



FIRST 5 MARIN
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PUBLIC NOTICE

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A G E N D A

Marin Children and Families Commission Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

4:00-6:00 pm

First 5 Marin Offices, 1050 Northgate Drive, Ste. 130, San Rafael

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87848137905?pwd=BE60d4Kok0z4YTobaSj34zRM0Jg8k5.1>

Meeting ID: 878 4813 7905

Passcode: 345511

Public Comment – Members of the public may comment on any item on the agenda during consideration of the item. Each speaker will be given 3 minutes for comment. A respectful dialogue that supports freedom of speech and values diversity of opinion is encouraged. The Commission may question the public, but no further action or discussion is allowed.

- 1. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:00 pm)**
- 2. Approval of minutes of the meeting of March 12, 2025 (4:05) - Action**
- 3. Public Comment (4:10) - Information**
This is an opportunity for members of the public to provide comments on issues that are not on the Agenda. Three (3) minutes per speaker maximum.
- 4. Funded Partners Project Update: Bay Area Discovery Museum (4:20) - Information**
- 5. Executive Director/Staff Report (4:35)**
 - A. Update on CalPERS Reconciliation by Brie Niewald of Regional Government Services (Info)
 - B. Update on Maternal Behavioral Health Initiative RFA (Info)
 - C. Early Learning Collaborative Action Networks (ELCANs) Presentation from Marin Promise Partnership (Info)
- 6. Committee Reports (4:55) - Information**
 - A. Retreat Ad-Hoc Committee: Schedule retreat planning meeting
- 7. Commissioner Items (5:10)**
 - A. Request to approve the Annual Report FY 23-24 prepared by First 5 California (Action)
 - B. Request to Approve the First 5 Marin Strategic Plan with no changes (Action)
 - C. Performance Review Process for Executive Director (Information)
- 8. Commission announcements & final comments (5:40) - Information**
- 9. Adjournment (6:00pm) - Action**

NEXT MEETING: May 14, 2025

Copies of documents used in this meeting are available in accessible formats upon written request. The agenda is available online at www.first5marin.org. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance (i.e. auxiliary aids or services) in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact First 5 Marin by calling (415) 257-8555 or email Michelle@first5marin.org at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.

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Commission Meeting Minutes April 16, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair Jessica Hollman called the meeting to order at 4:27 p.m. (after a quorum was in attendance).

Commissioners in attendance:

Kari Beuerman
Angie Evans
Aideen Gaidmore – Commission Vice Chair
Itoco Garcia
Dr. Jessica Hollman – Commission Chair
Supervisor Eric Lucan
Kelly McKinley
Lisa Raffel
Sandra Rosenblum?
Dave Bonfilio – Commissioner Emeritus

Staff in attendance:

Maria Niggle – Executive Director
Michelle Fadelli - Manager of Public Policy and Communications
Susanne Kreuzer – Manager, Help Me Grow Marin?

Guests in attendance:

Faisely Correa – Parents in Action/Marin Child Care Council
Daphne Cummings – Marin Promise Partnership
Veronica Duarte – Parents in Action
Dennise Enriquest – Marin Child Care Council
Monica Espitia – Bay Area Discovery Museum
Teresa Lee – Marin Child Care Council
Tanya Taylor – Marin County Office of Education

Guests online:

Kelsey Lombardi – Marin Child Care Commission
Madeleine McCann – Marin Child Care Council
Brie Niewald – Regional Government Services
Michele Tyler – Marin Child Care Council

- II. REVIEW OF MINUTES** for the commission meeting on March 12, 2025.
Commissioner Raffel made a motion to approve the minutes from March 12, 2025;
Commissioner **Garcia** seconded the motion.
Motion/Second: Raffel/Garcia

The motion to approve the minutes was unanimously approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kelsey Lombardi, from Marin Child Care Council and the Marin Child Care Commission, introduced herself as an online guest.

IV. FUNDED PARTNERS PROJECT UPDATE

Monica Espitia from the Bay Area Discovery Museum (BADM), provided an update on their project, "Improving Child and Family Well-Being in Marin Through Joyful Play." Monica provided a background summary about BADM and their "CREATE" framework (which describes how educators can build children's creative problem-solving skills through intentional experiences). CREATE means: Child-directed, Risk-friendly, Exploratory, Active, Time for imagination, and Exchange of Ideas.

Monica explained that the BADM project is designed to close the "playful learning opportunity gap" by "building barriers and tackling barriers." In the first year, a community engagement manager was hired and they are testing initiatives. Several community days are scheduled: with Parent Voices (April 27th), at Pickleweed Park (May 4th), and at the North Bay Children's Center (May 24th). More community outreach will be happening at dozens of places with many organizations. [Commissioners will be invited to family days.]

How will success be measured? BADM will be tracking ratings from focus communities; they will track the redemption of free passes that will be distributed, hoping for 50% new/first time visitors. They will also conduct a survey: observing child learning through play; asking if BADM "feels like a place for people like them"; observing joy being experienced as a family; and having the opportunity to connect with others.

Relationship-building: year one, with meetings and setting community days; year two, with community days, advisory and "hopscotch dreaming"; year three, with community play learning installations.

Commissioner Hollman said BADM is very welcome at Marin Community Clinics.

Faisely Correa said the first time she went, she thought the museum was just for rich people; but the staff was really nice. (She added that for summer camps, BADM is too far away. Monica replied that transportation will be provided for community days, but BADM is not able to provide that yet for summer camps.)

Veronica Duarte said the museum needs bilingual staff at the front desk; she added that her whole family enjoyed their visit.

Dennise Enriquez said that two of their families have summer camp scholarships.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

A. **Executive Director Maria Niggle** began by reporting that she is working with Regional Government Services (RGC) on our CalPERS reconciliation for four employees (three current and one former).

Commissioner Garcia asked if we're looking at options for reconciling with the employees, with pre-tax deductions. Can we "over-deduct" for a period of time rather than "charging" and employee all at once?

Commissioner Hollman noted that we are not paying back CalPERS; they have been paid. It's paying back First 5 Marin.

Brie Niewald from RGC said you have three years (from March 23, 2025) to notify employees of the over-payment and attempt collection. She noted that \$7,360 is owed by one of the employees.

Commissioner Garcia said he doesn't feel comfortable demanding that, but noted that it is public money.

Commissioner Gaidmore said it's important to set up a payment plan to return the money to the commission.

Commissioner Beuerman asked how this could go on for multiple years. **Maria** said it was found by a detailed auditor. (She noted that it will show up in the audit for the next fiscal year due to the date it was discovered.)

Brie Niewald added that prior deductions were a flat amount rather than a percentage; that has now been changed.

Michelle Fadelli asked if staff will be notified soon.

Commissioner Hollman asked about the next steps. **Maria** said she will work with Brie and RGC.

Dave Bonfilio mentioned the Brown Act and the need to agendaize a closed session.

Commissioner Gaidmore said this should happen fast-- at the next commission meeting.

Commissioner Garcia added that the "remedies" are public information; but the personal information and dollar amounts would be in closed session.

Commissioner Raffel asked if the prior employee has been notified; **Maria** said not yet. Brie has recommendations.

B. Update on Maternal Behavioral Health Initiative RFA

Executive Director Maria Niggle reported on the RFA that has been submitted. She said that staff from Marin County Health and Human Services has been very helpful. There have been some negotiations on the budget. She's grateful to the commission for providing funds for the application. We should hear by next week (end of April) whether we are a successful applicant—for the \$3 million proposal.

Commissioner Raffel asked what the role is for First 5 Marin, at what scale. For 3.5 years? **Maria** said the application was made by several agencies and partners. We are coordinating. Help Me Grow Marin will play a big part. First 5's can't be the lead agency because we are not a 501(c)(3), but we are the proxy lead.

C. Early Learning Collaborative Action Networks (ELCANs) – Daphne Cummings from Marin Promise Partnership (MPP) presented; MPP is a collective impact organization focused on results-based accountability and place-based focus.

The ELCAN effort has achieved some early wins: 100% preschool teacher retention in West Marin with no waiting list and an excellent benefit package. In Marin City/Sausalito, there are sustainable funding sources for preschool and child care. Programs are racially and culturally appropriate.

Commissioner Gaidmore said the ECE community (early childhood education) does not support preschool embedded in the K-12 system. **Commissioner Garcia** said we also have to note that the processes were not serving West Marin well. **Commissioner Gaidmore** said it's still not ideal. **Daphne** said her job is to coordinate; these were not her choices. But they have been successful in West Marin.

Daphne said there are two options: the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) for 2-to-4 year olds, and the "CCTR" (the General Child Care and Development Program) for 0-to-3 and 5-to-12 year olds.

In the Canal, there is a prenatal-to-3rd grade ecosystem. It started with a “datawalk” of factors and barriers.

Top priorities: funding for infant-toddler and family/neighbor care; the gap between the true cost of care and reimbursement rates; and funding for staffing. For family/friend/neighbor (FFN) care, there is only one in West Marin and Marin City, but 21 in the Canal. This is currently unlicensed care. There is an opportunity for vouchers.

Question: how can ELCAN outreach to families? (especially undeclared care homes).

Dave Bonfilio said you just have to go to the recreation path in the Canal to see dozens of caregivers. Daphne said, yes, the Canal is busy, lively, vibrant. So many babies! (Just WHO is caring for the babies, and what do those caregivers want and need?)

Commissioner Hollman said that ELCAN is a wonderful experience! At medical appointments, we ask whether anyone else cares for your child. There is a quality concern; many caregivers are not trained, and will rely on TV/electronics— and serve unhealthy foods and excessive juice.

Commissioner Evans said one size does not fit all. She said that Marin City has kind of started over. Previously, there was nothing available for two year olds. Historically, older Black women were the caregivers, and they have not been well-replaced. Our ELCAN work is individualized. There is no “FFN care” in Marin City. There are trust issues, trauma. Children and families are getting their needs met— whatever we need to do. Horizon Community School is working FOR Marin City.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. The ad-hoc Retreat Committee just scheduled a meeting for Thursday, May 1st at 4 pm. [The full-commission retreat is scheduled for Friday, May 23rd.]

VII. COMMISSIONER ITEMS

A. Request to Approve the Annual Report for FY 2023-24 prepared by First 5 California

Commissioner Raffel made a motion to approve First 5 California’s Annual Report for FY 2023-24. **Commissioner Garcia** seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Raffel/Garcia. The motion to approve was unanimous.

B. Request to Approve the First 5 Marin Strategic Plan – with no changes

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to approve First 5 Marin’s Strategic Plan..

Commissioner Raffel seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Garcia/Garcia. The motion to approve was unanimous.

C. Performance Review Process for Executive Director – Commissioner Hollman

reported that she is working with Claudia Sandoval and provided a handout related to the executive director (ED) performance review process. The process calls for commissioners to assess the ED’s performance through a four-part framework and to provide feedback and set future goals. The process is designed to strengthen communication and trust, and support organizational effectiveness. The handout also provides a timeline for the process, with commissioner surveys to be completed by May 5th. By June 15th, Claudia will incorporate all the feedback and finalize templates for the annual and mid-year review process.

Commissioner Garcia said it’s a great framework.

Commissioner Hollman added that it’s ok not to respond to any questions.

Commissioner Beuerman asked if there will be staff review. (No, staff will not be included in this process.) **Commissioner McKinley** noted that a “360 review” is an entirely different process.

Commissioner Garcia said we should consider how supervised staff responds. Maria said we did not ask for a 360. **Commissioner Beuerman** said perhaps we should in the future; it could be useful.

VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/FINAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Hollman asked about Advocacy Day at the State Capitol in Sacramento. Maria said it was a great success! Unfortunately, no commissioners were able to attend. She saw Assemblyman Damon Connolly with First 5 Sonoma and Parent Voices. The Senator McGuire meeting was with staff; Jackie Wong from First 5 California and Avo Makdessian from the First 5 Association also attended (because Senator McGuire is the President of the Senate. (Head Start was a big part of the discussion.)

Commissioner McKinley asked when do we get dates for Advocacy Day; we need at least two months lead time. **Commissioner Garcia** suggested that we put an advance hold on potential April dates. Michelle Fadelli said we can also make appointments with the legislators in their district offices so more commissioners can attend.

Michelle also provided a reminder for the next Marin Communications Forum which will be in-person on **Friday, May 2nd** at Dominican University (1 to 4:45 pm). The subject is **“Maternal Mental Health, Wellness and Suicide Prevention.”** Maria Niggle added that the Zoom recording is available for the last forum, The New Ecology of Early Childhood, with Dr. Philip A. Fisher from the Stanford Center on Early Childhood.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Raffel made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by **Commissioner McKinley**.

Motion/Second: Raffel/McKinley.

The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.