

## SYSTEMS OPTIMIZATION & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

### ACTION SUMMARY

February 20, 2024 – 12:00 p.m.

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**Members:** Chevon Kothari (Chair), LaWanda Wesley

**Advisory Committee Member(s):** Heidi Keiser, Carolyn Curtis

**Staff:** LaTina Price, Erin Maurie, Lindsay Dunckel

**Consultant:** Stephanie McLemore Bray

**Absent:** Érik Fernández y García, Kairis Chiaji

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#### 1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

#### 2. Public Comment on Off-Agenda Items

None.

#### 3. Approve Draft Action Summary of December 19, 2023

**Action:** MOTION: C. Curtis Second: C. Kothari

Approved as recommended.

#### 4. Receive Update on Policy and Advocacy Activities

Staff provided an updated on the latest policy and advocacy activities including a debrief of the First 5 Summit and Advocacy Day held earlier in the month and updates on local Child Care Coalition and Children's Trust Fund.

##### First 5 Summit and Advocacy Day

E. Maurie reported that more than 100 colleagues from across the state were representing the First 5 Network in Sacramento for the First 5 Association Summit and Advocacy Day. Commissioner LaWanda Wesley kicked off the event with a heartfelt welcome and land acknowledgement. The sessions focused on capacity building, systems and REDI work and strengthening our collective message.

Staff including LaWanda, Julie, LaTina and Erin had productive meetings on the supports needed for children and families and had the opportunity to highlight the impactful local work of First 5.

#### Local Policy and Advocacy Efforts

E. Maurie along with Committee member H. Keiser reported that the County Board of Supervisors approved funding to support efforts to increase the supply of child care providers in hard hit districts. Also highlighted was the advocacy efforts of local early childhood experts, including First 5, who made recommendations to the Planning and Oversight Commission for the Sacramento Children's Fund to support child care, early care, and economic support for families with young children. Comments were well received by members.

#### **5. Receive Update on Systems Improvement & Sustainability/ REDI Activities**

Staff provided an update on systems improvement and sustainability efforts including notice of the upcoming staff REDI retreat, updates on the Sacramento County GARE application and introduced Stephanie McLemore Bray of Touchstone Leadership Group who is consulting on the Commission's Participatory Grant Making process.

#### GARE Application

Staff reported that Sacramento County received approval to move forward on its application for membership to GARE - a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advancing opportunities. L. Price stated that she, along with several other county department leads, members of the Racial and Health Equity Interdepartmental group and County DEI Cabinet participated in the first GARE planning meeting. As part of the GARE application process, the planning team is requesting high-level feedback on department-level Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, past and present.

Committee members provided feedback as to which of the Commissions efforts ought to be included in the summary. Members suggested adding Reducing African American Child Deaths and the Blue Ribbon Commission in addition to the Resolution on Racial Equity and Social Justice, Consultants Employed to Support Operationalizing REDI, and Strategic Planning Process for a total of four First 5 Sacramento DEI related initiatives.

## **6. Presentation: Participatory Grant Making Process**

S. Bray, founder of Touchstone Leadership Group and former CEO of United Way CA Capitol, region provided a presentation to committee members on the Participatory Grant Making (PGM) and an update on where First 5 is currently in the process. She gave an overview of her experience and background with over 30 years in the non-profit sector and highlighted her work with the Seattle Foundation to raise their racial equity agenda and implement PGM. She stated that the PGM model is picking up a lot of interest and engagement with foundations who in service to racial equity have done the work, similar to First 5, about understanding how much of their resources have been invested in the BIPOC community.

Bray highlighted that the Commission included in its Strategic Plan the goal of funding new and non-traditional partners and engaging those partners in co-creating what the process will look like to distribute the funds. She stated that a significant amount of dollars are being invested in those organizations and that she is very excited to be a part of the process.

Committee members received the presentation which included an overview of the key principles, best practices, strategies and structures for engaging participants, examples of decision-making models, and key questions that will inform the process.

Committee members asked about outcomes for participants in past PGM efforts and the impacts of unrestricted capacity building funding on target populations being served by the agencies. Bray provided members with real scenarios based on past initiatives highlighting positive feedback and impactful outcomes. In addition, she strongly encouraged First 5 to engage an evaluator that has experience with equitable evaluation. She advised that one of the principles of equity is to meet people where they are, meaning that you understand fundamentally how inequitable practices have been barriers for people to do their very best work in the community. She affirmed that all aspects of the PGM process should be and look different from the current process. Bray acknowledged that she has not found a government agency that has conducted a PGM process and assured that it can be done.

J. Gallelo noted that Commissioners will see that the funding timeline for the REDI grant making process is 6 – 12 months later than the process in place to start contracts on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Staff fully understand this process requires that we “slowdown in order to speed up”. She added that separate evaluation dollars have been allocated for the REDI work.

All expressed their excitement in seeing the process implemented by First 5.

**7. Committee Member Comments**

No comments

**8. Upcoming Events/Future Agenda Items**

Next SOS Committee Meeting scheduled for April 16, 2024 in person with Commissioner L. Wesley as chair. Meeting will be held at the First 5 Sacramento Office.

Adjourned: 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

LaTina Price, Systems Optimization,  
Sustainability & Racial Equity Manager  
First 5 Sacramento Commission