The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the City of Las Cruces – COVID-19 Task Force Committee on March 16, 2022. At 3:30 p.m. at City Hall, 700 S. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Members Present:
  Tessa Abeyta-Stuve, City Councilor, District 2
  Kasandra Gandara, City Councilor, District 1
  Yvonne Flores, City Councilor, District 6

Members Absent:
  Kathryn Olszowy, Ex-Officio member
  Adrian Larson, MountainView, Member

Others Present:
  Marina Montoya, Administration, Parks & Rec
  Audrey Barela, Parks & Recreation
  Becky Baum, Recording Secretary, RC Creations, LLC

I. Call to Order: Councilor Abeyta-Stuve called the meeting to order.

II. Conflict of Interest: There was no conflict of interest.

III. Acceptance of the Agenda: Councilor Flores motioned, Councilor Gandara seconded. The agenda was accepted.

IV. Approval of the Minutes - January 19, 2022: Councilor Abeyta-Stuve announced that Dawn Sanchez and Steven Lopez were unable to attend. Steven did provide slides to view. Councilor Flores motioned, Councilor Gandara seconded. The minutes were approved. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve abstained.

V. Discussion Items:

A. COVID-19 Vaccination Task Force

   i. Department of Health - Dawn Sanchez:

   ii. Office of Emergency Management - Stephen Lopez:

       Slides were shown; they will be attached. The local numbers continue to look good. The U.S. may see an increase in the northeast and Midwest
based on wastewater testing results. The seven day positivity rate in Doña Ana County is 4.05%; 2.77% in New Mexico; 1.21% in the U.S.; 1.31% in the world. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve stated that within the last week they’re changing how they’re tracking certain items; she will send out a question for follow-up. The cases per day are continuing to go down.

Councilor Gandara would like to know where test sites are; it will no longer be sent regularly but perhaps Mr. Lopez can look at maybe once a week how the Board integrate the information. She also recommended that the Board doesn’t meet anymore unless there is a rise in numbers. Councilor Flores agreed. Councilor Flores asked if there are any changes in the U.S. with travel in terms of testing prior and other requirements. There was discussion on Mr. Lopez’s comment in the previous meeting of changing this from a pandemic to an endemic; notify if it changes the way things are handled.

Councilor Gandara is concerned with the new variant in Europe and China. There is a possible surge in positivity and spread in late April and early May. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve stated they will include that in the questions for Mr. Lopez; how the Board can engage and if this task force is meaningful in the engagement or if there are other avenues to pursue. Councilor Flores asked if they will have a tentative meeting placeholder or stop meeting unless something earth shattering happens. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve will inquire as to the process of how they would deactivate the Board if they decide to do so. Christine Rivera stated that if they feel that they will meet in the future it would be better being in the background. If it’s disbanded a resolution would need to be done to bring it back. The next meeting will be tentative; if things are running smooth they will only send an e-mail to all those on the Task Force. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve will report to Council on Monday.

iii. City of Las Cruces Staff Update: There was none.

iv. Community Messaging: There was none.

v. Discussion: Councilor Gandara thanked everyone for their hard work to getting to this point. Councilor Abeyta-Stuve gave a special thank you to all City staff that helped and filled in where help was needed.

vii. Next Steps: Councilor Abeyta-Stuve will send an e-mail to Dawn Sanchez and Stephen Lopez with the questions.

VI. Future Discussion/Task Listing:

VII. Next Meeting Date: Next month, April, if needed.
VIII. Adjournment:

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Chairperson