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**SENIOR PROGRAMS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 11, 2016—EASTSIDE CENTER**

PRESENT: Chair Felix Vega (Eastside Center Representative); Vice Chair Judy Chavarria (Member-at-Large), Secretary Marilu Darby (District 2 Representative), Dr. Abel L. Chavarria (District 1 Representative), Sharlene Wittern (District 3 Representative), Manuel Contreras (District 5 Representative), Renee Short (District 6 Representative), Juliette White (Henry Benavidez Center Representative), Gabriel Montalvo (Munson Center Representative), Rayla Buchanan (Sage Café Senior Center Representative)

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

GUESTS: Sonia Saldana, Interim Community and Cultural Services Director; Lora Garcia-Palacios, Interim Senior Programs Administrator; Michael Garcia, Recreation Facilities Manager; Azucena Saucedo, Assistant Management Analyst; Claudia Chavez, Parks and Recreation Services Manager; Guests: James Gibson, William Kolbin, Frank Lemus, Jerry Gunderson, Graciela Romero; and Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Felix Vega called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 11, 2016, at the Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite Street, Las Cruces, NM.

INTRODUCTIONS: Chair Vega reported Sonia Saldana has been appointed to serve as the Interim Community and Cultural Services Director. He introduced and welcomed Interim Senior Programs Administrator, Lora Garcia-Palacios, and Manuel (Manny) Contreras, newly appointed District 5 Representative.

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: Board members reviewed the July 14, 2016, Board meeting minutes. Vice Chair Judy Chavarria, Member at Large, moved to approve the July 14, 2016 Board meeting minutes. Rayla Buchanan, Sage Cafe Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 10 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments.

INTERIM SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Michael Garcia, Recreation Facility Manager, reported John Hamilton, who offered to disseminate educational information about Parkinson's disease and other degenerative diseases at the centers, has not provided the requested information to M. Garcia for review and approval. J. Hamilton did, however, refer those interested in obtaining information about Parkinson's disease to the Parkinson's Association website. An update will be provided at the next Board meeting

At the previous Board meeting M. Garcia presented his schedule for visiting all the centers on a regular basis to meet face-to-face with participants. However, there was a discrepancy with his availability and the center participants. M. Garcia presented the revised schedule to the Board.

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54 He will be visiting each of the different centers on a rotating basis every Thursday from 9:00
56 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. His regular office hours at the Benavidez Center are Monday, Tuesday,
58 Thursday and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and every Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to
2:00 p.m. He provided his contact information should it be necessary for participants to reach
him prior to him visiting the centers.

60 M. Garcia will be attending the New Mexico Conference on Aging August 22, 2016, through
62 August 24, 2016. He will be the main contact person during the trip. He will coordinate
accordingly with the group on a daily basis so attendees know what to expect.

64 As requested by the Board at the July 2016 Board meeting, M. Garcia, provided an update on
66 the Senior Programs' pending work orders. He anticipates the ADA automatic door buttons for
68 Sage Café will be installed within the next month. The HVAC units at Sage Café were checked
and properly adjusted. He reported the ventilation system and air flow of the room are working
properly. Fans and blinds will be purchased and installed. R. Buchanan stated the activity
room is very warm.

70 M. Garcia reported he continuously receives complaints about the temperature of Munson
72 Center facility either being too hot or too cold. Staff is constantly adjusting the temperature of
the facility. This will be an ongoing problem until winter time. He stated staff will continue to do
74 their best to adjust the temperature of the building accordingly. Gabriel Montalvo, Munson
Center Representative, stated he noticed the sensor in the art painting studio is blocked by a
76 locker. There should be some clearance between the sensor and the locker so that the sensor
does not give a bad reading. M. Garcia will follow up.

78 M. Garcia reported the sidewalk at Eastside Center that needs to be resurfaced is considered to
80 be safe as per Risk Management. However, staff is looking into making renovations at Eastside
Center and doing a complete revamp, not just to the sidewalk but to other areas of the building.
Staff is looking at revamping the entire look of Eastside Center, pending funding.

82 M. Garcia stated the toilet seat covers and dispensers requested for Sage Café will be installed
84 by the end of the week or early next week.

86 M. Garcia stated there is no funding available at this time for the installation of a flag pole at the
88 Sage Café as requested. A recommendation has been made, as a temporary fix, to purchase
an indoor flag pole or a flag pole that can be attached to the exterior wall of the building. He is
90 open for other suggestions from the Board. Dr. Abel Chavarria, District 1 Representative,
reiterated the Woodmen of the World Life Insurance (Woodmen) organization will donate the
92 flags and a flag pole to the City. The organization does not have the funds to erect the flag
pole. He stated it is the recipient's responsibility to go through the process of erecting the pole.

94 S. Saldana, Interim Community and Cultural Services Director, stated the installation of a flag
96 pole is considered to be a capital improvement project. The installation of the pole will cost
between \$5,000 to \$10,000 to complete. The reason the cost estimate is so high is because
98 there is foundation work that needs to be completed to erect the flag pole. A capital
improvement application must be completed to request funding for the project. At this point, S.
Saldana stated staff is looking at other capital improvement projects to include in the funding
100 request application. After further discussion, it was recommended a small ceremony be held at

102 the Sage Café during the lunch hour to accept the donation from Woodmen. Dr. Chavarria
103 reiterated Woodmen will deliver a flag pole and an American flag to the Sage Café Senior
104 Center. This will be an interim fix until funding becomes available to install a flag pole on the
105 exterior of the Sage Café facility. Renee Short, District 6 representative, recommended a small
106 ceremony be conducted at this time and a larger ceremony be conducted when the exterior flag
107 pole is installed. M. Garcia will coordinate a date and time with Woodmen to conduct the
108 celebration. The timeframe for holding the celebration will be no longer than one month.

109 M. Garcia is waiting for a response from Dial-A-Ride regarding the purchase of a bench and the
110 possibility of adding a transit stop at Sage Café. He will provide an update at the next Board
111 meeting.

112 M. Garcia developed a work order tracking system that he will use to provide updates at the
113 Board meetings. He will follow up with an onsite visual inspection to ensure the work has been
114 completed. M. Garcia stated another concern that was brought to his attention from a center
115 participant was in regard to the Eastside Center restrooms not being fully ADA accessible. In
116 speaking with Roger Bishop, Nutrition and Services Program Manager, M. Garcia stated over a
117 year ago the entire building was inspected to ensure it met ADA requirements. The facility
118 passed inspection. The ADA signs posted are not specific to the restroom doors. The signs are
119 specific to the entire building. M. Garcia will confirm with R. Bishop and Risk Management.
120 Frank Lemus, guest, asked if it is possible to make the restrooms off the dining room fully ADA
121 accessible, specifically to install automatic door openers. M. Garcia will request a cost estimate
122 for the purchase and installation of ADA automatic door buttons. He will meet with Risk
123 Management to discuss the concern expressed regarding the non-compliance ADA accessible
124 restrooms at Eastside Center. An update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

125 James Gibson, guest, stated he is a board member of the ADA Advisory Board. He is
126 interested in providing a report to the ADA Board regarding the Eastside Center restrooms. As
127 soon as date is scheduled for the ADA Advisory Board meeting, he will extend an invitation to
128 M. Garcia to attend the ADA Board meeting and provide an update.

129 Dr. Chavarria stated Woodmen is also interested in donating prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place
130 winners of the billiards' tournaments. If this is something of interest to Senior Programs,
131 Woodmen will include it in their budget for next year or possibly this year. S. Saldana
132 announced billiards tournaments are currently being held on a monthly basis at Munson Center.
133 M. Garcia will follow up. She stated there has been discussion about holding a variety of activity
134 competitions with other communities.

135 R. Short expressed concern stating there a lot of ideas that are discussed at the Board
136 meetings. However, the ideas discussed do not come to realization. R. Short recommended in
137 the future a timeline be established to get the ideas from the discussion state to realization. S.
138 Saldana explained what occasionally happens is that people will call and offer to lead programs
139 or activities, but they do not follow through. Realistically, the people who offer to coordinate an
140 activity or event need to step up and follow through. Senior Programs has a long list of activities
141 and programs to implement, but unfortunately, there are not enough volunteers to lead the
142 activities. R. Short stated sometimes the activities do not need a volunteer or a leader. She
143 stated there is a disconnect between discussions, realization and dissemination of information.
144 S. Saldana informed the Board the activities and programs are advertised in the Senior
145 Programs Newsletter.

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150 Programs' monthly newsletter, *Las Cruces Bulletin*, *Las Cruces Sun News* and flyers posted at
151 each of the centers. It was suggested activity signup sheets also be placed at the different
152 centers.

153 R. Short inquired about the status of adding a craft's class at Munson Center. The
154 recommendation was made at a previous Board meeting. She stated currently at Sage Café
155 there are classes in needle point, crocheting, knitting, etc. It was first presented to R. Short to
156 teach a craft class, but she was not interested. She stated she truly believes it is not necessary
157 to have a leader or a volunteer for the classes. A group of people sharing the same interest is
158 sufficient enough to pull people together. All that is needed is to advertise the activity. S.
159 Saldana stated a signup sheet was placed at Munson Center after the recommendation was
160 discussed at the Board meeting. However, no one signed up. She stated M. Garcia will get
161 together with each of the site center Board representatives and figure out the programs and
162 activities that the participants want to see implemented. It is really important to get feedback
163 from the center participants.

164 R. Short reported a request was made to install a corkboard at Sage Café, but instead a chalk
165 board was installed in activity room. She asked if it can please be corrected. M. Garcia will
166 follow up.

167 R. Short inquired about the status of a recommendation made by James Gibson, former
168 Advisory Board member, regarding starting a Coffee and Conversation group at Munson
169 Center, similar to one being held at Sage Cafe. A signup sheet will be placed at Munson Center
170 to see if there is any interest. R. Short requested it be advertised in the newsletter.

171 Jerry Gunderson, guest, stated when Coffee and Conversation first started at Sage Café, there
172 was very low attendance. Two years later, the activity has 10 to 15 participants. It is very
173 successful. G. Montalvo stated the new sitting area at Munson Center is drawing more people.
174 People are staying longer and conversing more. There is a lot more information shared
175 amongst each other. R. Short stated she would like to see Coffee and Conversation expand to
176 Munson Center, because it has been very beneficial and successful at the Sage Café.

177 Claudia Chavez, Parks and Recreation Services Manager, reviewed the July 2016 Parks and
178 Recreation 50 plus fitness classes' activity attendance report. She reported there are a few new
179 programs. Parks and Recreation is wrapping up the summer programs. She reported an
180 increase in attendance for the walking group. C. Chavez announced a new 50-plus walking
181 program is beginning on September 27, 2016. The 12-week tracked program will meet three
182 times a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at the Frank O'Brien Papen Center. The cost is
183 \$12.00 per month. The goal of the walking program is to increase stamina, cardiovascular
184 health, and socialization. An overnight camping/hiking trip is planned from October 24-27,
185 2016, to Palo Duro State Park, Canyon, Texas. The trip includes camping, hiking, site seeing,
186 and birdwatching. Parks and Recreation program staff will provide the transportation. Two staff
187 members are certified and trained to deal with any type of emergency. The cost for the trip is
188 \$110.00 per person or \$30.00 per person if individuals are traveling on their own.

189 Lora Garcia-Palacios, Interim Senior Programs Administrator, announced staff will continue to
190 take care of business. She provided her contact information. Her office is located in the front of
191 Munson Center. Her direct telephone number is 541-2459.

198 L Garcia-Palacios announced Senior Programs is collaborating with the Roadrunner Food Bank
200 of New Mexico and Casa de Peregrinos to provide a mobile food pantry at the various centers
202 on a set schedule, preferable the third Wednesday of each month. The first food pantry
204 distribution is scheduled for August 24, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Munson Center.
206 The food drops are open to the public. A food box will be provided to the first 50 people. L.
208 Garcia-Palacios stated the priority is to distributed the food boxes to the center participants who
210 have been identified as being nutritionally at risk. For this reason, the food distribution is not
212 being widely advertised to the public. Individuals interested in obtaining a food box will need to
214 complete a brief application. According to Casa de Peregrinos, Senior Programs is meeting the
216 nutritional needs of only 12 percent of the senior population. The goal is to increase the
218 percentage to at least 24 percent. The mobile food pantry distribution schedule is as follows:
220 August at Munson Center, September--Eastside Center, and October--Benavidez Center. The
222 distribution dates for Sage Cafe and Frank O'Brien Papen Centers will be announced at a later
224 date. Casa de Peregrinos requires at least a 3,000 lb. food drop which is enough to feed about
50 people. This is the minimum distribution that they will do per site. Staff is working on
meeting the requirements of the program at Frank O'Brien Papen and Sage Café Senior
Centers since these two centers serve less than the minimum requirements. Board members
inquired how the center participants will be notified of the mobile food pantry distribution. L.
Garcia-Palacios stated it is being advertised in the newsletter, flyers posted at the centers, radio
announcements, through the Senior Programs' case managers and the Network Volunteer
Center. Senior Programs' staff is also working with the City's marketing coordinator to get the
word out. If there are more people than food boxes available, staff will refer those individuals to
the Roadrunner Food Bank and Casa de Peregrinos. L. Garcia-Palacios announced Senior
Programs also collaborates with the Morning Star Pantry, the Lighthouse. The Lighthouse
delivers 20 grocery bags to Senior Programs on a monthly basis. The bags are delivered by the
meals on wheels' delivery drivers to homebound eligible seniors identified as being at risk.

224 L. Garcia-Palacios announced Senior Programs is also collaborating with Dona Ana County
226 Community and Constituents Department and other local agencies to provide a Senior
228 Resource and Education Fair. The Fair is scheduled for October 19, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to
230 1:00 p.m. at the Dona Ana Community College East Mesa Campus. There has been a lot of
232 interest from vendors. Senior Programs will provide transportation. L. Garcia-Palacios stated it
is very important to provide information, education and resources to the seniors. Casa de
Peregrinos will provide breakfast, lunch and snacks for those in attendance.

232 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** An update was provided on the August 2016 Senior Programs'
234 Open Action Items. Action item number 12—promote the bond issue for funding for the central
236 kitchen design remains in the works. Board members inquired if there will be an increase in
238 property taxes if the project is approved by the voters. An update will be provided at the next
month's Board meeting.

240 Action number 14—distribution of educational information regarding neurodegenerative
diseases, particularly Parkinson's disease remains in the works.

242 **CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:** Chair Vega introduced and welcomed new board
244 member Manual (Manny) Contreras, District 5 Representative. M. Contreras stated he retired
from the Children's Drug Court after 20 years of service. His prior volunteer service included:

246 Dona Ana County Sheriff's Reserves in Hatch, Hatch Police Department's Reserves, Garfield
248 Fire Department and Hatch Ambulance Service. He is looking forward to working with seniors.
250 He feels it is very important to ask seniors what programs and services they want offered
252 because their needs may be different than what we think that their needs are. He wants to work
254 closely with Senior Programs' staff, seniors and anyone else who may need his help. He is
256 currently working as a security guard at the Income Support Office in Anthony. He stated he
has scheduled his days off on the days that the Board meetings are held. M. Contreras
recommended placing posters regarding the services provided by the Income Support office at
each of the centers. There may be some seniors who are facing a hardship paying utility bills,
buying groceries, etc., and may benefit from the services provided by Income Support. Vice
Chair Chavarria stated as a county representative, the seniors in the rural areas can also benefit
from this information. Vice Chair Chavarria will contact M. Contreras for more information.

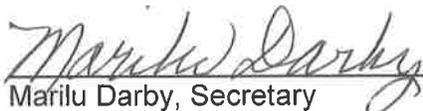
258 R. Short reiterated she hopes Coffee and Conversation activity that meets at Sage Café can be
260 duplicated at the other centers. It started out slow at the Sage Café, but it has developed to the
262 point that they are going on outings. There is a cohesive group of people who are willing to do
264 activities together outside of the parameters of the center. They have developed comrade and
266 they enjoy talking about various topics and subjects. Coffee and Conversation is very
268 beneficial. Seniors who live alone come to socialize with one another, which is invaluable. S.
Wittern stated the communication exchange at Munson Center during the lunch hour between 8
to 15 people is informal but very worthwhile. Chair Vega stated there is a small number of
people who come together to social at the Eastside Center. The topics of discussion vary. It
makes people feel better.

270 J. Gunderson, participant of Coffee and Conversation at Sage Café, extended an invitation to
272 join the group Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. J. Gibson reiterated
communication and socialization are very important.

274 **UPCOMING MEETING:** The next regular Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting is
276 scheduled for Thursday, September 8, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Frank O' Brien
Papen Center, 304 W. Bell Avenue, Las Cruces, NM.

278 **ADJOURNMENT:** Secretary Darby moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. Dr. Chavarria
seconded the motion. Vote: 9 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

280 Submitted,

282 
284 Marilu Darby, Secretary


Toni Flores, Recording Secretary