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**SENIOR PROGRAMS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 9, 2016—BENAVIDEZ RECREATION CENTER**

PRESENT: Acting Chair Judy Chavarria (Member-at-Large), Dr. Abel L. Chavarria (District 1 Representative), Marilu Darby (District 2 Representative), Sharlene Wittern (District 3 Representative), Gabriel Montalvo (Munson Center Representative), Juliette White (Henry Benavidez Center Representative)

ABSENT: Chair Felix Vega (Eastside Center Representative), Rick Jackson, (District 4 Representative), Renee Short (District 6 Representative), Bill King (Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative), Rayla Buchanan (Sage Café Senior Center Representative)

GUESTS: Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator; Michael Garcia, Recreation Facilities Manager; Claudia Chavez, Parks and Recreation Services Manager; Jerry Gunderson, AARP Volunteer; Frank Lemus, Guest; Jan Nywening, Guest; and Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: In the absence of Chair Felix Vega, Vice-Chair Judy Chavarria presided over the meeting.

Acting Chair J. Chavarria called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 9, 2016, at the Benavidez Recreation Center, 1045 McClure Road, Drive, Las Cruces, NM.

INTRODUCTIONS: Acting Chair J. Chavarria introduced the newly appointed board member, Dr. Abel L. Chavarria. On May 16, 2016, the Mayor and City Council appointed Dr. Chavarria to serve on the the Senior Programs Advisory Board as the District 1 Representative.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: S. Saldana explained this is an opportunity for Board members to declare any personal interest with any item of business on the agenda. If Board members or staff have a conflict of interest with any item of business, they should declare and abstain from voting on that particular item of business. 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: Board members reviewed the May 12, 2016, Board meeting minutes. After review, Juliette White, Henry Benavidez Center Representative, moved to approve the May 12, 2016 Board meeting minutes. Secretary Marilu Darby, District 2 Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

48 **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Jerry Gunderson, AARP Volunteer, provided an update on
AARP's initiative to preserve social security. He reported AARP volunteers attended
50 presidential rallies held in Albuquerque, Vado and Las Cruces, NM, to voice their
support for preserving social security. J. Gunderson distributed an AARP 2014 social
52 security fact sheet. He stated of the total New Mexico population which is over two
million, there are approximately 295,000 people who are 65 years of age and older.
54 This represents approximately 10 percent of the total population. Of those 65 years of
age and older, 1 in every 5 New Mexicans receive social security. The average social
56 security amount that an individual receives is \$560.00 per month. Social security is the
sole source of income for 1 to 3 New Mexicans age 65 years of age and older. J.
58 Gunderson reported in 2017 AARP will be working with the new presidential candidate
to preserve and expand social security. If nothing is done to preserve social security, by
60 2034 social security will be reduced by 25 percent across the board. An individual who
receives \$1,000 a month from social security, will only receive \$750.00. This is a
62 substantial decrease for individuals who are on a limited income. J. Gunderson has
reviewed the proposed plans from the presidential candidates to preserve and expand
64 social security. However, he stated there are pros and cons with the proposed plans.
He will continue to update the board.

66 Secretary M. Darby requested a brief synopsis of the Senior Programs' newsletter
articles be translated to Spanish. S. Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, stated
68 currently, the most important articles are translated to Spanish. The goal is to translate
the entire newsletter for the Spanish-speaking people. Michael Garcia, Recreation
70 Facilities Manager, added staff is looking into adding more pages to the newsletter.

72 Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative, reported the schedule for
horseshoes at Munson Center is conflict with the schedule that is advertised in the *Las*
74 *Cruces Sun News*. The schedule published in the newspaper is incorrect. M. Garcia will
follow up.

76 **SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Claudia Chavez, Parks and
78 Recreation Services Manager, reviewed the May 2016 Parks and Recreation monthly
recreation attendance report. She reported activity attendance has increased for Pickle
80 Ball and H²O Cardio. She encouraged Board members to contact her or Sonia Saldana,
Senior Programs Administrator, if they had any ideas for new programs and/or activities.
82 Discussion followed regarding Senior Olympics. C. Chavez stated Senior Olympics is
independent of the Parks and Recreation Department. The Senior Olympics office has
84 been moved out of the Frank O'Brien Papen Center. Senior Olympics is still going
strong under the direction of Ceci Acosta from Roswell. Board members expressed
86 concern on the lack of advertisement for the Senior Olympic state games. The Board
voiced their support to return the games to Las Cruces. Board members stated if more
88 seniors knew about Senior Olympics, there would be more participation. S. Saldana
stated Senior Programs works closely with Senior Olympics. The Senior Olympics pool
90 tournament held at Munson Center in April 2016 is one example. Senior Olympics also

92 provides the instructor for the Enhanced Fitness classes held at Munson and Sage Café Senior Centers.

94 J. Nywening stated there was an evening exercise class held at the Sage Café Senior
96 Center a couple years ago. C. Chavez stated the class was a partnership between
Senior Programs and Parks and Recreation. The class was canceled due to low
98 attendance. J. Nywening recommended adding an evening exercise class at the Sage
Cafe because it will be very beneficial to the area residents. C. Chavez agreed there is
a need for the class, and she will take the recommendation under consideration.

100 S. Wittern commented that the Senior Circle has been in existence for over seven years
102 and has a membership of over 2000 members. Senior Circle offers a variety of exercise
and fitness classes free of charge.

104 G. Montalvo inquired if shuffle board falls under the Parks and Recreation Department.
106 C. Chavez informed the Board Parks and Recreation does not offer shuffleboard. He
stated there is a shuffle board court at Munson Center that is not being used because
108 the court is cracked. S. Saldana will follow up.

110 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, provided an
update on the May 2016 Senior Programs' Open Action Items. Action item number
112 12—promote the bond issue for funding for the central kitchen design remains in the
works.

114 Action number 13—implementation of a congregate meals program at Sage Café
116 Senior Center remains in the works. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs has been
working very hard this month to begin serving congregate meals at the Sage Café. The
118 congregate meals pilot program is scheduled to begin on July 5, 2016. Meals will be
served two days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, time to be determined. It is
120 anticipated between 40 to 50 meal reservations will be accepted per day.

122 Jan Nywening, Guest, stated the Enhanced Fitness class participants have expressed
concern about a scheduling conflict with the class and the congregate meals program.
124 The Enhanced Fitness class at the Sage Cafe is a popular, well-established class. The
class has good participation. If the class is relocated or if the time is changed, there is a
126 possibility that there will be a decrease in the class attendance. J. Nywening stated the
center participants are upset because they have not been informed of the
128 implementation of the congregate meals program and the impact the program will have
on the fitness classes. S. Saldana stated no changes or interruptions to the fitness
130 classes are anticipated at this time as a result of the congregate meals program. Meals
will be served only on the days there are no exercise classes scheduled. Staff is in the
132 process of determining how to best provide services and avoid disruptions to the current
classes, activities or programs as a result of space limitations. J. Gunderson inquired if
134 Senior Programs is considering extending the hours of operation at the Sage Café

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136 Center as a result of the meals program. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs is limited
138 with the staffing. For this reason, the congregate meals program will be operating two
140 days a week. The intent of the program is to determine the need for meal services in
the area. The expansion of operating hours will be taken under consideration in the
future.

142 J. White recommended the Board consider changing the Board meetings from monthly
144 to four times a year. S. Saldana informed the Board she had a discussion with Board
members who are still employed and they have stated it is difficult to attend the monthly
Board meetings. She also wanted to propose to the Board for their consideration
changing the Board meetings from monthly to quarterly meetings.

146 After further discussion, J. White made a formal motion to change Board meetings from
148 monthly to four times a year or as needed. Dr. Chavarria seconded the motion.
Discussion: G. Montalvo stated there are pros and cons meeting four times a year.
150 The pros on this proposed action is that the individuals who are working will be able to
attend the meetings. The cons to the action is that Board members will need to wait
152 four months to receive answers to questions. Board members who are unable to attend
meetings can be kept informed by email, etc. He stated information and communication
154 are very important. J. White recommended when there are issues that need to be
addressed, Board members should ask who, what, when and where. A formal request
156 needs to be made so that staff has enough time to conduct research and provide the
requested information. S. Saldana announced if meetings are held on a quarterly basis,
158 the meetings will be held every 3 months, not every 4 months. Acting Chair Chavarria
stated continuity is her main concern. When she attends the quarterly meetings in
160 Santa Fe, NM, it takes some time to get reacquainted with the Board members. She
enjoys the monthly feedback. S. Saldana reminded Board members they can always
162 come to the managers to report issues of concern or to receive updates. She prefers
issues be addressed immediately rather than waiting a month to present to the Board.

164 S. Wittern stated she attends Munson Center two to five days a week and anytime that
166 something comes up, Administration is excellent in terms of resolving issues. Staff is
extremely helpful and cooperative. S. Saldana stated for this reason, issues of concern
168 should be brought to the attention of front desk personnel who will then make the
referral to the appropriate staff. Listening sessions are being scheduled to receive
170 participant feedback/input.

172 After further discussion, there was a request to have the motion reread: J. White made
a formal motion to change the Board meetings from monthly to four times a year or as
174 needed. Dr. Chavarria rescinded the second on the motion. The motion was tabled.
The motion will be revisited, discussed and voted on at the next meeting.

176 **CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:** J. White, Benavidez Center
178 Representative, reported overall the participants of the center are very happy.

180 Everything is going well. Acting Chair Chavarria stated she noticed there is not an
American flag at the facility. J. White stated there has been some issues with the hook
182 that holds the flag. M. Garcia added the knob that lowers and raises the flag is jammed.
M. Garcia will follow up. Dr. Chavarria stated Woodmen of World Life Insurance will
184 replace the flag free of charge. If anyone knows of another center that needs a flag,
please let Acting Chair Chavarria or him know. The company will also replace the state
186 flags free of charge.

188 S. Wittern expressed concern with the participants of the center that are homeless,
bipolar, mentally unstable, using drugs illegally, and disabled. She has received
190 questions from some of these individuals inquiring if services are available to them at
the center. However, S. Wittern inquired at the front desk of Munson Center and was
192 told services for individuals with a disability, bipolar, etc., are not available at the center.
S. Saldana stated if they are seniors and are homeless, disabled, or have mental health
194 issues, they need to see the front desk receptionist who will then direct them to the
appropriate staff for information and referral services.

196 Secretary Darby stated that if anyone has any questions, Lena Reta is wonderful and
very helpful. She has helped M. Darby and others with certain issues. She stated the
198 staff at Munson Center is very helpful and will provide assistance, like Cyndi Davis. S.
Saldana reiterated if someone needs assistance, please direct them to the front desk
200 receptionist. S. Wittern stated she referred the senior participant to the front desk. The
receptionist informed her Senior Programs does not provide therapy services. S.
202 Saldana apologized. She will remind staff that when these issues arise, staff needs to
contact the Long Term Care Services Manager, Lori Garcia-Palacios, who will make the
204 appropriate referral either to the case managers or the resource center. Board
members need to be very vigilant and report incidents to staff so that they can be
206 addressed immediately.

208 G. Montalvo reported he has received complaints about the piano being played during
the noon hour. The background music is too loud.

210 **UPCOMING MEETING:** The next regular Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting is
212 scheduled for Thursday, July 14, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Eastside
Community Center, 310 N. Tornillo Street, Las Cruces, NM.

214 **ADJOURNMENT:** J. White moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 a.m. Dr. Chavarria
216 seconded the motion. Vote: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

218 Submitted,

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222 _____
Marilu Darby, Secretary



Toni Flores, Recording Secretary