place for safe distribution; now there aren’t any volunteers, as many were over 60. She responded by arranging a line of credit with the market next door to the Canal Alliance office building. Current needs are rental assistance, food, healthcare and unemployment. Food pantries can resume next week if social distancing is in place.

They are also dealing with: messaging to families; getting tablets to families so kids can do homework; immigration and legal services; DACA and aging out, and whether there will be a Supreme Court decision before June; and production of simple videos for public information on Facebook.

Commissioner Bonfilio reported that the Civic Center is closed, leaving the Grand Jury to work remotely. He will provide updates.

Commissioner Auguste reported that Homeward Bound is keeping numbers low at shelters for social distancing purposes. They are “temperature testing” all incoming clients, and making referrals to health care if needed. Older clients fear being in the shelters; some have been provided with
temporary Motel 6 vouchers. There are also staffing concerns, as many staff have children or are pregnant.

Commissioner Seatavakin reported that she has been working on point of testing at the County’s Emergency Operations Center.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – In addition to the written report, Executive Director Amy Reisch added the following:

- The Help Me Grow database is up and running; screening is now available for ASQ (the “Ages and Stages” questionnaire). Without any formal launch of the program or outreach, our Help Me Grow staff (Susanne Kreuzer and Maritza Barahona) have 15 clients. They have been getting referrals from private doctors, following just one presentation to physicians at “Grand Rounds.”
- First 5 Marin has been collaborating with the County and the Marin Community Foundation about emergency funding needs; we are anticipating a role for First 5.
- First 5 staff is working remotely, but all are available to commissioners and the public.
- Our May 1 policy breakfast is cancelled and will be rescheduled in the Fall.
- Forums for March and April are cancelled/postponed.
- The Women’s Hall of Fame dinner has been rescheduled to September 17th. (First 5 will retain the two tables that were reserved.)

V. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- Preparation for Emergency Grants to Address COVID-19
  In preparation for the need for emergency grants related to the Coronavirus/COVID-19, Amy noted that the Governor has suspended the 72-hour Brown Act requirement. As executive director, current First 5 policy allows her to make expenditures up to $10,000. She asked whether the commission might want to expand that authority.

  Commissioner Bonfilio asked whether she wanted to suggest a dollar amount. Amy suggested a $25,000 limit per grant and noted that the budget has several places with unallocated funds (about $175,000). Commissioner Rodoni asked if we want to establish a sunset. June 30th was suggested as the end of the fiscal year.

  Commissioner Bonfilio made a motion to authorize the executive director to approve emergency grants up to $25,000 each, for a total not to exceed $175,000, through June 30th, 2020.
  **Motion/Second: Bonfilio/Rodoni**
  The motion was unanimously approved.

- Update on Public Charge
  Commissioner Martel-Dow provided an abbreviated presentation about immigration and public charge issues. After the recent Supreme Court decision, the public charge issue is moving forward and now applies to entry into the United States and green cards as well as adjustment of status and consular processing. The form is 20 pages long, with detailed questions about receipt of public benefits. 100,000s of people are being excluded by a wealth test. Low-income people are not being allowed to bring family members into the country. Individual immigration officers have a great deal of discretion.

  - One small, bright note is that Coronavirus testing and treatment is excluded from the public charge test.
  *Commissioner Bonfilio noted that he would not be here if the wealth test were in place when his relatives immigrated. All agreed that most of us would not be here. *Commissioner Beuerman asked if we are under martial law? She said that the immigrant populations are very fearful.
• **First 5 Retrospective from The Luminare Group**

_Jill Casey_, First 5 Marin’s evaluation consultant from The Luminare Group, provided an introduction to their retrospective report. She noted that there are three overarching considerations for the commission at this point: what are their roles in the executive director transition, the rapidly declining Prop. 10 (tobacco tax) revenues; and the challenging political environment on the national level. (Now, added to that is the Coronavirus/COVID-19 situation.)

**Where to Lead from?** First 5 Marin is grounded on three basic areas:

1. **Targeted Universalism:** First 5 Marin is both focused on the long-term yet able to be flexible in the present.
2. **Ecosystem Partner:** First 5 Marin is a convener, a catalyst, a strategist and an advocate.
3. **First 5 Marin is also a community-centered learning organization.**

As commissioners have been focusing on COVID-19 priorities, it was agreed that self-reflection, sharing and discussion of the Retrospective Report would be delayed until the April meeting when commissioners have had more time to read and reflect.

-Amy asked whether this document might not be helpful for executive director candidates. There was general agreement that it be shared with our recruiters.

**VI. CLOSED SESSION –** Commission chair Kristen Seatavakin adjourned the meeting to closed session for the Executive Director search update at 6:55 pm. Non-members and staff ended their calls.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT –** Commission chair Kristen re-opened the meeting with nothing to report. The commission meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm.

**NEXT SCHEDULED COMMISSION MEETING:**

**Wednesday, April 15, 2020**
5:30 p.m.
First 5 Marin conference room
1050 Northgate, Suite 130, San Rafael, CA

*** Please note that the meeting location is tentative. (If shelter-in-place orders remain active, this meeting will again be conducted by phone/video conference.)

*Coronavirus/COVID-19 pre-meeting discussion about health services at the Marin Community Clinics (MCC). First 5 Commissioner Dr. Lisa Leavitt reported that one week ago, patients were filling the waiting room at the clinics. Now, as much as possible is being handled by phone. (One major question is about billing for a “telephone visit.” All are learning new processes.) Commission Leavitt provided this summary:

* Dental care – emergency only
* 4th Street dental clinic – closed
* clinic hours reduced; now Monday to Friday 8 to 5; no evening hours
* Administration – remote
* Behavioral Health – phone visits and remote
* Nutrition – remote
* Community mobile crisis -working
* Complex Care – compiling a list of resources available (food etc.)

There is now a single point of entry for employees and patients; all are screened before entering. Focus on personal protective equipment (PPE).

*Well visits for children – on hold. (Separating well and sick visits morning and afternoon.)
*Newborn well-checks at 8:30 a.m.
*Gyn care – delayed
*OB case managers – remote. Referrals to specialists on hold

Dr. Leavitt also noted that people are nervous about working at the clinics, especially those who are older or are pregnant.