

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY
ADMINISTRATION

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ 297

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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February 11, 1999

AGENDA: February 23, 1999

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 05060

RE: Families and Children First Program Update

Dear Board Members:

As your Board will recall, Proposition 10 was approved by California voters in November, 1998. This Proposition established local and Statewide Families and Children First Act Programs, to be funded by an additional levy on tobacco products. It is anticipated that Santa Cruz County will receive approximately \$3.7 million per year. Your Board has established a Santa Cruz County Families and Children First Commission to determine the distribution of these funds.

On January 26, 1999, your Board appointed Cecilia Espinola, in her role as HRA Administrator, and me, in my role as HSA Administrator, as two of the five members of the Families and Children First Commission for Santa Cruz County. You also initiated procedures which will result in two at-large vacancies being filled and, with the appointment of the Chair of your Board as the fifth member, the Commission membership will be complete and able to begin its work.

At your January 26th meeting, the HSA Administrator was directed to report back on preliminary plans for staffing and support to the local Commission and to report on any additional developments on the State or local level which may affect the organization and operation of the Families and Children First Commission within Santa Cruz County.

State Developments

On the State level, very little has transpired since the last report to your Board. The Statewide Commission is expected to provide guidance and direction to local Commissions, though independence of the local Commissions is assured through the structure of the Initiative approved by the electorate. As of this writing, Governor Davis has yet to make additional appointments to the Commission. One appointment was made by outgoing Governor Wilson. A number of bills have been introduced in

the Legislature proposing to direct the activities and expenditures of both local Commissions and the State Commission, but these bills are in a very preliminary stage and there is little of substance to report.

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) has scheduled a conference on Proposition 10 for March 5, 1999, in Sacramento. The conference will cover a variety of issues associated with child growth and development, including brain development, services which positively influence children's growth, integrated community-based service delivery models, and related matters. Though this conference and others of the same nature are concentrating on some of the technical aspects of child development, there is little activity around issues of organizational structure, strategic planning, inter-county cooperation, and the potential interfaces between local Commissions and the State Commission.

Local Developments

The United Way of Santa Cruz County recently received a grant from the Bank of America for a project called, "Success by Six". This grant, in the amount of \$30,000, is for a nine-month period beginning immediately and is designed to provide a community-wide planning activity (expected to take six months, with the remaining three months to be devoted to report writing and plan dissemination) around the needs of children, ages 0 through 6. The target population is almost an exact duplicate of that to be served by Proposition 10 efforts. It is anticipated that the County's Children and Families First Commission may be able to develop a joint endeavor with the United Way so that the outcome of their planning activities will have relevance and applicability for the County's own Commission and its ultimate requirement to develop a strategic plan for Santa Cruz County children.

United Way will be carrying out the Success by Six planning activities under the auspices of the Santa Cruz County Children's Network. The Network has been previously designated by your Board as the County's AB 377 children's services planning group.

Also, on the local front, HSA staff have had discussions with their counterparts in Monterey County. Monterey is at about the same stage in development of their Commission as is Santa Cruz. They, however, in cooperation with Natividad Medical Center (Monterey County's Hospital), have conceptualized a possible approach to local needs identification and service delivery for children. This model envisions a social/medical/educational core diagnostic center from which would radiate a variety of services and interventions, all designed to promote child growth and development, and to mitigate circumstances which affect a child's ability to grow and mature. While the Monterey development is conceptual only, it does suggest that potential benefits may exist in inter-county and multi-county discussions and planning, at least around developmental phases of the local Commissions and how they ultimately will be organized.

Advisory Participation

The Initiative that established the Children and Families First Commission in California counties envisioned a broad-based community planning and activity process. Santa Cruz County can achieve this through the Success by Six activity. The Initiative also envisioned that interest in these important endeavors would extend beyond those appointed as Commissioners, and contemplated a series of advisory groups. This should be a matter for discussion at an early meeting of the Commission. Presumably the Commission would wish to begin development of a structure that would result in a formal, consistent method for the community to communicate its wishes to the Commission, both directly and through a series of subordinate advisory groups. The broad base of the Success by Six collaborative also supports this purpose.

Financial Implications

There are no changes in the projected revenues that ultimately will come to Santa Cruz County as a result of Proposition 10. However, when these funds arrive remains a question. Inquiries at the State level have not resulted in any definitive response as to when revenues actually will transfer from the State to the counties. Tax collections began on January 1, 1999, on certain tobacco products and presumably are flowing into State coffers via the State Board of Equalization. There is some debate as to whether legislation is required to authorize State officials to move these funds to the local jurisdictions, or whether the Proposition was sufficiently detailed to permit this to occur. It is expected that some of these questions will be resolved within the next few weeks.

Santa Cruz County's ability to provide substantial staffing to the Proposition 10 Commission will be enhanced once a clear picture of funding support is available. In the meantime, HSA and HRA both have assigned staff to attend the March 5th conference in Sacramento which will permit this County to remain abreast of State developments, and to begin gathering preliminary information on models for intervention strategies and local planning approaches.

It is anticipated that at the first meeting of the local Commission, HSA will present a proposed series of interim goals and discussion topics to guide the Commission. These may include areas for discussion, such as:

1. Priority emphasis should be upon designing activities that will lead to development of a Families and Children First strategic plan for Santa Cruz County.
2. The Commission should consider the pros and cons of various funding strategies and should seek guidance from local and regional experts in this regard.
3. Should any distribution of funds be deferred until a strategic plan, developed with community participation, has been completed?
4. If there is a need to engage in preliminary grant-making prior to completion of a strategic plan, should such grants be one-time-only in nature? Should on-

going or sustained grant-making be deferred until a plan has been fully developed? **300**

5. Should the Commission consider adopting policies that will give priority to grants that can be used to leverage additional funds from State or federal sources, or from private foundations?
6. Should the Commission investigate strategic alliances with other funding sources in the community/region/State that have a similar targeted population and might wish to pool funds for a greater impact upon the local community?

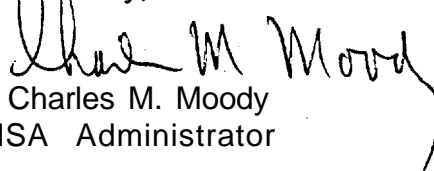
The above topics and others would be designed to stimulate initial thinking about how the Commission might pursue its role and begin its activities. They are not intended to be exclusive nor particularly comprehensive, but rather to provide a general sense of how the Commission could begin its deliberations.

In consideration of the above,

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Accept and file this report on Families and Children First Act; and
2. Direct the Health Services Agency Administrator to convene a meeting with appointed members of the Santa Cruz County Families and Children First Commission.

Sincerely,


Charles M. Moody
HSA Administrator

RECOMMENDED:


for Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

CMM/amg

cc: CAO
Auditor-Controller
County Counsel
HSA Administration
HRA Administration
United Way
Children's Network