

CITY OF LAS CRUCES

The following are the summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board** meeting held on Thursday, September 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the Munson Center, located at 975 S. Mesquite, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative
Vice-Chair Belinda Soto, Henry Benavidez Recreation Center Representative
Secretary Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large
Larry Altamirano, Sage Café Senior Center Representative
Steve Gaskell, District 1 Representative
Carol Gurule, District 3 Representative
Yolanda Knodle, District 4 Representative
Martha Lopez, Munson Center Representative
Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brendan Shannon, District 5 Representative
David Hernandez, Eastside Center Representative

GUESTS PRESENT:

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on September 12, 2024, by Chair Mona Bedale, District 2 Representative.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Roll call was taken and a quorum was ascertained.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Larry Altamirano, Sage Café Senior Center Representative.
4. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** The Board observed a moment of silence.
5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Motion to approve the Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting agenda for September 12, 2024, was made by Secretary Judy Chavarria, Member at Large, seconded by Steve Gaskell, District 1 Representative. Motion passed unanimously.
6. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board Members had no conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.
7. **INTRODUCTIONS:** None were done.
8. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

1
2 **9. ACTION ITEMS:**
3

4 **9.1. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 8, 2024 SENIOR PROGRAMS ADVISORY**
5 **BOARD MEETING MINUTES:** Motion by Larry Altamirano, second by
6 Steve Gaskell. Motion passed unanimously.
7

8 **10. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
9

10 **10.1. SENIOR PROGRAMS DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT - SONIA**
11 **SALDANA:** S. Saldana reported on the grant funding that was recently
12 approved through Council. The Title IIIB Home Care program received
13 \$63,000 from the federal government. The City's contribution for the grant
14 was \$137,000. The state allocated \$450,000 to distribute amongst the
15 programs that need most of the funding. This could be personnel, vehicle
16 maintenance, gas, uniforms, supplies and is based on history and cost of
17 goods. The projected donation amount from people utilizing the services is
18 \$3,500 a year. This is lower than the home delivered and the congregate
19 because most people on homecare are already donating to home delivered
20 meals. Previously, the goal was \$2,000, but they surpassed the goal. Title
21 IIC1 is the congregate meals, and they received \$182,000, and City match
22 was \$257,000. There was an additional \$30,000 for salary increases, cost
23 of good increases. For program income, the goal is \$92,000 in
24 contributions. A breakdown of all program contributions per center was
25 distributed to the Board last month. Title IIC2 is home delivered. The
26 federal government gave \$75,000 and the City's contribution for the
27 program was \$282,000. Projected program income is \$90,000. Nutrition
28 Services Incentive Programs (NSIP) is \$217,000 which is used to purchase
29 food that is grown in the U.S. only. The City match for the program was
30 \$684,000 for last few years. The City also provides additional funding to
31 supplement the programs. The City matches 60-70% and the grants are
32 doing 30-40%. The average meal contributions is over a dollar and for
33 Home Delivered meals it is under a dollar. The goal is to be to donate on-
34 line and accept credit/debit cards which neither are possible right now. All
35 cash donations are carefully handled.
36

37 S. Saldana provided an update on the Munson Center expansion project.
38 The framing is near completion. The project is on schedule and completion
39 is anticipated early next year with a grand opening perhaps in the Spring or
40 Summer. There is a huge increase of people coming to the centers. The
41 City is waiting for the additional funding to complete the Sage Café Center
42 expansion project. It is anticipated the funding will be received by the Fall.
43 S. Saldana reported other projects include replacing the dining room floor
44 at the Frank O'Brien Papen Center and the kitchen floor at the Henry
45 Benavidez Recreation Center. These facilities will have to be closed for a

1 week or two for the replacements. This will be announced a week or two
2 beforehand for people to make other plans. There are a lot more people at
3 the park behind Munson Center lately. Staff is working with Parks and Public
4 Works to remove brush along the fence as people have been cutting the
5 fence to go into the ponding area which is very concerning. The fence will
6 be rebuilt. Also, looking into replacing the floor at Munson Center. There
7 are some extra security services lately to monitor Munson Center. Frank
8 O'Brien Papen Center has had two break-ins on the Parks and Rec side
9 and so there is security there, and senior programs only controls the dining
10 area.

11
12 Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager, stated they are seeing an
13 increase in attendance at all the recreation programs at the different
14 centers. They have an exhibit at the State Fair. Interested in anything in
15 the artistic medias that are offered as classes to enter. The Thursday dance
16 at Sage Café from 2:00-4:00 p.m. was well attended. Board members were
17 asked to inform participants of the upcoming Halloween dance scheduled
18 on Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with live music,
19 costume contest, and games. Other recreation programs that have
20 implemented include additional Spanish classes, beginner, conversational
21 Spanish intermediate and advanced. Classes will run with similar to the
22 NMSU schedule.

23
24 **11. UPDATES:**

25
26 **11.1. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS:**

27
28 Larry Altamirano reported great growth but also growing pains. Parking is
29 an issue at the Sage Café Senior Center. The additional parking at Sage
30 may not accommodate the present issue. The TV monitor is not really being
31 seen when you come in, so maybe move it to a different location within the
32 dining room. Other issue people wanting to socialize, and they were put in
33 the overflow room, but that room is for activities. They have run out of food
34 several times, August 30 ran out of main entrée by 12:15 p.m., September
35 4 and 5 ran out of main dish, by 12:15 p.m. giving two scopes of rice and
36 salad. The amount of food that is prepared is based on the number of
37 people coming and then 10% above. The word is getting out the food is
38 great. Sonia Saldana stated they will take a closer look and possibly send
39 more than the 10%. People are getting there later, after 12:15 p.m. May
40 need signs that additional parking is available at the swimming pool. There
41 was a question on the vegetables whether canned or frozen. There is a
42 grant with New Mexico Home Grown and buying local vegetables for some,
43 but also some canned.

44

1 Yolanda Knodle reported some clients wondering about the little juice
2 glasses, tiny little glasses. Sonia Saldana mentioned working to get all the
3 glasses the same size, but at Munson there are small, medium, and large
4 glasses. Also clients mentioned appreciation of the portions of the meals.
5 Mentioned the dressing is too watery and that it was being made at Munson
6 Center and that client got sick from it. She did mention this to Roger.
7

8 Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative,
9 reported their TV monitor is not rotating the information. It is stuck on
10 Spanish. She reported an increase in the number of people coming to the
11 Frank O'Brien Papen Center. In asking, some are from the Munson center
12 as looking for smaller centers to go to. The people they have for cleaning
13 tables do a good job.
14

15 Martha Lopez, Munson Center Representative, reported seeing a lot of new
16 people. They will be needing more tables and chairs. Mexican food day
17 seems to be very popular and crowded. The asparagus has been tough,
18 hard to cut, rubbery, dark, and hard to chew. More people are coming in
19 later. Suggest getting a cover over the outdoor exercise equipment as it is
20 very hot.
21

22 Judy Chavarria, Member at Large, questioned why red chili beans and
23 cauliflower were served at the same time. She reported Kline Park is going
24 through a renovation, and a canopy has been put on the play area for the
25 children which is great, and beautiful turquoise color. The side that faces
26 La Nueva Casita Café has two entrances for people with disabilities. The
27 stage is still being worked on. The mural is also very beautiful. On the
28 corner of Mesquite and Hadley is the Sunshine Grocery building, one block
29 to the north, 660 N. Mesquite is a home that has a very nice historical mural.
30 There is also a brief history of the mural to read. She recommended placing
31 a mural east wall that faces Tornillo Street of the Eastside Community
32 Center. Sonia Saldana stated the building is not owned by the City and
33 somebody did look at that wall, the wall would have to be resurfaced.
34

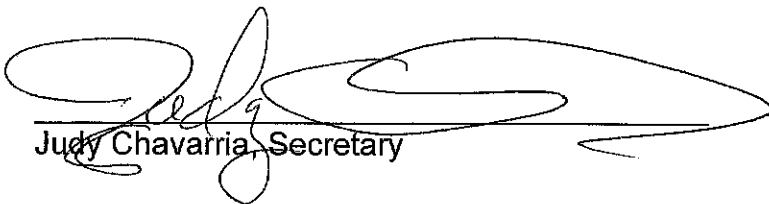
35 Chair Mona Bedale reported she referred another person for respite care
36 services. She met with two families that are grandparents raising
37 grandchildren and gave them information about the program. If there are
38 issues with the food, it should be addressed immediately rather than a
39 month later. Sonia Saldana stated if the individual is comfortable, please
40 approach the cook in each kitchen so the issue can be addressed
41 immediately.
42

43 It was mentioned that sometimes the portions are shortened to make the
44 food go further, but Sonia Saldana stated this should not be the case as
45 portions are set and she will discuss with Roger Bishop.

1
2 It was mentioned there will be fire drills scheduled at the different center.
3 Everyone in the building needs to participate. Staff will try hard not to
4 schedule during lunch. Also, City doing the Great American Shake Out
5 Program, another surprise drill sometime in October 2024.
6

7 **12. ADJOURNMENT:**

8
9 **12.1.** Motion to adjourn was made by Larry Altamirano, seconded by Judy
10 Chavarria. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.
11

12
13
14 
15
16 Judy Chavarria, Secretary