The following are summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board Meeting** held on April 11, 2019 at 9:02 a.m. at Sage Café Senior Center, 6121 Reynolds Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**
- Chair Cheryl De Young, Benavidez Center Representative
- Vice Chair Rayla Buchanan, Sage Café Senior Center Representative
- Secretary Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large
- Dr. Abel L. Chavarria, District 1 Representative
- Sharlene Wittern, District 3 Representative
- Rudy Alvarez, Eastside Center Representative
- Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative
- Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O’Brien Papen Center Representative

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**
- Marilu Darby, District 2 Representative
- Rick Jackson, District 4 Representative
- Manuel Contreras, District 5 Representative
- Etta Kaufman, District 6 Representative

**GUESTS PRESENT:**
- Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator
- Michael Garcia, Recreation Facility Manager
- Azucena Saucedo, Assistant Management Analyst
- Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Cheryl De Young, Benavidez Center Representative, called the Senior Programs’ Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2019, at the Sage Café Senior Center, 6121 Reynolds Drive, Las Cruces, NM.

II. **ROLL CALL:** Roll call was taken, and a quorum ascertained.

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Rudy Alvarez, Eastside Center Representative, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** A moment of silence was observed.

V. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members and staff present had no conflict of interest with any item of business on the agenda.

VI. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, was welcomed back.

VII. **ACTION ITEM(S):** Dr. Abel Chavarria, District 1 Representative, moved to approve the March 14, 2019 Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting minutes. Rayla Buchanan, Sage Café Senior Center Representative, seconded the motion. Vote: 8 Ayes; 0 Nays. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. **DISCUSSION ITEM(S):** Michael Garcia, Recreation Facility Manager, updated the Board on the April 2019 list of pending work orders and issues of concern:
Action item #5—resurfacing of the sidewalk at the Eastside Center. The Facilities Department has placed this work order on hold pending funding availability. Facilities is aware this is a safety issue that requires attention. However, due to the lack of funding, it will not be addressed until after July 1, 2019 (Fiscal Year 2020).

Action Item #35—Recruitment of an instructor for the Beading classes at Sage Café and Frank O'Brien Papen (FOBP) Centers. A volunteer instructor has been recruited to teach the Beading classes at the Sage Café Senior Center. Another volunteer will be trained to teach the classes at the FOBP Center. M. Garcia announced the Beading classes are now part of Senior Programs' regular programming. As a result, the classes will follow the same registration process, fees and charges schedule as the regular classes, six-week sessions at $1.00 per drop-in session. It was announced Senior Programs will no longer purchase the beads for the class participants. M. Garcia stated the beads are expensive and several program participants were taking advantage of the program by utilizing the program for their personal gain. S. Saldana added there were people taking large bags of beads home. The instructor will dictate the supplies required for the class. The class participants have been informed of these changes.

G. Montalvo suggested having a kit available for beginners. M. Garcia stated this recommendation has been taken into consideration, but not everyone wants to make the same item. S. Saldana encouraged those interested in making jewelry to tour the Munson Center lapidary lab. It is a lot of fun, and the work they do is beautiful. M. Garcia stated Senior Programs offers silver jewelry making classes, and he is considering reinstating the faceting classes.

Item #36—The safety concern expressed with the Eastside Center recreation activity room door slamming shut has been resolved. The pressure gauge was replaced. M. Garcia will follow up with Risk Management to ensure the door is safe and meets code compliance.

Item #37—Signage needed for the men's and women's restroom entrances at the Eastside Center. M. Garcia stated new ADA signage has been ordered for the restrooms. As soon as the signs are ready, they will be mounted on the wall next to the women's and men's restrooms.

Item No. 38—Status on the recruitment of a Tai Chi instructor. At the previous meeting, M. Garcia announced Lorenzo Zepeda, Tai Chi instructor, accepted a position with the City of Las Cruces Museum Systems. As a result, the Tai Chi classes will continue through June 30, 2019, which is the end of the contract period. M. Garcia is working with the Department of Health (DOH) to recruit a Tai Chi class instructor to lead the classes after July 1, 2019.

Secretary Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large, stated the Tai Chi classes have been cancelled for the past few weeks because L. Zepeda has been attending orientation classes. R. Alvarez expressed concern stating there is a core of very faithful participants, and it is very frustrating to find out the class has been canceled when they arrive at the center. A class participant suggested creating a phone tree directory to inform the class participants of any changes to the class schedule. Through the phone tree, class participants can easily and quickly receive updated information about the class.

R. Alvarez inquired if it was possible to make up the missed classes. M. Garcia stated he will follow up with the DOH, which is the agency that oversees the program. Class participants will be notified in advance if makeup classes are scheduled.
Senior Programs Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
April 11, 2019  
Page 3

102  Action item No. 39 - Status update on the repair of TV monitor located in the hallway of Munson Center. M. Garcia is working to resolve the technical issues associated with the TV monitor. In the mean time another informational TV monitor is available in the lobby of Munson Center.

106  Action Item No. 40 - Munson Center sidewalk improvement project status update. The Munson Center sidewalk remodeling project is expected to begin at the end of April or beginning of May 2019. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of July 2019. G. Montalvo recommended installing rubber mats in the concrete. This will help prevent the deterioration of the sidewalk during the winter months when salt is poured on the concrete.

112  M. Garcia announced, beginning April 26, 2019, the FOBP Center will undergo a roof construction project. The facility will remain open throughout the construction project, and there will be disruption to the program’s activities or services. Several parking spaces in the west parking lot of the center will be reserved for the construction crew. The project is expected to be completed by May 3, 2019.

118  Action item no. 41 - Status on the recommendation made to install a snack vending machine at the Sage Café Senior Center. M. Garcia stated this is not a viable option due to the amount of time the center is open and the limited amount of space available. Coffee and pastries are available until 10:30 a.m. and lunch is served from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

122  Action item no. 42 - Update on the recommendation to post photos of participants celebrating a birthday on the bulletin boards or display on TV monitors at each of the centers. M. Garcia stated a survey will be distributed to determine the interest of the participants. He stated all participants must agree to have their photos taken and displayed at centers. Otherwise, he cannot proceed with this recommendation, because Senior Programs does not want to make it seem as if it is segregating a certain group of seniors.

130  Action item no 43 - Capital Outlay funding request application submission update. S. Saldana reported Senior Programs will be submitting a Capital Outlay Request for Funding application for the expansion of the Sage Café and the Munson Senior Centers. The reason Senior Programs is applying for an expansion is because of the congregate meals program set ups and teardowns. It is a challenge trying to find volunteers to help with the setup and teardowns of the tables and chairs. Senior Programs has relied on staff and a few volunteers to setup for the congregate meals program; however, it is becoming more and more challenging. If the expansion is approved, the dining room will be dedicated strictly for the congregate meals program, and it will not be necessary to setup and teardown tables and chairs. Senior Programs will be able to accommodate more people and offer more activities or classes. The expansion will consist of an addition of a classroom and a multipurpose room to the back of the Sage Café and to the south of Munson Center. Senior Programs is in the application process. If the funding request is approved, it may take up to three years to begin the project.

144  Action item no. 44 - Status on the floor remodeling project at the Benavidez Center. M. Garcia reported the installation of the reception desk has been completed. The next phase of the remodeling project will be to replace the floor. The contractor will work on the project during the weekend, so it does not negatively impact the programs and services at the Benavidez Center. M. Garcia stated the worn-out flags at the center were replaced with new flags. The flags at
Munson Center will also be replaced. Chair C. De Young stated she heard positive remarks about the reception desk, and the participants appreciated the new flags.

S. Saldana thanked J. Chavarria and Dr. A. Chavarria for advocating for the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council meeting to be held in Las Cruces on April 24 – 26, 2019. On April 24, 2019 the NMAAA will hold a budget training for new directors at Munson Center. The Advisory Council meeting will be held on April 25, 2019 at the Hotel Encanto from 9:00-4:00 p.m. On April 26, 2019 the Policy Advisory Committee will tour one of the Senior Programs' facilities. The providers and Council members have been extended an invitation to eat lunch at Munson Center. Board members were encouraged to attend the Council meeting on April 25, 2019.

S. Saldana announced Senior Programs was notified it will be receiving additional Federal funding through the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging. It is a large amount of money and the criteria is that the funds must be spent by June 30, 2019. The funding is allocated for home care, respite care, congregate and home delivered meal services. Senior Programs has not accepted the additional funds, because it is exploring options to determine how to best utilize the additional funding. J. Rodriguez-Haught stated the FOBP center cannot accommodate any more people. The center is already crowded. Chair C. De Young inquired if the funds can be used to purchase equipment for the allocated services. S. Saldana stated that unfortunately the funding can only be utilized to provide the contracted units of services for the abovementioned services. Secretary J. Chavarria recommended holding a picnic/BBQ similar to the event that was held at the FOBP Center a year ago. Senior Programs will take this recommendation under consideration.

**IX. UPDATES:** J. Rodriguez-Haught stated the participants of the FOBP Center have expressed concern, because they heard Munson, Benavidez and the FOBP Centers were potential sites to be used for the migrants. S. Saldana explained the City of Las Cruces has been working on a plan in the event there is an influx of migrants coming to Las Cruces. She stated there are other facilities that will be used first to accommodate the migrants. If those other facilities are not able to accommodate the number of individuals coming to Las Cruces, then the City will move forward with the plan to open Benavidez Recreation and Munson Centers for the migrants. The sites that will be used first include: Community of Hope, Gospel Rescue Mission, and Casa De Peregrinos. S. Saldana stated the initial list that was created did not include the FOBP Center; however, the updated list now includes: Meerscheidt Recreation and the FOBP centers. To date, the Gospel Rescue Mission has been able to accommodate the number of people coming to the Las Cruces. S. Saldana stated she voiced her concerns to the City about possible health risks and the vulnerable population attending the centers. She stated the centers will be a last resort. J. Rodriguez-Haught stated the senior programs participants do not want to be displaced, and they do not want to see their resources exhausted by another group. S. Saldana will continue to voice her concerns to the City staff.

Secretary J. Chavarria requested an update on the situation with the piano at the Eastside Center. She stated the piano has not been removed. It is still in the same location. M. Garcia stated the piano has not been moved or locked, because it is an antique piano. Finding a key to lock the piano has been a challenge. He reported a change in the hours the piano is available for public use from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and after 12:00 p.m. A sign has been placed on the piano. He also addressed the change in hours with the two individuals who regularly play the piano. A survey will be circulated at the Eastside Center to receive input from the participants to determine if they want the piano or if they want it removed from the lobby. Secretary J. Chavarria stated the
piano is very disruptive to the participants sitting in the lobby, particularly for the receptionist. It
was recommended a cover be purchased for the piano. If it is covered, then the participants know
it cannot be used. M. Garcia will follow up.

Secretary J. Chavarria commented the potatoes served with the Yankee Pot Roast were raw and
hard. R. Alvarez suggested inviting the Nutrition Program Manager to the next Board meeting to
discuss the Board's concerns with the meals served. R. Alvarez stated they are seniors; they are
not slobs to be eating some of those meals that are being served. Dr. A. Chavarria stated there
was also a corn salad that was served that same day, the salad had no flavor. Chair C. De Young
stated the meal served at the Benavidez Center was amazing. The corn salad had cilantro, and
it was very good. The pudding was excellent. The whole wheat rolls were very good. It was an
excellent meal. Chair C. De Young stated her only complaint is the temperature of food. The
food is not hot, it is served lukewarm. By the time, they sit down to eat the food, the meal is cold.
She stated the day the Benavidez Center was closed for repairs; she ate lunch at Munson Center
and noticed the difference in the temperature of the food. The food was served hot at Munson
Center. For this reason, she mentioned the purchase of equipment with the extra funding. She
feels Benavidez Center has faulty equipment that needs to be replaced. The food is very rarely
hot. She stated 8 out of 10 meals that should be hot are lukewarm unless they were just pulled
out of the oven. Dr. A. Chavarria had the same complaint at the Eastside Center. The food is
served lukewarm, not hot. S. Saldana stated based on the information provided, it seems that
the Benavidez and Eastside Centers are the two centers experiencing these issues. There have
been no complaints about the food being served from the participants of the other centers. R.
Alvarez reported he noticed the server at the Eastside Center had the trays served ahead of time.
Secretary J. Chavarria added the seasoned potatoes are good, but sometimes they leave them
too long in the serving trays and they look like charcoal. J. Rodriguez-Haught commented she
does not like the white sauce served on the pea and corn salads. S. Saldana will follow up with
the Nutrition Program Manager. She will ask the nutrition program staff to check the meals
equipment at all the centers to ensure it is working properly.

S. Wittern reported a volunteer with the Network Volunteer Center reported there was a couple
who had set up a tent in the park. She also noticed there was a large hole at the bottom of the
fence on the southside of the park leading into the holding pond behind Munson Center. S.
Saldana stated she will follow up with Codes Department.

J. Rodriguez-Haught stated more salt and pepper shakers are needed. S. Saldana stated Senior
Programs continuously replaces the salt and pepper shakers, spoons, forks, and cups because
these items get thrown away accidently.

R. Alvarez stated a bridge pool stick is needed for the billiards room at the Eastside Center
because the bridge pool stick has been missing for some time now.

S. Wittern stated the custodian informed her that the toilet paper is being taken from the Munson
Center restroom stalls. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs has an ongoing issue with the toilet
paper being taken from the centers. If this issue continues, then it will be necessary to put some
measures into place. She asked Board members to remain vigilant at the centers and let people
know that there is a cost associated when replacing these items. Dr. A. Chavarria recommended
signs be posted informing the participants not to remove silverware from the centers. J.
Rodriguez-Haught stated people have been saving seats with their purses at the FOBP Center.
S. Saldana stated saving seats is not allowed at the centers, because it is an unfair practice. Staff will follow up with this concern.

S. Wittern stated she is not sure if a participant of Munson Center has permission to bring a pet into the center. She stated during the March dance the participant brought the pet into the center. S. Saldana stated she had had an extensive discussion with the individual. She stated the pet is a service animal. To qualify as a service animal, the participant must answer a few questions about the service animal. If the questions are answered correctly, then the service animal can be brought into the centers. However, if the service animal is being disruptive, then staff can request that the animal be removed from the facility.

The next Board meeting will be held May 9, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Benavidez Recreation Center, 1045 McClure Road, Las Cruces, NM.

X. ADJOURNMENT: Dr. A. Chavarria moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Submitted,

Judy Chavarria, Secretary

Toni Flores, Recording Secretary