



2 The following are the summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board** meeting held  
4 on Thursday, June 9, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at Munson Senior Center, 975 S. Mesquite Street, Las  
Cruces, New Mexico.

6 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center Representative  
8 Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large  
Dr. Abel L. Chavarria, District 1 Representative  
10 Sharlene Wittern, District 3 Representative  
Yolanda Knodle, District 4 Representative  
12 Diane Turo, District 6 Representative  
David Hernandez, Eastside Center Representative  
14 Belinda Soto, Henry Benavidez Recreation Center

16 **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Vice Chair Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative  
18 Secretary Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative  
Manuel Contreras, District 5 Representative  
20

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

22 Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator  
Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager  
24 Guille Carranza, Recording Secretary

26 I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center  
Representative, called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on  
28 Thursday, June 9, 2022, at the Munson Senior Center, 975 S. Mesquite Street, Las Cruces, NM.

30 II. **ROLL CALL:** Roll call was taken, and a quorum was ascertained.

32 III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dr. Abel Chavarria,  
District 1 Representative.  
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36 IV. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** The Board observed a moment of silence.

V. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Dr. A. Chavarria moved to approve the June 9, 2022,  
38 Senior Programs Advisory Board Meeting agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Judy  
Chavarria, Member at Large Representative. Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.  
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42 VI. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members had no conflict of interest with any item of  
business on the agenda.

44 VII. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Yolanda Knodle, newly appointed District 4 Representative, was  
introduced and welcomed. She is a retired early childhood educator from New Mexico State  
46 University. She has been busy caring for her grandchildren, family members, and checking on  
her elderly neighbors.  
48

50 **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:** J. Chavarria thanked the Las Cruces Fire Department (LCFD) for the  
prompt response to a house fire in her neighborhood. They were very efficient and quickly  
52 extinguished the fire within minutes.

54 David Hernandez reported a water leak on the northside of the Henry Benavidez Recreation  
Center. He stated a large puddle of water has accumulated in that area and it continues to grow.  
56 He has reported the issue to several staff members. Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager,  
stated a work order was placed last month with the Facilities Department. The Facilities  
58 Department is looking into the issue. He will follow up with Facilities on the status of the work  
order. Dr. A. Chavarria requested the issue be resolved as soon as possible because during this  
60 drought, every drop of water is important and should not be wasted. He added it seems as if the  
City does not care about our water since the issue has not been resolved. S. Saldana stated water  
62 conservation is very important. She will ensure Senior Programs' staff follow up with the work  
order today to ensure the issue is resolved as soon as possible. Board members recommended  
64 placing an article in the newsletter to remind the public about the importance of conserving water.  
It was reported the City of Las Cruces Utilities Department now has a water app that tells people  
66 exactly what their water usage is for the month.

68 **IX. ACTION ITEM(S):** Dr. A. Chavarria moved to approve the May 12, 2022, Senior Programs  
Advisory Board meeting minutes as presented. J. Chavarria seconded the motion. Vote: 8  
70 Ayes, 0 Nays; Motion carried unanimously.

72 **X. DISCUSSION ITEMS - SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Sonia  
Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, stated that due to the recent break-in at the Munson  
74 Center facility and for security purposes, the Munson Center front doors will continue to be  
designated as the main entrance to the facility. The north and south side doors will continue to  
76 be used as exit doors only.

78 Dr. A. Chavarria commented there are times when they see people with mental health issues  
coming into the centers. He asked if staff are trained to work with people with mental health  
80 issues that are disruptive and pose a threat to the seniors. S. Saldana explained part of the  
reason the front entrance to the center has been designated as the main entrance to the building  
82 is to make sure staff knows who comes into the building. If an individual walks into the facility  
and exhibits disruptive behavior, staff have been trained to immediately call law enforcement.  
84 Staff will try to move the individual away from the group or move the participants away from the  
individual to keep everyone safe until law enforcement arrives. S. Saldana asked the Board to  
86 remain vigilant and report any incidents to the staff so they can address the situation before it  
gets out of hand. Board members stated there is no staff available at the Eastside Center that  
88 they can report these types of incidents to. The only staff are the kitchen staff. S. Saldana stated  
participants can report these incidents to Roger Bishop, Nutrition Program Manager, kitchen staff,  
90 Home Delivered Meals programs staff, and Tanya Quintana, Senior Office Assistant. Board  
members recommended those individuals that have been designated as a contact person for the  
92 Center should be more visible and introduce themselves to the participants at the centers so that  
participants know who to contact.

94 J. Chavarria stated she feels vulnerable at the Eastside Center, because sometimes it is just the  
seniors eating lunch by themselves with no staff members present. S. Saldana reiterated kitchen  
96 staff and various staff members at the center have been trained to assist with these types of

98 incidents. Staff attend annual active shooter training classes. Presenters are scheduled to  
100 provide mental health and CPI training to the staff. S. Saldana stressed the importance of  
102 ensuring everyone is aware of their surroundings. She reported the security alarm system at  
Munson Center is being updated and will soon be operational. Staff is working on installing  
security cameras at the facilities.

104 S. Saldana announced cleaning and sanitizing efforts will continue at the centers. Tables, chairs,  
and high touched areas in the buildings will continue to be cleaned and sanitized. Participants  
will also continue to be encouraged to sanitize and wash their hands regularly.

106 Senior Programs staff have received several complaints that the participants miss their cup of  
108 coffee in the mornings. Beginning July 1, 2022 coffee and pastries are being reinstated at Munson  
and Eastside Centers, with a few changes. The coffee pots are being replaced with Keurig  
110 machines for health and safety reasons. These machines require minimal maintenance and  
sanitizing. The pastries will be individually wrapped. There will not be a price increase for the  
112 coffee and pastries. This includes tea. Frank O'Brien Papen Center and Henry Benavidez Center  
will not have coffee and pastries available for sale because these centers open later in the day.  
114 S. Saldana announced participants cannot bring in their own coffee or coffee machines into the  
centers because the equipment has the potential of getting lost, stolen, or if someone gets sick  
116 from the drinking the coffee it poses a liability to the City. In addition, a food handler's permit is  
now required for anyone handling food. We want to make sure everyone stays safe.

118 It was reported that the kitchen staff should be trained on the proper way to handle food. The  
120 kitchen staff do not change their gloves when they handle things other than food. It was reported  
this happens frequently at all the centers. The kitchen staff need to be reminded that gloves  
122 should be used when serving and if they do something else in between they need to replace their  
gloves when they return to the serving line or take off their gloves while tending to other things.  
124 S. Saldana will follow up with the Nutrition Program Manager.

126 S. Saldana announced based on the recent Nutrition Program Survey results, a majority of the  
Senior Programs' participants voted to do away with the meals program reservation system.  
128 Beginning July 1, 2022 meal reservations are no longer required. The only meal reservations that  
participants are required to make are for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday meals. Meals  
130 will be prepared based on historical data and will add a 10 percent variance. D. Turo stated her  
concern is that if Senior Programs moves away from the reservation system, there will be an  
132 increase in the amount of food being wasted or thrown away. It is concerning because the price  
of food has increased significantly during the past few months. S. Saldana stated food waste  
134 has been an issue even with the reservation system in place. Participants forget to cancel or fail  
to show up for their meal reservation. She reminded Board members any leftover food, that can  
136 be frozen, is used for the home delivered meals program participants.

138 A survey was conducted to receive feedback from the participants about their music preference.  
Some people enjoy hearing the piano being played during lunch and others have a strong opinion  
140 against playing the piano. Based on the survey results, a majority of the participants chose to  
have the piano played during lunch. As a result, the piano will be played during lunch three days  
142 out of the week, Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. If Board members have any feedback on  
any of these changes that were recently implemented, please contact S. Saldana.

146 S. Saldana also announced beginning July 1, 2022 participants of the Grab N' Go meal program  
will no longer be allowed to pick up multiple meals. Participants will only be allowed to pick up a  
148 meal for their spouse or qualifying adult child. Beginning July 1, 2022 Senior Programs will also  
be asking that all meal program participants present their Senior Programs member card to the  
150 hostess on a daily basis. She announced member cards are being updated. The member cards  
will have a bar code that provides the member's name and ID number. The bar code will be  
152 scanned by the hostess during the check-in process each time the participant has lunch at the  
center. This check-in process is currently being used at the Benavidez Center for the congregate  
154 meals program participants. If you know of someone who needs a meal and they cannot attend  
one of the centers, please let the staff know and they can assess the individual for the home  
156 delivered meals program.

158 S. Saldana reported C. Behrens has done an excellent job working with the volunteers of the  
Russ Boor Community Garden. The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department  
160 staff recently visited the community garden, and they were very impressed with the garden. They  
are interested in modeling the community garden's mission of distributing produce to the seniors  
162 in the community.

164 **XI. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:** S. Saldana will work on finding presenters that  
can provide training on elder abuse. C. Behrens is working on scheduling flu shot clinics in the  
166 near future.

168 J. Chavarria reported the vegetables served at the Eastside Community Center continue to be  
overcooked. S. Saldana will follow up with the kitchen staff.

170 The next Board meeting will be held Thursday, July 14, 2022, at Henry Benavidez Recreation  
Center, 1045 McClure Road, Las Cruces, NM at 9:00 a.m.  
172

174 **XII. ADJOURNMENT:** Dr. A. Chavarria moved to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:55 a.m.  
Motion seconded by J. Chavarria. Vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

176 Submitted,

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180 Mona Bedale, Secretary

  
Toni Flores, Recording Secretary