



## **EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL MINUTES**

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
Wednesday, October 21, 2020**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) convened on Wednesday, October 21, 2020.

Board Members in Attendance: Chair McHorse, Vice Chair Worthington, Members Bliss-Lima, Gordon, Hosking Pulido, Huston, Paver, and Wren

Staff in attendance: Rachel Farley, Donna Sundstrom, Kymberley Maddox, Cindy Gamez, Filip Gecic, Larry Elsner, Shay Breen

**CALL TO ORDER** – Chair McHorse called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from September 18, 2020 meeting**

Member Huston motioned to approve minutes. Member Paver seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes by a vote of 8-0-0.

### **2. PRESENTATION**

#### **a. Dove Springs Health Center and Child Care Center- Kymberley Maddox, Assistant Director**

Ms. Maddox noted that it takes 6 to 8 weeks to plan a public meeting. There is a community Task Force that helps staff and the project team stay connected to the community between meetings. ECC Vice Chair Worthington is a member of the Task Force. Public meetings about the Health Center were held on June 27, 2019, and September 21, 2019. They were well-attended. At the June meeting, the community was asked to provide feedback on key design and green elements. The feedback was that the community prefers the center to have a modern style, metal paneling material, standing seam roof, and solar panels.

The Child Care portion of the building will be one-story which will have access to the rest of the health center but will also have a separate entrance. The rest of the building will be two stories. The first floor will include WIC and a community space and the second floor will have an immunization clinic, a neighborhood center, and will house the City's Community Youth Development (CYD) staff who work with young people in Dove Springs on programming to prevent juvenile delinquency.

The outdoor learning spaces for the child care center will not be accessible to public, so staff are proposing adding a nearby public playground. A shaded pavilion is planned between driveway and soccer fields with solar panels and battery storage where the community could charge devices in the event of a blackout. Community members told the project team that children need a safe crossing route from the neighborhood to nearby Mendez Middle School and Widen Elementary School, so pathways from the neighborhood connecting to the district park and/or a crosswalk to the schools will be included. Other elements that will be included are solar panels, rain water collection, pervious paver parking lot (not impervious concrete), a rain garden, and an

Art in Public Places installation. An example of Art in Public Places installation in the playground at the Women and Children's Shelter was shared. The Economic Development Department oversees the Art in Public Places project of which community engagement is a key component. Art installation will align with the construction timeline for the center.

Ms. Maddox shared pictures of the project site for the center and adjacent soccer fields. There is currently a survey on SpeakUp Austin asking for public input on two different options for footprints of the Health Center and shape of the Child Care Center within the Health Center. Both options have the same square footage. Both options preserve the existing trees and limit the center footprint to 16,000 square feet.

Next steps/timeline:

- Early 2021- Schematic Design Renderings – Present in Dove Springs Recreation Center and the South-East Branch Library if COVID-19 regulations allow
- Provide Website access for Public input
- Collect Input on Social Media
- Incorporate comments in the design development documents
- Spring 2021 - Present more developed design
- Design-Builder Proposal for Guaranteed Maximum Price by Summer of 2021
- Construction Start by Fall of 2021
- Construction Completion by Spring 2023

Questions and comments:

**Q-** Does the design of child care center take into consideration the differing amounts of space needed for children of different ages? **A-** Yes. The City required that the Design-Build firm contract with a child care consultant.

**Q-** What is the process for choosing the child care center operator? Will the advisory council be involved in that? **A-** It is a competitive process. The operator will be required to achieve and maintain NAEYC accreditation and have an agreement with WFS to accept child care subsidies. Community members may be invited to participate in the selection of the operator.

**Comment-** It would be helpful to see the layout and configuration of the child care center in each of the two options in the survey as this could influence the preference of the two options.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS**

##### **a. Elect ECC representative and alternate to sit on the Joint Inclusion Council**

Member Huston motioned to elect Raul Alvarez as the JIC representative and Johanna Hosking Pulido as the alternate. Member Gordon seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 8-0-0.

##### **b. Resolution thanking Council for including child care in the SAVES funding**

The Policy Work Group proposed a motion to approve a recommendation thanking Council for supporting child care through SAVES. Member Huston seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 8-0-0.

##### **c. Approve ECC 2021 Calendar of Meetings**

ECC members reviewed and discussed the draft calendar of meetings for 2021 with meetings scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. with no meetings in July or December. Members noted that rather than the ECC scheduling evening meetings to encourage community engagement that the ECC and the community engagement should work to engage members of the community where they are. Vice Chair Worthington noted that once the

meetings are no longer remote, it would be great if residents could have the option to participate remotely or in person.

Member Huston motioned that ECC approve the draft calendar without changes. Member Gordon seconded the motion. The 2021 calendar was approved by a vote of 8-0-0.

**d. Discuss and approve draft proclamation and ECC letter honoring Jacquie Porter**

The original draft of the proclamation was too long. Mayor Pro Tem Garza's office suggested that ECC members could write letter to the family to accompany the proclamation that includes the content edited from the original draft. Vice Chair Worthington will follow up with Members Huston and Alvarez to get the letter drafted. ECC members can vote to approve the language of the letter and proclamation at the November meeting.

**e. Community Engagement Work Group next steps**

Member Alvarez will send out a meeting invitation for October 27 at 3:30 for anyone interested in participating in this work group. Note, ECC members can invite or suggest members of the community who are not ECC members to be a part of work groups.

**f. Update on City of Austin Economic Development Corporation- Chair McHorse**

Council approved the bylaws and procedures to move forward with creating this corporation and included a seat on the board for an early childhood sector representative. Nominations and appointments to the board are being made, but we do not yet know how the early childhood representative will be selected. Council would like to use the corporation to generate additional funding for the sectors included in the SAVES resolution. Special thanks to Council Member Tovo's office who informed Chair McHorse about this opportunity and to the Chamber of Commerce for supporting the inclusion of an early childhood representative.

**g. Update on Reimagining Public Safety- Chair McHorse**

On November 17, from 2 to 4 p.m., the SX6 Coalition will hold a community conversation to gather input on reimagining public safety. SX6 will also encourage coalition member groups to host community conversations with their own constituents. Community conversations will also be held in each Council district. The ECC could request an update from the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force in the future. Rachel will email copy of the community conversations toolkit to ECC members.

**h. Update on Pre-K enrollment- Chair McHorse**

Pre-K enrollment in Central Texas is down significantly compared with last year according to E3 Alliance data. Current enrollment by district compared with last year: Austin ISD- 53%, Del Valle ISD- 55%, Manor ISD- 45%, Pflugerville ISD- 70%, Round Rock ISD- 75%, Leander ISD- 111%.

The SX6 Pre-K Work Group is crafting messaging to the community about benefits of Pre-K and testing the messaging with families to find out their concerns. ECC Members Gordon and Paver will share anecdotal information about why families are not enrolling in Pre-K with Laura Koenig and Cathy Doggett of the Pre-K Work Group.

**5. STAFF UPDATES-** None provided.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mary Jane is currently the ECC representative to the Success by 6 Leadership Team but she no longer has time to continue this role. Chair McHorse and Member Huston attend the Leadership Team each month but it would be helpful for another ECC member to attend in the role of ECC representative. Member Huston will fill this role until another ECC member is identified to take it on. Chair McHorse will send Member Gordon information about what the role entails. The SX6 Leadership Team meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Chair McHorse adjourned the meeting at 9:53 a.m.