



**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, March 21, 2018**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at Workforce Solutions Capital Area, located at 6505 Airport Blvd. in Austin, Texas.

Board Members in Attendance: Chair Larry Elsner, Raul Alvarez, Anna Lisa Conlin, Jennifer Garcia, Rebecca Harrison, Serena Hill, Aletha Huston, Rhonda Paver, and Sebastian Wren.

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

Chair Elsner called the Board Meeting to order at 9:08am.

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 January 10, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes and Member Harrison seconded. Minutes were approved by a vote of 8-0 with Member Conlin off the dais.
5. PRESENTATION:
 - a) Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC), Austin Public Health. (Annette Phinney, WIC Manager)
 - i. USDA program
 - ii. Serves pregnant women, breastfeeding moms with children under 1 year old, postpartum women who've had a baby within the last 6 months, children up to 5 years old
 1. Anyone caring for a child up to 5 years old can apply for benefits for the child
 - iii. Participants must live in Texas, be income-eligible, and have nutritional risk to qualify
 1. Nutritional risk is broad enough that it essentially captures

- all families
- iv. Benefits include:
 - 1. Nutrition & breastfeeding education
 - 2. Healthy food
 - 3. Referrals
- v. Nutrition packages tailored to needs of clients
 - 1. For example, nutrition packages will be different for breastfeeding moms compared to formula feeding moms
- vi. WIC classes include Guide for Dads, Cooking with Fruits and Veggies, Do I Make Enough Milk, Tips for Feeding 1-2 Year Olds, and Active Play
- vii. Program Mission – Prevent nutrition related illnesses and improve health outcome
 - 1. Differs from SNAP, which aims to prevent and reduce hunger
- viii. Every \$1 spent results in up to \$4.21 savings in Medicaid costs
- b) Current programs and the FY 2018-19 Annual Action Plan process, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department (Angie Sommers, Senior Research Analyst)
 - i. Discussion regarding the Consolidated Planning process, which leads to an Action Plan and a CAPER
 - 1. There are 5 action plans under the consolidated plan, which have more detailed information regarding expenditures and approach
 - 2. The CAPER is the end of year report on accomplishments and goals
 - ii. Over the last 5 years, funding across all sources has remained fairly level
 - 1. Current Administration has proposed cuts, but has not been finalized at this point
 - iii. In Fiscal Year 2016-17, the City of Austin spent \$14.7 million and \$12.8 million was available in Federal funding.
 - iv. Investment categories include:
 - 1. Homeless & Special Needs
 - 2. Renter Assistance
 - 3. Homebuyer Assistance
 - 4. Homeowner Assistance
 - v. Public comments can be submitted to NHCD@austintexas.gov
 - vi. All programs are income eligible; not targeted to specific populations aside from income
 - 1. Families with children are not targeted, but child care is an available resource for participants
 - vii. It's documented that children are present, but doesn't give priority
 - 1. Lead testing is done for families with children up to 6 years old
 - viii. Services are provided directly by the City as well as through

contractors

1. Contractors are used for home repair and child care services
 - ix. Discussion regarding the input process
 1. Consolidated planning a lot more broad, and will engage with Commissions and include a community needs assessment period
 - Begins in January; needs assessment in March
 2. Speaker distributed signup sheet for emails to be added to the distribution list regarding the process
 - x. Federal funding and guidelines are extensive; limits local control regarding program structure
 - xi. NHCD looking for input regarding the population needing services in the community
- c) Bright By Text (Jessica Dominguez, Success By 6 Program Manager, United Way for Greater Austin)
- i. Cathy McHorse from United Way for Greater Austin presented on behalf of Jessica Dominguez
 - ii. Bright by Text is related to VROOM
 1. App (VROOM) only is not as effective without text reminders, which is provided by Bright by Text program
 - iii. “Start Smart” campaign for brain development information for caregivers
 1. Sends age specific brain activities via text
 - iv. Request for ECC to consider making recommendation that Bright by Text fliers be included in utility bills
 - v. Program has ability to send localized information by zip code
 1. Can include things such as Pre-K registration timelines and information regarding events like Coats for Kids
 - vi. Outreach has begun with AISD through Parent Support Specialists, interested in partnering with other school districts
 - vii. Content links to VROOM and brightbytext.org
 - viii. Available in English and Spanish
 1. Looking into expanding to include Arabic
 - ix. United Way will follow up at an upcoming ECC meeting with more information and an item for potential action

6. NEW BUSINESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- a) Executive Committee updates – Chair Larry Elsner
 - i. ECC work groups- Chair Elsner and Cathy McHorse – request from Chair to meet prior to next general meeting and assign lead person to schedule meeting for each group. Initial meeting should include selection of a leader and discuss upcoming work agendas and purview of each group.
 1. Policy
 2. Finance
 3. Community Partnerships and Engagement

- b) ECC representation on, and cooperative agreement with, the School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP) Leadership Team members
 - i. SRAP drafted in 3 year cycles; embarking on planning for version 3.0; will be a 5-year plan
 - 1. SRAP Leadership Team would like ECC representation at the table to assist with planning the SRAP and to help align ECC work with SRAP goals where possible
 - ii. Member Huston made a motion to continue partnership and representation on SRAP Leadership Team
 - iii. Member Wren seconded the motion
 - iv. Motion passes 9-0

7. STAFF BRIEFING:

- a) Texas Family Connects – no discussion
- b) Cities Supporting a Strong Prenatal to Age 3 Agenda Initiative – no discussion
- c) Council Resolution 20170928-057 regarding high quality child care and Pre-K3 – Report will be provided to ECC at April meeting

8. RELATED GROUPS:

- a) Austin Chapter of the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TXAEYC) – no updates
- b) Child Care Licensing – no updates
- c) Child Inc. – no updates
- d) E3 Alliance – no updates
- e) Success by 6 – no updates
- f) Workforce Solutions – 1136 are currently on the waitlist. Attrition is low due to 12-month eligibility
 - i. Attrition largely from absence termination, could move from 66 days to 40 days, with analysis before end of service eligibility
 - 1. If new rules are adopted, would go into effect in May

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Updates and possible action on the 2018 Bond Referendum
- b. Updates and possible action on findings and recommendations of the work group responding to Council Resolution 20170928-057
- c. Next meeting Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at 9:00 a.m., Location: City Hall, Boards and Commissions Room 1001

ADJOURNMENT –Chair Elsner adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m. without objection.