



2 The following are the summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board** meeting held
4 on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Henry Benavidez Recreation Center, 1045
McClure Road, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

6 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

8 Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center Representative
8 Vice Chair Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative
10 Secretary Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative
10 Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large
12 Sharlene Witttern, District 3 Representative
12 Yolanda Knodle, District 4 Representative
14 Manuel Contreras, District 5 Representative (present via phone call)
14 David Hernandez, Eastside Center Representative
16 Belinda Soto, Henry Benavidez Recreation Center

18 **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

18 Dr. Abel L. Chavarria, District 1 Representative
20 Diane Turo, District 6 Representative

22 **GUESTS PRESENT:**

22 Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator
24 Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager
24 Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

26 **I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center
28 Representative, called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on
Thursdays, July 14, 2022, at the Henry Benavidez Recreation Center, 1045 McClure Road, 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 Chair Rodriguez-Haught.

34 **IV. MOMENT OF SILENCE:** The Board observed a moment of silence.

36 **V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large moved to approve the
38 July 14, 2022, Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting agenda as presented. Motion seconded
40 by Secretary Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative. Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried
unanimously.

42 **VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members had no conflict of interest with any item of
44 business on the agenda.

46 **VII. INTRODUCTIONS:** No introductions.

48 **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

50 **IX. ACTION ITEM(S):** Sharlene Witttern, District 3 Representative, moved to approve the June
14, 2022, Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting minutes as presented. Yolanda Knodle,

52 District 4 Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays; Motion carried
unanimously.

54 **X. DISCUSSION ITEMS - SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Sonia
56 Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, provided a breakdown of the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21)
Senior Programs' budget and the source of the funding. In FY21, Senior Programs received
58 \$117,016.00 in State grant funds from the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging (NMAAA) for the
congregate meals program; \$109,002.00 in Federal funds; \$160,671.51 from meal contributions;
and \$226,757.00 from City match funding.

60 The Home Delivered Meals program received \$341,153.49 from State funding; \$26,204.30 from
62 Federal funding; \$128,093.69 from Home Delivered meal contributions; and \$341,153.49 from
City local match funding.

64 The In-Home Care Services Program received \$20,106.00 from State funds; \$35,854.70 from
66 Federal funds; and \$98,897.00 from City local match funding. There were no program
contributions received from the participants in FY21, because Senior Programs staff were not
68 allowed to go into the clients' homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the home care aids
could not go into the clients' homes to provide services, they conducted wellness checks by calling
70 the clients on a daily basis. Staff worked very closely with the clients' family, Las Cruces Fire
Department Mobile Integrated Program, and Adult Protective Services to ensure the participants'
72 needs were met. During FY21, it was a very challenging time, but Senior Programs' staff
managed to keep in touch with the homebound clients and were able to get them the assistance
74 or services they needed to remain in their home and stay safe.

76 The Respite Care Services and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program received
\$4,058.00 from State funding; \$74,704.90 from Federal funding; and \$7,000 from City Local
78 match funding. Senior Programs was able to provide respite care services, because it
subcontracts with an outside home care agency that provided respite care services during the
80 pandemic. This service was not affected and continued as usual. The Grandparents Raising
Grandchildren program staff were able to provide services for the grandparents and the
82 grandchildren. They were able to provide the participants of the program school supplies,
clothing, etc. There were some restrictions that were in place during the pandemic and staff had
84 to stand in long lines outside of the store to make the needed purchases. S. Saldana reiterated
staff continued to work and provided services during the pandemic.

86 The Senior Nutrition Program received \$242,286.65 in Federal funding from the Nutrition Program
88 Services Incentive Program (NSIP) for the purchase of food.

90 The City of Las Cruces contributed \$424,287.27 of general funding for the Senior Nutrition
Program; \$492,556.06 for the Senior Centers/Recreation Program; and \$470,219.90 for the Long-
92 Term Care Services/Case Management Program.

94 Senior Programs provided the following units of services. The congregate meals program served
181,734 meals; Home Delivered meals program provided 297,460 home delivered meals; Respite
96 Care and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren programs provided 4,311 units of services. There
were no homemaker hours or recreational activities provided in FY21 due to the
98 services/recreation activities being cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

100 Senior Programs distributed 2,965 food boxes to the Senior Programs' participants during the
102 COVID-19 pandemic.

104 In addition, S. Saldana reported Senior Programs received a one-time special Federal funding
106 appropriation to purchase supplies and food for the Senior Nutrition Program. The funding
108 consisted of an additional \$35,849.60 from Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA C1;
110 \$71,702.75 from Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA C2); \$18,949.80 from
112 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES III FCC3); \$76,735.81 from
114 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES III FCC3); \$37,804.89 from
116 Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES III FCC3) for a total of \$241,042.85.
S. Saldana reported this is the funding that Senior Programs received for FY21. The number of
people served, and the number of meals provided.

118 Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative, inquired if the City provides any type of
120 assistance if someone needs a medical ID bracelet. S. Saldana stated the City does not, but the
122 case managers will work with the individual to locate community resources that offer these types
124 of services.

126 David Hernandez, Eastside Center Representative, expressed concern, because there is no limit
128 to the number of food boxes that can be picked up by an individual at the monthly senior center
130 food distribution sites. He stated he knows of an elderly individual that picks up two food boxes
132 at each of the monthly distribution sites, one for husband and one for her. The individual has
134 stacks of food boxes in her living room. Some people abuse the system by taking more food
136 boxes than they need and/or by selling the food boxes. Others give away the food they are not
138 going to use. Secretary Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative, stated she is aware of volunteers
that pick-up food boxes for homebound individuals who are unable to pick up a food box at one
of the food distributions sites for various reasons. D. Hernandez recommended staff ask for
identification and keep track of who picks up a food box. S. Saldana stated Casa De Peregrinos
is the agency that oversees the food box distributions. She will bring this issue of concern to
Casa de Peregrinos staff so that they are aware and can address these types of situations.

140 S. Saldana reported staff will be working on updating the Senior Programs' Activities' Fees and
142 Charges Schedule. Public hearings will be scheduled to receive input from the public. All
144 comments and recommendations will be taken into consideration. For this reason, it is very
146 important that participants attend the public hearings and provide their input or feedback. Senior
Programs wants to ensure the fees and charges are fair and equitable. The proposed amended
fees and charges schedule will be presented to the Board for their review and approval prior to
presenting the proposed schedule to City Council for final adoption.

148 C. Behrens stated the activities that are at no cost to the City will continue to be free of charge.
150 However, for those activities that there is a cost associated with it, the City will recoup the cost of
152 supplies, materials, and equipment. As an example, to participate in the Lapidary and Silver
154 Jewelry open lab there is a \$3.00 all-day fee but the fee includes the use of the machines and
156 equipment. S. Saldana reiterated the purpose of updating the fees and charges schedule is to
ensure Senior Programs is charging a fair price for the people that are using the
machines/equipment. C. Behrens stated the Faceting class is being canceled because of the
lack of interest. He stated the cost to replace the Faceting machines is approximately \$10,000

148 per machine. G. Montalvo stated that it is not that people have lost interest in the activity, but it
149 is the increase in the cost of the materials and some people cannot afford it. For instance, for the
150 Stained-Glass class the price of a spool of sauter was \$12.99, now that same spool costs \$23.99.
151 For a 12" x 12" piece of glass, the price was \$8.99, now the same size of glass costs \$16.99. S.
152 Saldana stated historically, Senior Programs does not break even on the program costs.
153 However, staff want to make sure that the fees and charges are fair to the participants. Board
154 members stated there are participants that take advantage of the classes and sell the items that
155 they make at the center. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs does not allow participants to use
156 the equipment and machines for commercial use. If there is someone, who is mass producing
157 and not allowing other participants to use the machines or equipment, then staff will review the
158 policies and procedures with that individual. Participants are asked to respect the equipment and
159 machinery so that Senior Programs does not have overblown supply costs that are then passed
160 onto the participants.

161 D. Hernandez stated it is also important to make sure seniors are kept informed of the increase
162 in prices and how that affects the activity fees and charges. D. Hernandez stated he provided
163 feedback when asked about the wood carving class. He placed a request for equipment that was
164 needed for the wood carving class such as a sander, burner, and a scroll saw. He stated he
165 understood it was not possible to purchase the equipment, because there was no space to store
166 the equipment. In the absence of the scroll saw, he is currently cutting the pieces of wood for the
167 class participants at his home. S. Saldana stated staff will follow up with his requests. There is
168 a possibility the equipment can be placed at Munson Center. D. Hernandez explained the wood
169 carving class originally started at Munson Center. Since the class participation increased to over
170 25 students, it was relocated to Eastside Center to accommodate the increase in class
171 participation. C. Behrens stated Lora Garner, Recreation Services Coordinator, will be contacting
172 D. Hernandez to select the equipment he needs for the class. S. Saldana stressed the importance
173 of attending the public hearings to provide input on the Senior Programs' activity fees and
174 charges. She asked Board members to encourage program participants to attend the public
175 hearings and provide their feedback. Senior Programs will work with the participants that cannot
176 afford the program fees.

177 S. Saldana provided an update on the Grab N' Go meal services. She reported the Grab N' Go
178 meal service participation has increased. Many of congregate meal program participants are not
179 interested in returning to in-person meals, because they are still concerned about the spread of
180 the virus. For this reason, the Grab N' Go meal services continue to be provided at the Sage
181 Café and Frank O' Brien Papen Centers. S. Saldana reported the three congregate meal program
182 sites combined have a lower number of participants than the two combined Grab N' Go meal
183 sites. She announced staff is considering reopening the Sage Cafe and the Frank O'Brien Papen
184 Centers within the next two months. It was reported there are people that will not drive to the
185 centers because of the distance from their home to the drive thru centers. Y. Knodle inquired why
186 a more centralized center was not selected for the drive thru meals such as Eastside or Munson
187 Centers. She did not understand why the program could not service the seniors that were already
188 in town by centralizing the drive thru meals. S. Saldana explained there were many people that
189 wanted to return to in person dining at the Eastside and Munson Centers. In addition, it was
190 easier to do Grab N' Go meals with the centers that were further away because this provides an
191 option for people. For those seniors that do not feel comfortable attending the in-person
192 congregate meals program, they can call Senior Programs and a case manager will help facilitate
193 a home delivered meal.
194

196 S. Saldana reported she has been working on scheduling Abuse in Later Life trainings as
198 requested. It has been a challenge finding presenters because the agencies she has contacted
200 are short staffed and not able to provide the requested training at this time. She will continue to
work on finding instructors for the trainings as discussed.

202 **XI. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:** D. Hernandez reported the Bureau of Land
204 Management ditch riders clean the canals and leave the debris on the ditch bank. The debris
accumulates and promulgates everywhere. It was recommended D. Hernandez report the issue
to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District so it can be cleaned up.

206 D. Hernandez expressed concern about the grocery carts that are scattered throughout the City.
He inquired if there is anyone that can collect and return them to their respective owner. S.
208 Saldana suggested contacting the Las Cruces Codes Department at 575-528-4100. Manuel
Contreras, District 5 Representative, stated the hospital has the same issue with the carts. He
210 has contacted Codes and the owners of the carts but was unsuccessful in returning the carts to
the rightful owners. Wal-Mart does not want the carts back after they have left the premises and
212 Codes stated they do not pick up the grocery carts. M. Contreras stated the hospital disposes of
the carts by throwing them in the dumpster.

214 B. Soto stated this is the same number that she has attempted to contact Codes to report a dead
216 tree in her neighborhood that is on City property. It has been reported to Codes on various
occasions and their response is that it is on their work order. It was recommended she reach out
218 to the Codes Supervisor, Michael Roach.

220 Y. Knodle reported a few people have asked if the Las Cruces Bulletin can be reinstated at the
Benavidez Center. C. Behrens stated he will reach out to the Las Cruces Bulletin and ask if the
222 Center can be added to the distribution list. People have been asking about the dances. C.
Behrens is working with a vendor to reinstate the physical fitness and recreational activities, which
224 includes the dances, in the next few months. There was request for an Oldies but Goodies dance.
The plans are to reinstate the Thursday afternoon and Saturday evening dances.

226 Volunteers interested in playing music during the lunch hour at any of the open centers must be
228 registered with the Volunteer Network Center. Contact C. Behrens if you know of someone who
is interested in playing music during lunch.

230 J. Chavarria reported on June 16, 2022 Senior Programs served a turkey roast and on June 27,
232 2022 a hot turkey sandwich. There was a good turnout for the turkey roast. It was delicious and
the portion was satisfactory. It was a big, thick slice of turkey. It was excellent. However, the hot
234 turkey sandwich was not satisfactory. The meal consisted of mashed potatoes, gravy, and a slice
of bread with an extremely thin slice of turkey and cheese. J. Chavarria brought it to the attention
236 of the Senior Nutrition Program Manager, Roger Bishop. R. Bishop stated that the standard
measurement is 3 oz. of protein per serving. It is unknown how much turkey was served because
238 the turkey was not measured. Consequently, all the participants had for lunch that day was a
summer salad, and mashed potatoes with gravy because the turkey melted into the mashed
240 potatoes. The summer squash was extremely well done and mushy. S. Saldana will ask R.
Bishop to follow up. Y. Knodle stated she asked for extra gravy and the server refused to give
242 her more. However, when her husband went through the serving line she overheard the server

244 say, "Give him more, because he is a big guy." J. Chavarria stated that if portions are going to be measured, then the servers need to be consistent when serving the food.

246 Board members inquired what the protocol is for seniors that are still hungry after they eat their meal since seconds are not allowed. S. Saldana stated seconds are no longer allowed because
248 people were bringing their own containers to take food home. S. Saldana explained Senior Programs serves one meal a day per person if people are having problems with hunger, please
250 let the staff know. The staff is well trained and can provide resources.

252 B. Soto stated people have been asking about art classes. People are very interested in learning to paint, because that activity is very therapeutic. C. Behrens stated he has been unable to recruit
254 an instructor. However, open painting is available but there is no instructor. C. Behrens will continue with the recruitment efforts for an Art instructor. He announced the Munson Center
256 Library has been holding painting classes. He will ask Shaunna Foster, Senior Library Assistant, to post the class schedule at the centers for anyone that is interested in attending the painting
258 classes.

260 S. Wittern commented the meal served that consisted of an ounce of turkey was breaded, very small, thin, tough, and hard to eat. She tried cutting the turkey with a knife, biting, chewing it, but
262 it was not edible. S. Saldana will follow up with the Nutrition Program Manager.

264 It was reported there is a vacancy on the Board for the Sage Café Senior Center represented position.

266 Chair Rodriguez-Haught stated Frank O'Brien Papen Center participants are enjoying the Grab
268 N' Go meal service at the Center. The meals are very well attended. She reported they had a few days when people did not receive a meal due to the new non-reservation system that was
270 recently implemented for the congregate meals program.

272 The next Board meeting will be held Thursday, August 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Eastside
274 Community Center 310 N. Tornillo Street.

276 **XII. ADJOURNMENT:** S. Wittern moved to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:34 a.m. Motion seconded by J. Chavarria. Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

278 Submitted,

280
282 Mona Bedale
Mona Bedale, Secretary

Toni Flores
Toni Flores, Recording Secretary