



**SENIOR PROGRAMS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

October 13, 2016—SAGE CAFÉ SENIOR CENTER

PRESENT: Chair Felix Vega (Eastside Center Representative); Vice Chair Judy Chavarria (Member-at-Large), Dr. Abel L. Chavarria (District 1 Representative), Sharlene Wittern (District 3 Representative), Renee Short (District 6 Representative), Juliette White (Henry Benavidez Center Representative), Gabriel Montalvo (Munson Center Representative), Bill King (Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative), Rayla Buchanan (Sage Café Senior Center Representative)

ABSENT: Secretary Marilu Darby (District 2 Representative), Rick Jackson (District 4 Representative), Manuel Contreras (District 5 Representative)

GUESTS: Lora Garcia-Palacios, Interim Senior Programs Administrator; Michael Garcia, Recreation Facilities Manager; George Lopez, City of Las Cruces EEO/ADA Coordinator; Cathy Mathews, City of Las Cruces Landscape Architect; Frank Lemus, Guest; Jerry Gunderson, Guest; and Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Felix Vega called the Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, October 13, 2016, at the Sage Café Senior Center, 6121 Reynolds Drive, Las Cruces, NM.

INTRODUCTIONS: George Lopez, EEO/ADA Coordinator for City of Las Cruces; Cathy Mathews, City of Las Cruces Landscape Architect; and Frank Lemus, guest, were introduced and welcomed.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENT: At the previous Board meeting Frank Lemus, guest, expressed concern stating the Eastside Center restrooms are not ADA accessible because they do not have automatic door openers. He inquired if a work order has been placed to bring the restrooms into ADA compliance and to install automatic door openers. Michael Garcia, Recreation Facilities Manager, stated he has inspected the restroom doors at the Eastside Center and he can see where the restroom doors in the lobby area are slightly heavy and difficult to open. He also noticed the restroom doors close relatively quickly because the doors do not have a hydraulics system attached to the door to prevent the doors from slamming shut. M. Garcia will place a work order to address the problem. Garcia reminded Board members to please email him directly with any concerns so that he can address them as soon as possible.

George Lopez, EEO/ADA Coordinator for the City of Las Cruces, stated the best person to invite to the Board meeting to address and discuss ADA concerns with respect to

50 building design and building modifications was Mr. Tomas Mendez, City Architect. G.
51 Lopez stated many of the City facilities were built before the ADA came into existence.
52 As per ADA regulations, to retrofit and modify a building to bring it up to current code is
53 unfeasible, if it constitutes an unreasonable hardship. The ADA requires that buildings
54 have one automatic entry per building. G. Lopez suggested Senior Programs' staff
55 contact the City's Facilities Department to conduct an initial ADA examination of the
56 building. They will inspect the facility and determine if it is feasible to modify the facility
57 to bring it up to ADA standards. He explained the ADA does not require extra
58 accommodations. It requires reasonable accommodations. In other words, the intent is
59 to help qualified disabled individuals come up to some parity with the general
60 population. To do that, there is a fundamental requirement to do certain things. It may
61 be modifications to the original design of a building so that the qualified disabled
62 individual can have equal access to the service, but it stops short of creating extra
63 conditions or opportunities. In this instance, it would not take a lot to adjust the
64 restroom doors since they are already ADA qualified. M. Garcia will contact Facilities
Department to conduct an ADA examination of the facility.

66 Cathy Mathews, Landscape Architect for the City of Las Cruces, reported several years
67 ago a team of City staff consisting of Tomas Mendez, City Architect; Parks and
68 Recreation, Senior Programs and herself developed a concept on how to better utilize
69 the outdoor space around Munson Center for additional programming. Different options
70 were discussed such as adding an outdoor exercise area adjacent to and in connection
71 with the senior center. C. Mathews explained the Munson Center community garden
72 was part of the initial concept that the team developed, and it was the first part that was
73 implemented. She reported currently there is additional funding that has become
74 available and the team is interested in completing the initial concept. C. Mathews
75 explained the idea is to create a walking trail in the vicinity up to 1/10 of a mile long so
76 that is an attainable and measurable distance. The team is proposing to install shaded
77 structures with picnic tables. Benches will also be placed along the route of the
78 pathway. There will be a mini-turf space and a grassy area for tai chi, outdoor yoga, or
79 other kinds of outdoor recreational activities. In conjunction with the community garden,
80 the team is proposing to plant fruit trees to integrate the idea of an orchard throughout
81 the area. The outdoor recreation area will include exercise stations with a variety of
82 exercise equipment. The exercise equipment will be strategically placed under the
83 trees for shade. The outdoor area will have high-end furnishings like the Heske Garden
84 furnishings. The path that is being proposed is going to be made of compacted crusher
85 fine. It will create a stable surface and will be ADA complaint. The surface will require
86 low maintenance and will be gentle on the knees. C. Mathews provided a poster board
87 displaying the exercise equipment that is being proposed to be installed in the new
88 outdoor recreation area.

90 Renee Short, District 6 Representative, inquired if the exercise equipment is applicable
to any population, specifically for seniors and if the benches will be covered benches to

92 provide shade and protect seniors from the sun. She inquired if there will be water
stations throughout the walking path.

94
96 C. Mathews stated the team has not finalized the location of the benches. There are not
98 enough funds in the budget to place covers over each of the benches. However, she is
proposing that the benches be installed in conjunction with the existing trees and with
100 the new trees to maximize the use of the existing shade and the new proposed shade.
102 As far as the water stations are concerned, it was not part of the initial plans to install a
water station or a water fountain. However, the team will take this suggestion under
104 consideration and work it into the plans. Because it is only 1/10 of a mile, one drinking
106 fountain will suffice. It can be centrally located where there is a water source, where it
can serve the garden and the recreation area. C. Mathews informed the Board the
state legislative funding for this project is on hold until administration releases the funds
108 to the City. As soon as the funding is released, the City will begin working on the
outdoor recreation area project. The intent is to complete this project by the end of this
fiscal year which ends on June 30, 2017.

110 J. Chavarria stated that considering the location of Munson Center are there any safety
precautions that will be taken to secure the area and the equipment when it is not in
112 use. C. Mathews stated a 6-foot-high fence will be installed on the outside parameters
of the walking trail. The entry to the area will be controlled by the Senior Programs'
114 staff. The staff will set the hours of operation and determine when the area will be
open. There will also be a gated and fenced access into the parking lot to the south of
116 the building so that Munson Center City vehicles can be parked overnight and have a
secure location.

118 S. Wittern stated she attend the meeting with the Chief of Police and they stated that
the park is being occupied by homeless people daily. She was unsure if a fence would
120 help the situation. C. Mathews stated the homeless people do not have anywhere to
live except in the parks, which are lovely places for all residents to enjoy. It can create
122 uncomfortable feelings for some people who are not homeless. However, there are all
sorts of options that can be utilized. A fence and signage posted that clearly states the
124 hours of operation are tools that allows the police to make a determination if people are
allowed in the area.

126
128 R. Short inquired if the funding also covers the equipment maintenance. C. Mathews
stated the funding was directed for the purpose of capital improvements. The funds are
130 strictly for the design and construction of the project. Maintenance will be an issue for
Senior Programs and the Parks Department to work out. Jerry Gunderson, guest,
132 stated that 1/10 of a mile is an attainable distance and adding a fence for security
purposes is an excellent idea. He informed the Board that with legislative cuts, if the
funds are not used by a certain date, the legislature can rescind the funds.

134

136 C. Mathews stated the idea is to cluster the exercise equipment along the walking trail.
137 There will be three or four pieces of exercise equipment that will be purchased
138 depending on the budget. The equipment will be clustered so that people can exercise
139 together for a social experience and because of space constraints. She displayed a
140 poster board with nine different pieces of exercise equipment being proposed to be
141 installed in the outdoor recreation area. These pieces of equipment are used when
142 designing workout spaces specifically for seniors. She asked the Board and the public
143 to identify the top three or four desired pieces of equipment they would be most
144 interested in seeing in the outdoor recreation area. The pieces of equipment consisted
145 of: A. two-person pendulum, abs and dips station; B. two-person cross country ski, C.
146 four-person leg press, D. two-person chest press, E. single elliptical, F. single butterfly,
147 G. four-person twisting station, H. three-person stationary station and I. two-person
148 back arms.

149 Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative, inquired if this equipment is weather
150 proof. C. Mathews stated these pieces of equipment are specifically designed for
151 outdoor use. The equipment is weather resistant and designed to be durable for this
152 type of use. M. Garcia stated that because there is a walking trail, his recommendation
153 is that they may not want to invest funds in a cardio-type machine. R. Short reminded
154 the Board they must take into consideration equipment that can be used by people who
155 are not ambulatory. It was recommended that pieces of equipment be purchased and
156 installed that not only focus on a cardio workout, but also strength training. M. Garcia
157 commented that strength training is more beneficial than cardio especially for older
158 people. The Board took a brief recess at 9:05 a.m. to vote on the top three to four
159 pieces of equipment they were most interested in seeing in the new area. Chair Vega
160 reconvened the Board meeting at 9:20 a.m.

161 R. Short requested that the ADA issue be included in the work order list for tracking
162 purposes. She requested staff contact the Facilities Department to investigate the issue
163 and asked that a report be provided at the next Board meeting, as per G. Lopez's
164 recommendation. G. Lopez stated if anyone has specific ADA questions, he may be
165 contacted directly by calling 575-528-3227. Dr. Chavarria recommended inviting Tom
166 Mendez to the next advisory Board meeting to speak to the Board members. L. Garcia-
167 Palacios will extend an invitation to T. Mendez. The Board thanked G. Lopez and C.
168 Mathews for attending the Board meeting.

169 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Dr. Abel L. Chavarria, District 1 Representative,
170 moved to approve the September 8, 2016 Board meeting minutes as presented.
171 Juliette White, Henry Benavidez Center Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 9
172 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

173 Jerry Gunderson provided an update on AARP's outreach efforts and the upcoming
174 defensive driving courses. The fee for the defensive driving class is \$15.00. Upon

178 completion of the class, the participants receive a certificate of completion. With the
180 certificate, participants may receive up to a 10% discount on their insurance, if the
insurance company accepts the certificate.

182 **INTERIM SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** In Claudia Chavez,
184 Parks and Recreation Services Manager's absence, Lori Garcia-Palacios, Senior
186 Programs Administrator, distributed the September 2016 Parks and Recreation 50 plus
fitness classes' activity attendance report. Questions regarding the report can be
directed to M. Garcia, and he will forward the questions to C. Chavez.

188 L. Garcia-Palacios at the previous meeting announced a Senior Resource and
190 Informational Fair will be held on October 19, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the
192 Dona Ana Community College East Mesa Campus. She previously reported
preregistration was required to attend the fair and was being limited to the first 100
194 participants. However, she received clarification that the first 100 people to register for
the event will receive a free continental breakfast and a free box lunch. The event is
free and open to the public. There is no limit to the number of people who can attend
the event. However, there is a limit to the number of meals to be provided.

196 J. Gunderson stated AARP will be conducting a fraud presentation at the Resource Fair.
198 He encouraged those present to attend. R. Short inquired if the Resource Fair was
200 advertised in the Senior Programs' newsletter. L. Garcia-Palacios stated it was not in
the newsletter, because she did not receive clarification about the limit of 100 people
until after the newsletter was printed. Flyers were posted at each of centers.

202 L. Garcia-Palacios reported the mobile food pantry distributions sponsored by Senior
204 Programs, Casa De Peregrinos and the Roadrunner Food Bank have been very
successful. Over 3000 pounds of food have been distributed to over 50 families on
206 monthly basis at each of the distribution sites. The primary recipients of the food
assistance program have been center participants. The distributions are open to the
208 public. The next mobile food pantry distribution is planned for October 19, 2016 at
Munson Center and on October 24, 2016 at the Eastside Center.

210 She reported Senior Programs is partnering with the Juvenile Citation Program (JCP) to
212 conduct a food donation drive at each of the centers. Board members were asked to
please encourage consumers to donate nonperishable food items by placing them in
214 the designated donation boxes. The food collected will be distributed during the
upcoming holidays to those in need.

216 The Senior Programs' Annual Report for fiscal year 2015/2016 was distributed to Board
218 members. The staff was commended on the excellent job they did compiling the
information. The annual report provides an overview of Senior Programs'
220 accomplishments throughout the year.

222 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** An update was provided on the October 2016 Senior
224 Programs' Open Action Items. Action item number 12—promote the bond issue for
funding for the central kitchen design remains in the works.

226 At the previous Board meeting R. Short requested work orders, discussed at the Board
228 meetings, be extracted from the minutes and a list compiled for better tracking
230 purposes. The Board was presented with a list of work orders and issues of concerns.
232 Board members reviewed the list consisting of 32 items. R. Short pointed out there are
things on the list that have been discussed for months, but have not been started or
completed. The list serves as a tracking tool that will assist the Board in monitoring and
tracking work orders.

234 An update on the open work orders was provided. M. Garcia stated the Sage Café Flag
236 Ceremony was cancelled due to a series of events that took place. He proposed the
238 Flag Ceremony be rescheduled for Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 11:30 a.m.
There were no objections from the Board. Board members requested invitations be
sent to the Mayor Ken Miyagishima, City Councillors, Interim City Manager David
Dollahon and Assistant City Managers.

240 Item #2--installation of toilet seat covers dispensers and disposable toilet seat covers at
242 Sage Café. M. Garcia stated Facilities reordered the toilet seat cover dispensers and
244 disposable toilet seat covers because they switched distributors. The items should be
received and installed within one month.

246 Item #3--purchase of a bench for Sage Café and adding a transit stop at Sage Café. M.
248 Garcia stated this is a capital project which is on hold because there is no funding
250 available. Funds will be requested during the fiscal year 2018 process. R. Short stated
252 there are several people who utilize the Dial-A-Ride transportation service at Sage
Café. They are standing outside waiting for the bus to arrive. Some of these people
cannot stand for a long period of time. For this reason, it is necessary to install a bench.

254 R. Short stated that information is crucial in the event Board members must lobby for
256 funding. They need to know the history or the story behind the issue so they can
258 provide accurate information. She stated there were many seniors who were very upset
260 about the lack of information and the short notice that was given to them when the solar
panels were installed at Sage Café. There were disabled people who did not know how
to enter the facility. R. Short stated it is about communicating the information to people
so that they know what is going on.

262 M. Garcia stated the same day he received the information about the solar panels was
the same day he provided the information to the participants. Unfortunately, it was out
of his control. The construction project ran longer than expected, but he did everything

264 he could to make sure the seniors were accommodated. He reiterated to please
266 communicate any client concerns to him directly, so he can immediately address the
concerns. R. Short stated there were several complaints. It was mostly people who
were disabled.

268
270 Item #5--the resurfacing of the Eastside Center sidewalk. M. Garcia stated this is a
capital project that is on hold because there is no funding available this fiscal year.
272 Funding for this capital project will be requested during the fiscal year 2018 budget
process.

274 Item #15—implementation of a coffee and conversation group at Munson Center. M.
Garcia reported a sign-up sheet was placed at Munson Center. No one expressed an
276 interest in this activity. He added coffee and conversation is currently taking place on
an informal basis in the Munson Center Keyboard Café.

278
280 Item #18—Request to install a corkboard and remove the chalkboard at the Sage Café
activity room. The corkboard will be purchased by the end of this week and will be
installed.

282
284 Item #19—the sensor in the Munson Center art painting studio is blocked by a locker.
M. Garcia reported this issue has been resolved.

286 Item #21—create a nomination's/door prize committee to nominate outstanding
288 volunteers from Las Cruces to be recognized at the annual NM Conference on Aging
and to solicit donations for door prizes from Senior Programs art classes for the annual
290 conference. After discussion, the following members were appointed to serve on the
nominations/door prize committee: Rayla Buchanan, Vice Chair Judy Chavarria, Dr.
292 Abel Chavarria, Renee Short and Senior Programs Volunteer Coordinator, Ryan
Steinmetz. M. Garcia will inform R. Steinmetz he has been appointed to serve on the
294 committee. The date of the next year's New Mexico Conference on Aging will be
provided at the next Board meeting

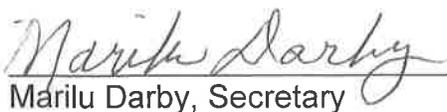
296 **UPCOMING MEETING:** The next regular Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting is
scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Benavidez
298 Recreation Center, 1045 McClure Road, Las Cruces, NM.

300 **ADJOURNMENT:** Dr. A. Chavarria moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. R.
Buchanan seconded the motion. Vote: 9 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

302 Submitted,

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Marilu Darby, Secretary


Toni Flores, Recording Secretary