

CITY OF LAS CRUCES

1 The following are the summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board** meeting held
2 on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. at the Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite, Las
3 Cruces, New Mexico.

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5 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

6 Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center Representative
7 Vice Chair Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative
8 Secretary Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative
9 Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large
10 Steve Gaskell, District 3 Representative
11 Yolanda Knodle, District 4 Representative
12 David Hernandez, Eastside Center Representative
13 Belinda Soto, Henry Benavidez Recreation Center Representative
14 Larry Altamirano, Sage Café Senior Center Representative

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16 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

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18 **GUESTS PRESENT:**

19 Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Deputy Director
20 Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager
21 Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

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23 **I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center
24 Representative, called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on
25 Thursday, September 14, 2023, at the Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite Street, Las Cruces, NM.

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

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29 **III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Gabe Montalvo, Munson
30 Center Representative.

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

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34 **V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large, moved to approve the
35 September 14, 2023 Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting agenda as presented. Motion
36 seconded by Steve Gaskell, District 3 Representative. Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried
37 unanimously.

38
39 **VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members had no conflict of interest with any item of
40 business on the agenda.

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42 **VII. INTRODUCTIONS:** None

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44 **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:** J. Chavarria announced on Saturday, September 23, 2023, the
45 Historic Community will come together to paint a mural on the wall between Lujan's Bakery and
46 the Marion Shop off Lohman Avenue. The mural will be sketched by an artist and community
47 members will help paint the mural. The mural will face Lohman Avenue. Anyone interested in
48 assisting with this project is welcome to attend.

49 **IX. ACTION ITEMS--APPROVAL OF THE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** J.
 50 Chavarria moved to approve the August 10, 2023, Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting
 51 minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Yolanda Knodle, District 4 Representative. Vote: 9
 52 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

53
 54 **X. DISCUSSION ITEMS - SENIOR PROGRAMS DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** S.
 55 Saldana, Senior Programs Deputy Director, reported she reviewed the Senior Programs Capital
 56 Outlay projects during the August 2023 Board meeting. She reported the Senior Programs FY24
 57 budget was recently approved by City Council. She provided an overview of the Senior Programs'
 58 funding, expenses, and funding sources. She explained that although Senior Programs has a
 59 four-year grant agreement with the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging (NMAAA) every year the
 60 City is required to submit a grant application for funding to the NMAAA. For FY24, the total
 61 approved funding allocation for Senior Programs is \$4,696,397.68. She provided the following
 62 spreadsheet that shows a breakdown of the total budget:
 63

Senior Programs Grants and Grant Match					
	General Fund Grant Match	Revenue Federal	Revenue State	Total	Revenue from Contributions
Congregate Meals	\$257,728.21	\$163,623.27	\$115,575.81	536,927.29	92,000.00
Home Delivered Meals	282,428.71	55,797.12	324,357.67	662,583.50	153,000.00
Homemaker Services	137,388.08	62,249.00	33,156.61	232,793.69	2,000.00
Respite Care/ GPRG	7,000.00	132,498.12	9,062.65	148,560.77	
NSIP (Nutrition Service Incentive Program)		219,683.00		219,683.00	
NM Homegrown			126,613.31	126,613.31	
Total	\$684,545.00	\$633,850.51	\$608,766.05	\$1,927,161.56	\$247,000.00

64
 65 The City of Las Cruces general funding contributions for the following programs are as follows:
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General Fund	
Long Term Care Program	\$854,430.00
Nutrition Program	840,207.12
Recreation Program	827,599.00
Total	\$2,522,236.12

Total for Grants, Grant Match, and General funds	\$4,449,397.68
Expected Revenue from Contributions	247,000.00
Total Senior Programs FY24 Budget if expected revenue is met	\$4,696,397.68

68
 69 Following are the total units of services provided for each of the grant funded services:
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Senior Programs Units of Services Provided - August 2023	
Congregate Meals Served	7,524
Home Delivered Meals	20,617
Homecare Hours	454
Respite Care Hours	471

71
72 S. Saldana stated the grant funds must be expended by June 30, 2024. The funding cannot be
73 carried over to the following fiscal year.

74
75 Board members inquired if there is extra funding if hours can be increased for home care program
76 participants. S. Saldana explained that a needs assessment is conducted for homebound clients
77 to determine eligibility for home-based services. The number of hours provided to a client is
78 dependent on the scoring system established by the State. The higher the score, the more hours
79 of services provided to a client. The lower the score the less hours the client is scheduled for
80 services. There are times when a person that qualifies for services requests to be placed on hold
81 until they are ready to receive services. Currently, there are 12 people on the waiting list to receive
82 home care services.

83
84 S. Saldana explained three years ago Senior Programs was awarded ARPA funding. This
85 additional grant funding is being used to provide extra hours of service for home care and respite
86 care clients.

87
88 Discussion followed regarding food that is allowed to be taken out of the center such as whole
89 fruits, cakes, rolls, etc. S. Saldana stated a list will be posted at the centers so that participants
90 know what food is allowed to be taken out of the centers. She explained some food cannot be
91 taken out of the centers because if it is not stored at the correct temperature, it has the potential
92 to cause food borne illnesses. Senior Programs must ensure it is following the contract
93 requirements, so it does not run the risk of losing the grant funds.

94
95 Board members inquired if there is left over food are participants allowed to receive a second
96 helping of food rather than discarding the food. S. Saldana stated seconds are not allowed at any
97 of the centers. Participants can request half portions or decline food they do not want. She
98 reiterated leftover food is frozen for the home delivered meal program participants. She reported
99 there have been issues with staff serving seconds. It was reported that at the Henry Benavidez
100 Center after 12:15 p.m., staff announce seconds are available. S. Saldana stated seconds should
101 not be allowed at any of the centers. There are signs posted in the dining rooms. Referrals can
102 be made to the case managers if seniors are having food insecurities. The case managers will
103 provide community resources for supplemental food services.

104
105 It was reported the ice dispenser at the Benavidez Center is out of service. Board members
106 inquired when the equipment will be repaired. The ice is placed in a plastic bag on a tray. It is
107 very unsanitary. There is an ice scooper, but not everyone uses it when getting ice. Chris
108 Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager, followed up with Roger Bishop, Nutrition Program
109 Manager. He stated the replacement part for the dispenser is on order. S. Saldana will follow up
110 with R. Bishop to see what other options are available for dispensing ice until the repairs are made
111 to the ice dispenser.

112

113 S. Saldana announced Senior Programs staff will begin working on the FY25 budget in the coming
114 months. She will keep the Board updated on the progress.

115
116 C. Behrens provided an update on the Recreation Program personnel changes. He stated Carla
117 Deemer, the new Recreation Coordinator started this week. The starting date for the second
118 Recreation Coordinator is September 24, 2023. The two part-time office assistant positions have
119 been converted to full-time positions. With the addition of the two new Recreation Coordinators,
120 Senior Programs will be looking at increasing the hours of operation and expanding recreational
121 programming opportunities at each of the centers. The new staff will be looking into contacting
122 instructors in the community that may be interested in teaching painting, guitar, fitness, dance,
123 and Spanish classes.

124
125 He announced the Halloween dance and costume contest will be held at Munson Center on
126 Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. There will be games, snacks, prizes, a
127 live band, and other fun activities. The dance will be free of charge. He asked Board members
128 to encourage center participants to attend the dance. There were concerns expressed about the
129 DJ services provided at the dances. Participants were not happy with the music and the fact that
130 it is more of an instructional than a social event. S. Saldana explained for this reason a live band
131 has been contracted to provide the entertainment at the dance.

132
133 **XI. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:** Board members reported they continue
134 working on providing community resources and information to seniors in need.

135
136 Board Members have been volunteering to assist Molly New with the water conservation
137 presentations at the centers. Jim Everette, Henry Benavidez Recreation Center Volunteer, was
138 interviewed by a television station. The purpose of the interview was to promote and recruit
139 volunteers. There was a concern expressed about the decrease in congregate meal program
140 participation at the Henry Benavidez Center. The projected number of meals is 120 and the actual
141 number of congregate programs participants that are served is 40. The decrease in attendance
142 is attributed to the recent change in staff. It was suggested that additional training in the
143 preparation of the food be provided to the staff. There have been complaints from the center
144 participants about the quality of food being served. S. Saldana explained the Henry Benavidez
145 Center also prepares home delivered meals, but she will follow up with the Nutrition Program
146 Manager.

147
148 Y. Knodle stated she has been advocating in support of the proposed affordable housing
149 development for low-income people because there are over 5,000 people that need homes.
150 However, City Council placed the project on hold.

151
152 There were concerns expressed regarding the shortage of food at the Sage Cafe and Eastside
153 Centers. It was reported that at the Sage Cafe staff are reducing the portions sizes. On the days
154 that the center runs out of food, people must wait between 20-25 minutes for food to be delivered
155 from one of the other program sites. Another issue of concern at the Sage Cafe is that people
156 are not given enough time to eat their meal because the staff is setting up for the afternoon activity
157 that begins after lunch. It was recommended that the reservation system be reinstated.

158


159 There has been positive feedback from the Munson Center participants on the new menu items.
160 It was recommended Fall Prevention/protocol training be conducted at the centers.

161
162 At the previous Board meeting it was reported there was several customer complaints at the
163 Benavidez Center about the overcooked vegetables. S. Saldana followed up and informed the
164 Board the cook used frozen vegetables instead of fresh produce with resulted in soggy
165 vegetables. With the Home-Grown grant, Senior Programs will be purchasing fresh produce and
166 this issue should be resolved.

167
168 The issue with the City of Las Cruces vehicles being parked in the paved parking lot of the Frank
169 O'Brien Papen Center has been resolved.

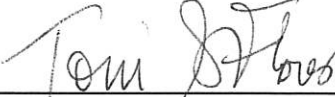
170
171 **XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Y. Knodle moved to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:45 a.m. Motion
172 seconded by Secretary M. Bedale. Vote: 9 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

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174 Submitted,

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Mona Bedale, Secretary



Toni Flores, Recording Secretary