



**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 10, 2018**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, at City Hall in Austin, Texas.

Board Members in Attendance: Chair Larry Elsner, Raul Alvarez, Mary Jane Burson, Jennifer Garcia, Aletha Huston, Rhonda Paver, Monica Sanchez, Carrie Semple.

Staff in Attendance: Austin Public Health Department (APH) staff – Rachel Farley and Laura Williamson.

Chair Elsner called the Board Meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

1. INTRODUCTIONS: ECC members, guests, and presenters introduced themselves.
2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None
3. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: None
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Member Huston moved to approve the November 11, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes and Member Paver seconded. Minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0.
5. PRESENTATION: Briefing and possible action on the potential 2018 Bond Referendum, Carla Steffen, Chief Financial Officer, Austin Convention Center Department
 - a) A Bond Election Advisory Task Force was appointed by Council in August 2016
 - b) In late 2016-early 2017, City staff compiled a comprehensive bond program needs assessment totaling \$3.2 billion
 - c) In June 2017, City staff presented Council and the Task Force with a recommended bond program starting point of \$640 million and bond categories of Reinvestment in Facilities and Assets, Transportation Infrastructure, Stormwater, Parkland and Open Space, Affordable Housing
 - d) Over 72 hours of public meetings have occurred to date
 - e) Public input shows support for increased funding in all categories except Transportation; Public input showed support for decreased funding for transportation
 - f) Playscapes are slated to get funding through Parks and Recreation Department
 - g) The task force is expected to make a recommendation to Council by March 2018

- h) ECC could make preliminary recommendations before March and more specific recommendations between March and August
- i) More information about bond program development at www.austintexas.gov/2018bond

6. STAFF BRIEFING:

- a) Austin Public Health and an ad hoc workgroup continue to work to prepare a response and recommendations to council on a resolution related to High Quality Child Care and PK3
- b) Preliminary findings and recommendations will be presented to the ECC on February 14 so members can give input

7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) 2018 Planning Session- Suzanne Hershey led ECC members in discussing the group's priorities and plans for the year
 - Rachel Farley reviewed the purpose and duties of the ECC per the bylaws:
 - Primary role is to make recommendations to Council; ECC also has responsibility to promote the Ready Communities goal of the School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP)
 - Focus is promoting optimal development in, and improved services for, young children
 - Members decide to form three work groups:
 - Policy- make policy recommendations, consider a tool to evaluate whether needs of families with young children are considered or met in policies, ensure ECC is working on SRAP strategies and indicators
 - Finance- Vetting budget recommendations, propose recommendations that have financial impact for the City,
 - Community Partnerships and Engagement- maintain the partnership with Austin Police Department, liaise with other Boards and Commissions, link with other initiatives such as Success By 6/United Way
 - Next steps are for each member to choose at least one work group to be on and to choose a lead for the group
 - There is a designated spot on the SRAP Leadership Team for an ECC member; a member from each work group could attend

8. RELATED GROUPS:

- a. Child Care Licensing- Amy Woodward explained that Child Care Licensing has moved to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. As of January 5, providers must do background checks through a provider portal. No staff can begin work until FBI checks come back. Questions can be directed to her at Amy.woodard2@hhsc.state.tx.us.
- b. Success by 6- Cathy McHorse let members know that United Way and Austin Public Health are moving forward on plans to implement Family Connects in Austin. United Way is planning to launch Bright By Text in April. United Way is

forming a business alliance to focus on early childhood issues and school readiness called Early Matters Greater Austin. Two Associate Superintendents from Austin ISD will attend the next SRAP Leadership Team meeting to give information about and get input on the process on filling the Early Childhood Director vacancy.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a) Preliminary presentation on the High Quality Child Care and PK3 Council resolution
- b) Proposed action- recommend recognition of the contributions Elaine Clark who retired from Workforce Solutions
- c) Presentation from WIC
- d) Possible action on 2018 Bond Program
- e) Topics to explore further
 - Family Connects program
 - School Readiness data (E3 Alliance)
 - Friends of the Children program
 - High Quality Child Care and PK3 resolution and needs/gaps assessment – CM Garza
 - Other ongoing Early Childhood efforts
 - Input from families and authentic community engagement
 - Other Boards and Commissions and potential areas of alignment

ADJOURNMENT –Chair Elsner adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m. without objection.