The following are minutes for the meeting of the City of Las Cruces Quality of Life Policy Review Committee held at 3:00 p.m. October 27, 2021, in City Hall, Conference Room 2007A.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Councilor Tessa Abeyta-Stuve – District 2 – Chair
Councilor Gabriel Vasquez – District 3
Dr. Marlena Fraune, Ex-Officio Member
Diego Medina, Ex-Officio Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Mayor Ken Miyagishima

OTHERS PRESENT:
Rebecca Slaughter, Quality of Life Deputy Director and PRC Staff Coordinator
Jill Aguirre, Quality of Life Senior Office Manager and PRC Recording Secretary
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator
Margaret Neill, Library Administrator
Karla Walton, Marketing and Event Coordinator

I. CALL TO ORDER - Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. A quorum was established with Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve and Councilor Vasquez present.

II. CONFLICT OF INTEREST – Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve read the conflict of interest statement. “Does any member of the City Council or any member of City staff have any known conflict of interest with any item on the agenda?” All members present indicated there were none.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA - Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve requested a motion for acceptance of the agenda. Councilor Vasquez made the motion. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve seconded. Roll was called and agenda was accepted by the committee members present.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve requested a motion for approval of the meeting minutes from the August 25, 2021, meeting. Councilor Vasquez made the motion. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve seconded. Roll was called and minutes were approved by the committee members present.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS
a. Parks and Recreation Youth Services Program Updates: Robert Nunez provided a brief introduction of his experience with the City of Las Cruces Parks
and Recreation Department. He provided a PowerPoint presentation of the youth services program. This presentation provided a detailed staffing breakdown. Mr. Nunez discussed the out of school programs and the attendance level of each. The After-School programs located at schools throughout Las Cruces has 248 kids registered and participating. This number is down from approximately 500 youth. The Safe Haven currently has 60 participants. The Safe Haven provides services to kids K-5th grade from 2:30pm-6:00pm on school days and from 7:30am-6:00pm on non-school days, and during the summer, 8:30am-4:30pm. Mr. Nunez advised the services staff provide to students during these times. Mr. Nunez discussed cost of programs. Summer Recreation has room for 225 kids K-6th grade. Teen Connection allows for 60 teens 6th -12th grade. The schedule for the programs runs 3:30-8pm during the school year and 11:00am-6:00pm in the summer. The other programs available are the Youth Development and Diversion, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful, and Las Cruces Youth Board. The Youth Development and Diversion is the new branding for the Juvenile Citation Program for class three citation youth. The participation numbers in 2020 were 140 and 375 in FY19. In FY14, almost 800 youth went through the program. This is a diversion program to keep youth out of the system, divert them from the courts, put them through an educational program, and have them participate in community service. The Keep Las Cruces Beautiful program had 3000 volunteers and 10,000 hours of community beautification projects prior to the pandemic. This program also has LIBBY the Green Dog. The Las Cruces Youth Board consists of 16 members grades 8th-12th. Parks and Recreation is working on creating a new panel of board members now. Mr. Nunez provided a list of partners that assist with these programs. Mr. Nunez discussed the budget for these programs which includes funding and in-kind. Dr. Fraune asked if there are any tracking mechanisms in place to monitor success in addition to the attendance tracking that is being done. Mr. Nunez advised that in performance management, staff are keeping track on how youth are transitioning through the programs. Councilor Vasquez asked about what the needs of our youth are and what the City could be doing to support these needs. Mr. Nunez said the goal is to evolve and work together with our community partners to gather our resources to provide the best services possible. Mr. Nunez said that he would like to be able to have a teen facility for youth. Councilor Vasquez detailed his involvement and interest in this idea. Rebecca Slaughter inquired about potential issues with having gender-based Youth Development and Diversion classes. Mr. Nunez advised that evidence-based, these programs work. He added that this is a situation that will come up more and that staff will have to look outside the box to address. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve asked specifically what the protocol is when youth member is trans or non-binary to make sure we are adapting to those needs. Mr. Nunez advised that within the program, staff work with the family and the youth to select the program that they feel the most comfortable in. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve asked if there are wait lists for after school programs. Mr. Nunez advised there are and detailed which locations where the wait lists exist.

b. The Big Read Program Presentation: Margaret Neill provided background on the how the program came to be. Joy Harjo, the U.S. poet laureate, and her
book, An American Sunrise, are the main event. Ms. Harjo will be in Las Cruces and will be a part of various events throughout The Big Read to include a book reading, a book signing, and a Q&A session. This is the second Big Read this year, which is not typical for a library. The library and the museums are working together on this project. In addition to the events with Joy Harjo, there are numerous events relevant to the topic throughout the program. Ms. Neill listed various programs to the committee, and she provided direction on how to access the list of events for the program on the City website. Councilor Vasquez thanked everyone involved in bringing this to Las Cruces. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve asked about how this program is being promoted. Ms. Slaughter detailed the steady marketing efforts that are occurring with the assistance of the Communications Office. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve and Councilor Vasquez offered Council’s assistance with any needs the department may have in promoting the program.

c. **Council District Newsletters, Meetings, and Events**: Karla Walton provided an overview of the outreach efforts that are happening with City Council. The first is the digital newsletter program that began in April. Ms. Walton displayed what the newsletters look like for the committee. The newsletters being provided at this time are for District 1, District 2, and District 4. The newsletter is multilingual meaning it is available in over 50 languages. There are currently over 500 subscribers. Ms. Walton reviewed the demographics of the newsletter subscribers. Ms. Walton described the various news items that are being presented in the newsletters. The promotion of the newsletters was described. In Person District meetings are being started back up, beginning with the District 2 Fiesta that occurred Saturday, October 9, 2021. A video highlighting the event was shown to the committee. Councilor Vasquez commented on how wonderful this public engagement is and complemented the quality of the work. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve expressed her gratitude for staff’s work and spoke of the benefits of these constituent events.

VI. **ACTIONS ITEMS** – None.

VII. **FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEMS AND TASK LISTING**: Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve asked the committee if they had items that they would like to discuss in the next month or two. Councilor Vasquez asked about the progress of the Utility Structure/Public Art Assets by District. Ms. Slaughter stated that it is a project that they continue to talk about, but it is slow-going and is not an easy, quick solution. Ms. Slaughter explained the process the Public Art Program is working on to satisfy this request and the progress that has been made thus far.

Master Calendar for Programs

Utility Structure/Public Art Assets by District

Indigenous Culture and Representation

VIII. **NEXT MEETING DATE** – To be determined.
IX. ADJOURNMENT - Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Vasquez made the motion to adjourn. Chairwoman Abeyta-Stuve seconded. Roll was called and all members present approved. Meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

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Chairperson

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Approved