

Early Childhood Council of Kern

General Council Meeting

March 6, 2024

Minutes

Members Present

Maria Aleman, Kevin Bartl, Myetta Beavers, Mike Bledsoe, Carolyn Coffey, Gladys Garcia-Jara, Megan Gretona, Jessica Krall, Christine Lollar, Michelle Lynam, Yadira Mendoza, Deborah Murr, Shirelle Perez, Lily Pimentel-Stratton, Elizabeth Rose, Janet Rubio, Amanda Tumblin, Melissa Vittoria, Tracey Wheat, and Jennifer Wood-Slayton.

Members Absent: Alesha Brown, Yolanda Gonzales, and Betty Phillips.

Staff Present: Amanda Cruz-Ardoin and Cheryl Nelson.

Guests Present: Albert Najera, Tessie Ragan, Michelle Van Hook, Shannon Vernon, Serena Witten, and Audrey Zimmerman.

Call to Order/Introductions: The meeting was called to order by Council Vice Chair Yadira Mendoza at 5:30 p.m. at Larry E. Reider building Room 202. Members were also present at the satellite locations at the Kern River Valley Family Resource Center in Lake Isabella, Cerro Coso Community College Child Development Center in Ridgecrest, and the Taft College Library. Michelle read the Council Mission Statement.

Consent Items: The consent items were read, which included amendments to the agenda that Item 5 (Budget) is an Informational Item. Mike made the motion to approve the consent agenda, including the amendment. It was seconded by Amanda T. The motion was unanimously approved. There were no public comments.

Kern Early Stars presentation: A presentation on Kern Early Stars was presented by coaches Marissa Roesler and Tracey Wheat. They spoke about the program, and how the coaches and staff support the early learning workforce in Kern County. They talked about how the coaches collaborate with other early learning organizations and agencies to enhance the services of all groups. It was also announced that Yadira has been hired as lead coach. There were no public comments.

Budget: Cheryl offered information regarding the Foundation Account. Christine had a question regarding the Wendy Wayne Scholarship payment in 2023. Cheryl said there was a correction made in the budget by KCSOS, but the recipient was paid in May, 2023. There were no public comments.

Council Merchandise: Amanda Cruz stated that the Executive Committee talked about getting name tags for all Council members, and a possible uniform look for going out to events. When looking at different styles of name tags, the majority of members liked the white name tag with the Council logo, which would cost around \$3.20 each. Tracey stated that the logo on the name tags would be more eye catching. Styles and materials of polo shirts were discussed, along with a supplier with which members currently work. Pens to distribute at community events were also discussed, with a price of around 39 cents each favored. The Council's logo and web site will be on the pens. Lily made the motion to spend \$600 from Community Event fund for pens and name tags. It was seconded by Amanda T. The motion was unanimously approved. There were no public comments.

2024-2029 ECCK Strategic Plan Workshop: Yadira asked for approval to purchasing lunch for Executive Committee, staff, and any interested Council members for the Strategic Plan Work Meeting. Michelle made the motion for approval, with a second by Carolyn. The motion was unanimously approved. There were no public comments.

Public Policy Report: Kevin commented on AB 2982, on First 5 CA is watching. If approved, the workgroup would present a comprehensive, equity-focused prenatal-to-age 3 system agenda. AB 2828 (Kids License Plate bill) has been reintroduced by local Assembly member Dr. Jasmeet Bains. Funds would be used for childhood injury prevention, with specific state agencies to receive the fund determined later. AB 772 would exempt drop-in child day care facilities from having proof that each child has TB clearance and age-appropriate immunizations. There were no public comments.

Council Committee Reports: For Workforce Development committee, Michelle commented that Feb. 22, committee members Michelle, Myetta, and Lily participated in Career Day at Standard Middle School, and received lots of good questions. On March 7, the committee will be present at Career Expo at CSUB. On April 26, they will attend the career event at CTECH at Independence High School. Christine stated the Wendy Wayne Scholarship committee decided to add the Council logo to the application. Christine spoke to Wendy's husband Gene Tackett, who asked to attend the next award celebration. Christine also recommended adding names of awardees to the Council's website, and that the qualifications have been enhanced. After speaking with Gene, Christine asked that an increase in the scholarship from \$500 to \$1000 be placed on the April Council agenda. There were no public comments.

Member Reports: Lily is the Regional Director for Early Childhood Mentor Program. In April, she will hold a welcome opening meeting for director mentors. She said that it is a valuable way to get students to join the workforce. Director Mentor would build support for new site directors. Christine thanked Amanda for hole punching the Council meeting forms. She also asked if the Council could authorize to allow staff to purchase \$250 or less, without Council approval. It will be an agenda item in April. Amanda Cruz stated the Bakersfield City School District Parent resource fair will be held April 10 from 3 to 6 p.m. at the district's 11th Street location. She also said that the UPK Mixed Delivery Group will meet March 19 at 6 p.m. on Zoom. There were no public comments.

Adjournment: Tracey moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Amanda T. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Next meeting: April 3, 2024, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Larry E. Reider Education Building, 2000 K Street, Room 202, Bakersfield, CA 93301 (satellite locations at the Kern River Valley Family Resource Center in Lake Isabella, Cerro Coso Community College Child Development Center in Ridgecrest, and the Taft College Library).

Respectfully Submitted,



Mike Bledsoe, Secretary