

**MINUTES**  
**FIRST 5 RIVERSIDE COUNTY**  
**Commission Regular Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2026**  
**2:00 PM**

First 5 Riverside County  
585 Technology Ct  
Riverside, California 92507

**Commissioners Present:** Supervisor Chuck Washington, Jose Campos, Charity Douglas, Zachary Ginder, Cheryl-Marie Hansberger, Elizabeth Romero (arrived at 2:40 p.m.), Kimberly Saruwatari (arrived at 2:35 p.m.), and Takashi Wada.

**Commissioners Absent:** Edwin Gomez

**Administrative Staff Present:** Charna Widby, Executive Director; Michael Knight, Assistant Director; Patricia Perez, Deputy Director; Lynn Stephens, Executive Assistant IV; Carol Abella, Regional Manager; Larissa Wills, Regional Manager; Estella Briseño, Regional Manager; Charity Webb, Regional Manager; Sean Pravica, Senior Public Information Specialist; Michelle Rodriguez, Public Information Specialist; Martina Guevara, Commission Coordinator; Steven Hernandez, Administrative Services Analyst II; Michael Avalos, Support Services Technician.

**Legal Counsel:** Kristine Bell-Valdez, Supervising Deputy County Counsel

**A. Call to Order – Supervisor Chuck Washington, Commission Chair**

1. Pledge of Allegiance – Led by Mr. Knight, Assistant Director
2. Roll Call – Conducted by Ms. Stephens, Executive Assistant IV

Ms. Stephens informed the Commission that Commissioners Romero and Saruwatari are expected to join the meeting late.

Absent: Commissioner Gomez.

**B. Public Comments (for items not listed on the agenda) – Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair**

None.

**C. Commission and Advisory Committee Business – Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair**

1. Advisory Committee Comments

Ms. Widby provided an update on the Advisory Committee meeting, including leadership elections, program presentations, and key discussions related to Guaranteed Income and Help Me Grow Inland Empire.

2. Director's Report – Charna Widby, Executive Director; Michael Knight, Assistant Director; Patricia Perez, Deputy Director

Ms. Widby provided updates on recent activities, including the Riverside County State of Education event, Read Across America, the First 5 California Commission Meeting, the 2026 State Healthcare IT Connect Summit, and First 5 Riverside County leadership engagement in Mecca. She also highlighted a recent visit to the Mead Valley Family Resource Center.

Mr. Knight provided an update on the reopening of the Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center, scheduled for March 18, 2026.

Ms. Perez provided an update on the CalWORKs Home Visiting Program, noting that improved performance has led to increased enrollment and an additional \$907,000 in mid-year state funding for the current fiscal year.

Supervisor Washington requested clarification regarding the funding increase. Ms. Perez confirmed the augmentation is tied to program performance. Ms. Widby added that the additional funding helps reduce reliance on Proposition 10 funds previously used to fill system gaps. Vice Chair Campos asked whether Proposition 10 funds remain encumbered; Ms. Widby confirmed that those funds remain available to support families and program expansion if needed.

Commissioner Douglas asked about the number of families served. Ms. Widby reported that participation has increased from approximately 135–140 families two years ago to approximately 480 families this year, with projections to reach nearly 800 families next year.

Supervisor Washington commended staff on the program's growth.

3. Public Information Report – Sean Pravica, Senior Public Information Specialist and Michelle Rodriguez, Public Information Specialist

Ms. Rodriguez provided updates on JFK Family Day and recent Family Resource Center outreach materials, including brochures and coloring books.

Mr. Pravica provided an update on the First 5 Riverside County and Department of Public Social Services drowning prevention video, which was shown during the meeting.

4. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Douglas acknowledged the hard work and progress at the Family Resource Centers, highlighted DHS reopening and efforts to support vulnerable families, noted programs such as the coloring book initiative, and recognized the partnership with DPSS on child abuse and drowning prevention. She also thanked Supervisor Washington for his leadership and dedication to drowning prevention.

Supervisor Washington shared a personal story highlighting the importance of drowning prevention.

**D. Presentations/Information Items – Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair** (A copy of all Presentation/Information Items and attachments can be viewed at [www.rccfc.org](http://www.rccfc.org) and at the Commission Business Office)

1. Drowning Prevention: Advancing Strategy and Impact — Cathryn Van Der Linden, Director of Drowning Prevention Initiatives, and Larissa Wills, Regional Manager

Ms. Wills provided an overview of the item and introduced Ms. Van Der Linden.

Ms. Van Der Linden presented on drowning prevention strategy and impact, including risk factors and barriers, evidence-based prevention approaches, community impact, measurable outcomes, equity and access, and the broader role of water safety beyond swim lessons.

Commissioner Saruwatari arrived at 2:35 p.m. Commissioner Romero arrived at 2:40 p.m.

2. Brown Act Training and 2026 Updates Presentation — Kristine Bell-Valdez, Supervising Deputy County Counsel
3. Ms. Bell-Valdez provided Brown Act training, including guidance on meeting procedures, public participation, conflicts of interest, and avoiding serial meetings. 2027-2030 First 5 Riverside County Strategic Plan Update — Charna Widby, Executive Director
4. Ms. Widby provided an update on the development of the 2027–2030 First 5 Riverside County Strategic Plan, including the updated framework, timeline, and activity development. She noted that community listening sessions were still ongoing and would continue in the coming weeks.
5. **Information Only:** First 5 Riverside County 2nd Quarter Financial Highlights and Vendors Over 25K List — Patricia Perez, Deputy Director, and Hui (Seraphina) Wang, Principal Accountant – **Receive and File**

Item received and filed.

**E. Consent Items – Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair** (A copy of all Consent Items and attachments can be viewed at [www.rccfc.org](http://www.rccfc.org) and at the Commission Business Office)

1. Approve First 5 Riverside County Draft Commission January 21, 2026 Meeting Minutes
2. **26-07:** Approve Contract with Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies for Home Visiting Financing and System Building Strategies from March 11, 2026 – June 30, 2027 (**CONTRACT NO. CF26122**) [**\$243,375 - PROP 10 FUNDS**]
3. **26-08:** Approve Contract with Eide Bailly, LLP for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Independent Audit Services from May 1, 2026 – January 31, 2027 (**CONTRACT NO. CF26117**) [**\$57,500 - PROP 10 FUNDS**]
4. **26-09:** Approve Two Amendments with Family YMCA of the Desert (**CONTRACT NO. CF25108**) and SoCal Water Babies, Inc. (**CONTRACT NO. CF24101**) for Drowning Prevention [**\$104,705 - PROP 10 FUNDS**]
5. **26-10:** Approve the Second Amendment for Match Funds to Inland Southern California United Way for the Guaranteed Income Program Pilot Grant from the California Department of Social Services from October 25, 2023 – June 30, 2026 (**CONTRACT NO. CF24136**) [**\$2,313,871.12 - PROP 10 FUNDS**]
6. **26-11:** Approve Contract with Nava PBC for Form-Filling Agent Pilot - Operations and Evaluation and Acknowledgment of Active No-Cost Data Sharing MOU CF26112 from March 15, 2026 - October 31, 2026 (**CONTRACT NO. CF26125**) [**\$175,000 - PROP 10 FUNDS**]

*Commissioner Romero moved to approve consent items 1-6 as presented. Commissioner Campos seconded the motion.*

- **Ayes:** (8) Washington, Campos, Douglas, Ginder, Hansberger, Romero, Saruwatari, Wada
- **Nays:** (0)
- **Abstentions:** (0)
- **Absent:** (1) Edwin Gomez

**Quorum maintained. Motion carried**

**F. Presentation/Action Item/Public Hearing — Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair**

1. Conduct a Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Annual Report of the California Children and Families Commission (a copy of the report may be obtained at <https://rccfc.org/About-Us/Impact> and can be viewed at the Commission Business Office). Pursuant to the California Children and Families Act, Health and Safety Code Section 130140 — Charna Widby, Executive Director
  - a. **Public Hearing:** Annual Report of the California Children and Families Commission for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 – Supervisor Washington, Chair
  - b. **26-12: Receive and File:** Annual Report of the California Children and Families Commission for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 - Supervisor Washington, Chair

Ms. Widby provided a brief overview

*Commissioner Ginder moved to receive and file Presentation/Action Item/Public Hearing 26-12 as presented. Commissioner Saruwatari seconded the motion.*

- **Ayes:** (8) Washington, Campos, Douglas, Ginder, Hansberger, Romero, Saruwatari, Wada
- **Nays:** (0)
- **Abstentions:** (0)
- **Absent:** (1) Edwin Gomez

**Quorum maintained. Motion carried**

Commissioner Ginder expressed appreciation for the highlights in the Annual Report recognizing First 5 Riverside's contributions to the County.

**G. Future Agenda Items:**

1. First 5 Riverside County Annual Budget
2. First 5 Riverside County Champion for Children Award
3. First 5 Riverside County 2026 Legislative Policy Agenda
4. 2027-2030 First 5 Riverside County Strategic Plan Update
5. Inland Southern California United Way — Guaranteed Income Pilot Presentation
6. Help Me Grow Inland Empire Presentation

**H. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m. to the next Regular Meeting of the Riverside County Children and Families Commission to be held on May 13, 2026, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at:

First 5 Riverside County Children and Families Commission Office  
585 Technology Court — Conference Room A  
Riverside, CA 92507

Meeting Minutes Recorded by Lynn M. Stephens, Executive Assistant IV.