



City of Las Cruces®
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

**SENIOR PROGRAMS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

April 14, 2016—Frank O'Brien Papen Center

PRESENT: Chair Felix Vega (Eastside Center Representative), Vice Chair Judy Chavarria (Member-at-Large), Secretary Marilu Darby (District 2 Representative), Sharlene Wittern (District 3 Representative), Renee Short (District 6 Representative), Gabriel Montalvo (Munson Center Representative); Juliette White (Henry Benavidez Center Representative), Rayla Buchanan (Sage Café Representative)

ABSENT: Bill King (Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative); Rick Jackson, (District 4 Representative)

GUESTS: Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator; Claudia Chavez, Parks and Recreation Services Manager; Alan Daily, James Gibson, and Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Vega called the Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 14, 2016, at the Frank O'Brien Papen Center, 304 W. Bell Avenue, Las Cruces, NM.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: Chair Vega introduced new incoming Board members. Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative, replaces James L. Gibson. Rayla Buchanan is the new Sage Café Senior Center Representative. Outgoing Board member James L. Gibson was thanked for his contributions and dedication during his tenure on the Board. Board member introductions followed.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: It was noted that no Board members or staff present had a conflict of interest with any item of business on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Juliette White, Benavidez Center Representative, moved to approve the March 10, 2016 Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting minutes as presented. Rayla Buchanan, Sage Café Senior Center Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 8 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Alan Daily, guest, voiced his concern in reference to a presentation that was held during lunch at Munson Center on March 23, 2016. While he was dining at Munson Center, a presentation was conducted by AARP on identity theft. He was not aware of any prior notification or advertisements on such a presentation. No one who was sitting at his table was aware a presentation was going to be held during the noon meal. He, as well as the other people sitting at his table, felt they were taken advantage off because they were a captive audience. He stated this occurred a couple of times before at Munson Center during the time he has been there. It is very annoying because no one takes into consideration the wishes and preferences of the people who are dining. A. Daily stated he goes to Munson Center to eat and socialize. He does not want to sit and listen to a presentation that is being forced upon him. By doing this, Senior Programs is disrespecting the meal program participants because they are

50 being forced to sit and listen to a presentation during lunch. To be disrespected in a senior
center is outrageous. It is one of the few places that you would expect to be disrespected. He
52 stated this issue needs to be addressed. A. Daily recommended advertising the presentations
on the monthly menus. This way participants know in advance a presentation is being planned
54 and they can choose to either come to the center or stay home. A. Daily stated the presentation
was extremely loud, and it was hard to carry a conversation. It was very demeaning to people
56 that were there. S. Saldana stated she will discuss this issue with staff and will make sure there
is more advertisement when presentations are scheduled.

58 S. Saldana explained presentations are sometimes conducted during the lunch hour because
that is when most of the people attend the centers. A. Daily commented there was a lot of
60 valuable information that was presented; however, because he was so resentful of being a
captive audience, it was counterproductive. J. White stated that the AARP presentation was
62 also conducted at the Benavidez Center and people with hearing aids found it to be very loud.
They had to remove their hearing aids because it was painful to sit and listen to the
64 presentation. S. Saldana stated that in the future she will recommend to staff that presentations
be moved into separate meeting rooms or held in the lobby area. Senior Programs does not
66 want to preclude people from enjoying a meal because of a presentation. S. Saldana will
conduct research to determine why the presentation was held in the dining room.

68 James Gibson, not as a member of the board but as a guest, presented an issue of concern.
70 He stated the meal served on Monday, April 11, 2016 was one of the worst meals served.
Specifically, the complaint from the center participants was that the portion size of the food
72 served was too small. He noticed the lunch room was almost empty and he stated this was an
indicator that people did not like the meal being served. Another complaint was that the meal
74 contained too much carbohydrates which is very unhealthy for diabetics. S. Saldana stated the
menus which includes the meal-size portions are approved by a dietician from the Non-Metro
76 Area Agency on Aging (NMAAA), which is the Senior Programs funding source. Meal
substitutions must also be approved by the NMAAA. Roger Bishop, the Senior Programs
78 Nutrition and Services Program Manager, also reviews the menus. S. Saldana stated a
committee consisting of congregate meal program participants was formed to provide
80 input/feedback on the menus. She stated all menus meet the 1/3 recommended daily nutritional
value. The comments and concerns presented are appreciated. The menus will be reviewed.

82 J. Chavarria commented the meal-size portion served at the Eastside Center where she dines
84 was more than satisfactory. It was an excellent meal, and she did not receive any complaints
from the program participants. S. Saldana asked Board members to encourage participants to
86 use the suggestion boxes available at all centers to submit their comments or concerns in
writing.

88 S. Wittern, District 3 Representative, reiterated some participants have commented on the high
90 number of carbohydrates served during Monday's meal at Munson Center. R. Short, District 6
Representative, stated she made this point at her very first meeting. The meals need to be
92 looked at in terms of the number of carbohydrates being served. She made reference to a
"white plate" which is a plate that contains turkey, bread and mashed potatoes where the food is
94 white. This is an indicator that the plate contains too many starches/carbohydrates which is very

96 unhealthy for a person who has a compromised health condition. S. Saldana will look into these concerns.

98 J. White stated a meal was served at the Benavidez Center that contained four vegetables from
100 the cabbage family. This is unhealthy for individuals who are on blood thinners, because it
102 counteracts the blood thinner. She stated program meal participants made recommendations to
Senior Programs' staff and the staff listened. The issue was resolved and that has not
happened again.

104 J. Gibson stated Munson Center is a great center. The center is kept clean. It is an asset to the
City. He started to comment on the lapidary lab use fees decreasing from \$4.00 to a \$3.00 a
106 day. J. White stated J. Gibson continuously brings up the same topic at each board meeting.
She stated he talks too long and too much about the same topic.

108 M. Darby stated that the piano is too loud and people cannot carry on a conversation during the
110 time that the piano is being played. S. Saldana reported that in order to play the piano the
individual must first register with the Network Volunteer Program. At this time, there is only one
112 person who has followed the protocol and can play the piano. S. Saldana stated she has heard
nothing but positive comments about the piano player.

114 **SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Claudia Chavez, Parks and Recreation
116 Services Manager, reported Parks and Recreation has scheduled new classes at the aquatics
center. The new classes consist of a salsa dance and line dancing classes. The goal of the
118 Recreation Program is to incorporate not only fitness-oriented classes, but also good-for-the-
soul classes. C. Chavez stated the summer hikes have been moved to Cloudcroft, NM and will
120 be held every Thursday. Transportation is provided and space is limited to 13 participants or
people can follow in their personal vehicle. Departure time for the hikes is 7:30 a.m. and the
122 return time is 4:00 p.m. The fees range from \$5.00 to \$20.00 and are based on the length and
difficulty of the hike.

124 S. Saldana reported acoustic panels will be installed at the Sage Café Senior Center. Staff is
126 also looking into installing benches and a shade structure on the outside of the building for
individuals waiting for the Dial-A-Ride bus. Automatic door openers will also be installed. The
128 aim is to complete as many of these projects as possible within the next two months. Staff will
explore other options available to reduce the noise level in the Munson Center dining room.

130 S. Saldana reported Senior Programs has received additional funding to paint Munson Center.
132 The color for the building will be selected by staff with input and recommendations made by the
center participants. Chair Vega requested a flag pole be installed in the front of the Sage Café
134 Senior Center to place the American flag. J. Chavarria stated she would look into the Woodmen
of the World donating a free flag to the Center. Senior Programs is still looking at beginning the
136 meal program at Sage Café Senior Center on July 1, 2016. The list of individuals interested in
participating in the meals program at Sage Café are program meal participants that are
138 attending one of the other Senior Programs' meal sites. Staff is working with Facilities on the
setups and tear-downs of the Sage Café facility for the meals program and activities. She
140 reported the new Senior Programs Recreation Facility Manager is scheduled to begin in May.

Senior Programs Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2016

Page 4

142 The manager will be evaluating the needs and wants of the Sage Cafe program participants and will be reviewing the hours of operation. Adjustments will be made as needed.

144 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** S. Saldana provided an update on the March 2016 Senior
146 Programs' Open Action Items. Action Items number 12--promote the bond issue to get funding
148 for the central kitchen design remains in the works. S. Saldana provided a brief background on
150 the central kitchen project. She explained the plan is to build a new central kitchen facility on
152 the corner of Arizona and Campo Street in Las Cruces, NM. The purpose of the new facility is
154 to centralize the meal production which will result in a cost savings to the City. Additional
156 benefits are that it will allow Senior Programs the opportunity to work with other
158 agencies/organizations and provide specialized meals. The existing kitchens will become
160 warming stations. Existing staff will transport the meals to each of the congregate meal sites. S.
162 Wittern inquired about the timeline of the project. S. Saldana stated this project begin many
164 years ago and as a result changes are now needed to the original design plans to meet the
166 needs of the program. R. Short inquired if the existing kitchen space at the Sage Café Center
168 will be reconfigured to allow for the expansion of facility use space. S. Saldana stated other
170 options are being explored. One possibility for the Sage Café Senior Center is an addition to
172 the facility. However, at this point and time there is no funding available and that can take years
174 to accomplish. Expanding into the kitchen is a good idea but it is not going to meet the needs for
176 space. The Sage Café facility is very space challenged. Staff will be looking into other options
178 to maximize the usage of the facility and meet the needs of the consumers.

162 Board members inquired about the congregate meals program leftover food. S. Saldana stated
164 the leftover food is frozen. The frozen meals are then distributed to homebound seniors who
166 are at-risk and who qualify to receive a frozen meal. For this reason, she stressed the
168 importance of the meals' program reservation system. It is very important that program
170 participants make a reservation to reduce the amount of wasted or left over food. Food that
172 cannot be frozen is thrown away. S. Saldana will provide the percentage of wasted food at the
174 next Board meeting. Board members suggested donating the leftover and prep food not used to
176 the Gospel Rescue Mission or the Soup Kitchen. S. Saldana stated there are strict federal and
178 state guidelines that the program must follow, but she will look into this recommendation.

172 Action number 13—implementation of a congregate meals program at Sage Café. The goal is
174 to begin the congregate meals program on July 1, 2016 at the Sage Café Senior Center. Senior
176 Programs is working on a schedule with Facilities on the setup and teardowns of the facility.
Staff is also looking into purchasing lightweight tables.

178 **CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:** Rayla Buchanan, Sage Café Senior Center
180 Representative, created a form to document Sage Café program participant
182 concerns/recommendations. Recommendations made included the installation of a bike rack in
the front of the center, installation of a gutter along the front entrance of the building,
accessibility for the disabled and installation of acoustic panels.

184 S. Wittern reported there have been some instances at Munson Center where individuals have
186 violated the code of conduct. There are many people coming into the center and outside of the
building begging for money. S. Saldana requested such incidents be reported to staff so they

Senior Programs Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2016
Page 5

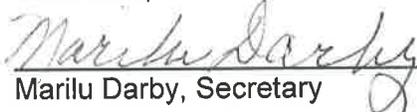
188 can be addressed immediately with the individual. Another issue of concern raised by Ms.
189 Wittern are individuals lecturing about their religious beliefs. She stated this is unacceptable
190 behavior that should be addressed.

191 Discussion followed regarding emergency contact information. There was Board consensus
192 that a workshop should be held at each of the centers on this topic. R. Short stated AARP has
193 good information available. J. White suggested saving emergency contact information including
194 a list of medications on the jump drive, computer and/or cell phone. S. Saldana will follow up.

195 **UPCOMING MEETING:** The next regular Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting is
196 scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Sage Café Senior
197 Center, 6121 Reynolds Drive, Las Cruces, NM.

200 **ADJOURNMENT:** S. Wittern moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m. Secretary Darby
201 seconded the motion. Vote: 8 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

202 Submitted,

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204 _____
205 Marilu Darby, Secretary


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Toni Flores, Recording Secretary