



A G E N D A

Marin Children and Families Commission

Statutory Meeting

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

4:00-6:00 pm

Health & Wellness Center, 3240 Kerner Blvd. Room 109, San Rafael

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86817051335?pwd=gShkhDGeaYgamakvs8nj0fisRPghaZ.1>

Meeting ID: 868 1705 1335 **Passcode:** 068705

- I. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:00 pm)**
- II. Approval of minutes of the meeting of February 12, 2025 (4:03) - (Action)**
- III. Public Comment (4:05) - (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.
- IV. Funded Partners Project Update - Postpartum Support Center (4:10) - (Information)**
- V. Executive Director/Staff Report (4:25) - (Information)**
 1. Update on commission retreat from Megan Joseph from Project Impact - (Information)
 2. Request to approve the revised Employee Handbook - (Action)
 3. Request to approve agreement with VIVA Social Impact Partners for services in reference to the Help Me Grow/Maternal Behavioral Health RFA - (Action)
 4. Financial Update & Budget to Actual Report - (Information)
 5. Update on Funded Partners 3rd Quarter Report - (Information)
- VI. Committee Reports (5:00) - (Information)**
 1. Finance Committee
- VII. Commissioner Items (5:15)**
 1. Consideration of Angie Evans' Membership Application (term expired Feb. 28, 2025) and request to forward recommendation of the nomination to the Marin County Board of Supervisors - (Action)
 2. Request to approve commission retreat date for May 23, 2025 and to reconvene Retreat Committee - (Action)
 3. Request to approve Budget FY 2024-25 Revision - (Action)
 4. Request to approve Fund Balance Policy - (Action)
 5. Advocacy Day - Wednesday, April 9, 2025 in Sacramento - (Info)
 6. Consideration to Reschedule Commission Meeting of April 9, 2025 due to scheduling conflict with First 5 Association's Advocacy Day (Action)

7. Update on final year of funded programs - ARPA & Impact Match - (Information)
8. Commission Appointments to Expire Soon - (Information)
9. Governance Calendar - (Information)
10. Annual Filing of Form 700 (Information)

VIII. Commission announcements & final comments (5:40) - Information

IX. Adjournment (6:00pm) - Action

NEXT MEETING - TO BE DETERMINED

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
March 12, 2025**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair Jessica Hollman called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. The meeting was held at the Health and Wellness Center, located at 3240 Kerner Boulevard in San Rafael.

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:

Tanya Taylor – Marin County Office of Education

Guests online:

Erika Hart – Postpartum Support Center
Ivana Jagodich – Postpartum Support Center
Megan Joseph – Project Impact

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES for the commission meeting of February 12, 2025. Commissioner Raffel noted a small correction on page 3 of the minutes; her reference to “Adrian” from Bridge the Gap (at the bottom of the page) should be changed to “Adriana.”

Commissioner Beuerman made a motion to approve the minutes as amended;
Commissioner Evans seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Beuerman/Evans

The motion to approve the minutes as amended was unanimously approved.

III. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Hollman asked if anyone had anything to add to the agenda.

Commissioner Lucan asked that we add an item to the agenda related to Transitional

Kindergarten in Mill Valley. **Maria Niggle** said it should be added to “Commissioner Items,” as #11. Commissioner Hollman made a motion to add the item to the agenda; Commissioner Gaidmore seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Hollman/Gaidmore

The motion to add a discussion of Transitional Kindergarten in Mill Valley was unanimously approved.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

V. FUNDED PARTNERS PROJECT UPDATE

Ivana Jagodich, Executive Director of the Postpartum Support Center (PPSC) joined the meeting online and presented a summary of their projects and impact. Ivana shared their Mission and Vision (available on their website at: www.postpartumsc.org); the goal of PPSC is to “help expectant and new parents navigate the perinatal period, reduce parental stress, and build effective support systems. Ivana reminded the Commission that prior to funding from First 5 Marin, PPSC was operating out of a storage facility and providing services remotely/online.

Ivana reported that their Diaper Bank is currently serving 500 families; and 939 families have applied for Diaper Bank supplies. (Over the past two years, there have been 8500 requests for supplies. She added that 231 families have requested additional services through the Client Services Interest Form.

Erika Hart from PPSC also joined online and added that the list of new families is growing monthly; there were 33 new families in January and another 30 in February. The March schedule includes connections with 430 families.

Commissioner Hollman said that we are so thankful for PPSC and for Ivana recognizing the need for postpartum services and for starting PPSC. She added that she called PPSC from the hospital when she was working with a new mother who was Ukrainian; she spoke with Erika to ask if there were any Ukrainian parents she could connect her with, and Erika just said she was on it. Commissioner Hollman added that she makes weekly referrals to PPSC. Ivana added that new mothers really need peer support.

Commissioner Raffel asked if there was any geographic data. Ivana said all the parents are from Marin County, and the majority are from the Canal and Novato. PPSC serves every city and town in the county. She added that most clients are Hispanic, but they serve all ethnicities. Some clients are from Russia, Ukraine, Turkey.

Commissioner Hollman asked how PPSC advertises for donations. Ivana said they use social media, and connect with their partners, with mothers clubs and volunteers. (She added that they always need toddler clothes and diapers.)

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Maria Niggle began by reporting that First 5 Marin has received \$400,000 in state/local/federal funding including \$30,000 from “CalAIM” for billable services through Help Me Grow Marin. She added that there is a significant behavioral health grant pending for 0-to-5 system of care coordination; First 5 is a named partner. She will report back on the status.

Maria added a summary of current “risks”: healthcare services/IGT grant matching; immigration concerns (we have resources on our website, and distributed an even larger list by email); and threats to Medicaid/MediCal for CalAIM funding.

1 Update on Commission Retreat - from Megan Joseph/Project Impact

Megan summarized the status of commission considerations following the recent retreat:

- * the work of the commission comes first
- * we are focusing on solutions and our commitments
- * we will create a Charter to provide clarity of purpose for existing members and information/background for new members.
- * we are looking at how to hold each other accountable
- * and we are looking at decisionmaking.

Megan summarized our sustainability discussion:

- There's a threshold; it's not just declining revenue. We need to look at timing.
- We need a funding strategy
- Solutions will require data, research and politics
- We need informed budget-planning

For the upcoming retreat on May 23rd:

- Strategic Plan "refresh"
- Completing the Charter/roles of commissioners
- Learning from other First 5's
- Facilitated discussions
- Learning more about the work of funded partners
- Early Learning Action Network
- Dealing with conflicts of interest/operating principles

Commissioner Hollman asked how we will look at the Strategic Plan and the Charter.

Megan said 8-10 years is not considered "best practice" for a strategic plan; it's ok for a longer framework. The plan should be three years, with more specifics.

Commissioner Garcia said COVID was a detour. We should have a subcommittee look at it and report back to the commission. Megan said a "refresh" still the participation of the full commission. We can "accordion": use subcommittee work, bring that to the commission and back again.

Commissioner McKinley said the hope is for specific direction for the next few years, clarity. What can we do, leverage and how can we connect the dots. Where are our time, talent and resources going? We need specifics. **Commissioner Hollman** said let's bring this up at the retreat and send it to a subcommittee.

2. Employee Handbook – updates include matching First 5 Marin's holidays to the County of Marin; creating a five-step rate schedule for pay equity and conducting a pay study for compensation. (Perhaps we can join with other First 5's on this?) Our auditor suggests a five-point scale.

Dave Bonfilio asked if the auditor will accept a plan to conduct the study, with the details to be worked out next year. (Yes.)

Commissioner Gaidmore said that CVNL (Center for Volunteer and Non-Profit Leadership) does a good job. She added that a study should be local (to capture Marin cost of living).

Commissioner McKinley suggested Gallagher for compensation survey reports

(www.ajg.com/services/compensation-survey-reports/)

Commissioner Lucan made a motion to approve the updates to the Employee Handbook; Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Lucan/Garcia

The motion to approve the updates to First 5 Marin's Employee Handbook was

unanimously approved.

3. VIVA Social Impact Partners – this item was a request to approve an agreement with VIVA Social Impact Partners for services related to a Maternal Behavioral Health RFA. The Commission for Behavioral Health has issued a “Request for Application” (RFA) for a “Maternal Behavioral Health Initiative” intended to: reduce out-of-home placements, improve educational outcomes, identify developmental delays, and serve behavioral health needs of young children and their parents/caregivers. If awarded, Marin would receive \$3 million. Maria explained that North Marin Community Services would be the lead agency.

Suzanne Kreuzer explained that all partners in the grant application are part of the current home visiting network in Marin County.

Commissioner Gaidmore said this is a wonderful example of supporting local organizations who do the work, through convening and coordinating.

Commissioner Rosenblum said we can leverage resources. She noted there are 14 counties eligible, but all may not apply. We have a pretty good chance.

Maria Niggle added that even if we are not successful with the grant, the preparation gives us a good framework for moving forward.

Commissioner Gaidmore made a motion to approve the application for the Maternal Behavioral Health grant; Commissioner McKinley seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Gaidmore/McKinley

The motion to approve the application for the Maternal Behavioral Health grant was unanimously approved.

4. Financial Update & Budget-to-Actual Report – Maria Niggle presented new budget documents for commission review including a two-year comparison of Budget-to-Actuals and an Administrative Costs Report (mid-year for FY 2024-25). She noted that we have had some difficulties with FASS (our accountants); quarterly reports are now coming in on a more timely basis.

Commissioner Raffel said that the “Administrative Cost Report” is not how she is used to reviewing admin costs.

Commissioner McKinley asked about the Budget-to-Actuals; Maria explained this is a revised budget based on what’s in versus not in. (Funds actually received.)

Commissioner McKinley asked what the Administrative Costs Report telling me?

Commissioner Garcia suggested that we ask the Finance Committee for the information in a different format. **Commissioner Lucan** suggested that we have one high-level slide (with the main point/s) and a more detailed chart for those who want to dive deeper.

Commissioner Raffel said that the budget revision document was easy.

Commissioner Garcia suggested that we consider infographics with the basic information.

Maria Niggle said our administrative costs are not creeping up. We are at 4.97% for the first half of the fiscal year, well under the 15% ceiling for admin costs set by First 5 California.

Commissioner McKinley referenced the Budget-to-Actuals, and said we want to know where did we say we would be versus where are we actually.

Maria Niggle said once accepted, we can make adjustments (for the reports) for the 3rd quarter.

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to accept the financial update documents; Commissioner McKinley seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Garcia/McKinley

The motion to approve the financial update documents was unanimously approved.

5. Update on Funded Partners 3rd Quarter Report – Maria Niggle reported that most of the funded partners have been paid the bulk of their award at this point in the fiscal year.

Commissioner Garcia asked if all of the partners are in compliance; Maria said not yet and we are working with them. **Commissioner Garcia** said non-compliance should be an issue when it's time for additional funding.

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to accept the 3rd quarter report for our funded partners; Commissioner McKinley seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Garcia/McKinley

The motion to approve the 3rd quarter report for funded partners was unanimously approved.

VII. COMMISSION ITEMS

1.Consideration of Angie Evans' Membership Application.

Commissioner Raffel made a motion to approve the application from Angie Evans for re-appointment to the First 5 Marin Children and Families Commission. Commissioner Lucan seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Raffel/Lucan

The motion to approve the commission application from Angie Evans was unanimously approved.

2. Request to Approve Commission Retreat Date for May 23, 2025 – this date was addressed in the Executive Director's report above.

3. Request to Approve the Budget Revisions for FY 2024-25 – this was addressed in the Executive Director's report, and upon further discussion, a motion to accept the proposed changes to the budget was made.

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to accept the budget revisions as presented, Commissioner McKinley seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Garcia/McKinley

The motion to approve the budget revisions was unanimously approved.

4. Fund Balance Policy – **Maria Niggle** presented the new draft Fund Balance Policy with a reserve level of six months of operating costs (personnel and services) based on the projected operating costs for the upcoming fiscal year (with an added COLA).

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to approve the new Fund Balance Policy; Commissioner Hollman seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Garcia/Hollman

The motion to approve the Fund Balance Policy was unanimously approved.

5. Advocacy Day 2025 – Maria Niggle reported that First 5 “Advocacy Day” at the State Capitol in Sacramento will be Wednesday, April 9th; she said she would send registration information out to commissioners.

Commissioner Garcia shared the suggestion that the commission meeting previously scheduled for April 9th be moved to Wednesday, April 16th at First 5 Marin offices (as our room in the HHS Connection Center is not available). **Commissioner Gaidmore** said that families are concerned about coming to the Canal neighborhood; **Commissioner McKinley** reminded the commission that anyone can dial in and join the meeting on Zoom.

Commissioner Gaidmore said we need to advertise the Zoom option more; Michelle Fadelli said she would be sure to do that. **Commissioner Beuerman** said she would announce to HHS staff at 3240 Kerner. **Commissioner Rosenblum** said there hasn’t been any drop in caseloads for WIC at this location. Commissioner Evans said there is fear among high school and elementary students as well; they are afraid to go to school because their parents might not be there when they go home.

Commissioner Hollman asked that we send a calendar invite for the new commission date on April 16th. Commissioner Garcia asked when we can change meeting dates, times or locations; Maria Niggle said that can only be done at “statutory meetings” in October or March.

Commissioner McKinley asked if there will be training for Advocacy Day. Yes, there will be talking points and some simulations of a legislative visit. Michelle Fadelli added that we will prepare some Marin-specific talking points as well.

6. Rescheduling the April 9, 2025 Commission meeting to Wednesday, April 16th – this was addressed in the discussion of Advocacy Day above.

7. Update on ARPA and Impact Match – Maria Niggle noted that this is the final year of ARPA funding; the program is sunsetting.

Commissioner Gaidmore stated that this program took over a year of negotiating with the County; former First 5 executive director Pegah Faed participated with her. The resulting teacher retention funding was huge. She said that the Board of Supervisors should continue the funding.

8. Commission Appointments – three commissioners have upcoming expiration dates: Jessica (term expires 6/30/25), then Sandra (9/14/25) and Kelly (11/30/25). Maria will send a link to re-apply. [Commissioners should re-apply well in advance to avoid a gap in service.]

9. Governance Calendar – a date has been added to the calendar for Maria’s performance review; a first meeting with the consultant is scheduled for Friday, March 14th. Recommendations will then be brought to the commission. Commissioner Gaidmore asked if the commission will be participating; Commissioner Hollman said yes. Commissioner Lucan added that the performance review would be discussed in closed session with the opportunity for feedback.

10. Filing Form 700 – reminder that all commissioners must file a “Form 700” regarding conflicts of interest; the deadline is Tuesday, April 1st. Maria will re-send all the information and links out to commissioners. **Commissioner Garcia** said the form is easy—unless you own property in Marin. He suggested that Maria send a “calendar invite” with a deadline reminder.

11. Transitional Kindergarten in Mill Valley – Commissioner Lucan added this item to the agenda to suggest that First 5 Marin send a letter regarding the proposed cancellation of the transitional kindergarten (TK) program in the Mill Valley School District. He suggested that the letter be addressed to the school board president and the superintendent in Mill Valley with a cc to John Carroll, the Marin County Superintendent of Schools.

Commissioner Evans said that a Mill Valley parent reported that the TK program probably was coming back. **Commissioner Lucan** suggested that we check the latest status before sending the letter.

Commissioner Raffel made a motion to approve sending a letter to support retaining the transitional kindergarten program in Mill Valley; **Commissioner Garcia** seconded the motion.

Motion/Second: Raffel/Garcia

The motion to approve sending a letter supporting retention of the transitional kindergarten program in Mill Valley was unanimously approved.

VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/FINAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Evans reported that the New Horizons Preschool was in its third week at their new location. Commissioners have received an announcement and are invited to the opening celebration on Saturday, May 10th from 12:30 to 2:30 at 140 Drake Avenue in Sausalito

Commissioner Garcia said he wanted to call attention to a new pattern of partner abuse toward women and children. He asked what are the commission resources on this issue.

Commissioner Evans thanked him for bringing up the issue, and added that Marin is not exempt. Michelle Fadelli reported that the Marin Communications Forum's May 2nd meeting will be about Maternal Mental Health; we can include the issue and share resources there. Susanne Kreuzer said Help Me Grow Marin addresses trauma with providers, including kids in trauma; she noted that this can be triggering for providers. **Commissioner Gaidmore** added that the early childhood education workforce is trained in trauma-informed care.

Commissioner Evans said we also need to think about culturally-sensitive and culturally-appropriate support services in Marin City. **Commissioner Gaidmore** said that the Marin Child Care Council has a long history of providing services in Marin City.

Commissioner Raffel said that Bridge the Gap has had training through the Cypress Resilience Project. (www.cypressresilience.org) **Commissioner Evans** said we need to address Marin City traumas; "we have Shawn (in Marin City), but we need more." [She explained that Shawn is a consultant from the East Coast who is available once a month in Marin City.] Maria Niggle said we can start a spreadsheet with Black caregivers and resources.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Garcia made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Commissioner Evans.

Motion/Second: Garcia/Evans

The motion to adjourn was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m.