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3 The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the **Las Cruces Economic**  
4 **Recovery Ad Hoc Board** on June 8, 2020 at 9:00am. The meeting was held via Zoom.

5  
6 **Members Present:**

7 Chris Schaljo, Chairman  
8 Debbi Moore, Vice Chair  
9 Michael Harris, Member  
10 Doug Cowan, Member  
11 Jolene Martinez, Member  
12 Sharon Thomas, Member

13  
14 **Members Absent:**

15 Veronica Archuleta, Member

16  
17 **Others Present:**

18 Griselda Martinez, Economic Development Director  
19 Francisco Pallares, Economic Development Deputy Director

- 20  
21 **I. Call to Order:** Mr. Pallares called the meeting to order, which was created via City  
22 Council Resolution 20-161.  
23  
24 **II. Conflict of Interest:** There was none.  
25  
26 **III. Acceptance of the Agenda:** Moved to after section of the Chair.  
27  
28 **IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Not applicable at this meeting.  
29  
30 **V. Discussion:** Introduction of Board Members. Mr. Cowan represents nonprofit  
31 category. Pastor Cornerstone Baptist Church and chief administrator for  
32 Cornerstone Academy in Las Cruces. Mr. Harris represents District 6 small  
33 business owner, technology consulting company. Ms. Martinez licensed clinical  
34 social worker, clinical director for Families and Youth Incorporated and adjunct  
35 facility at New Mexico State University in the area of community organizations and  
36 representing Councilor Bencomo. Ms. Thomas former Councilor and Mayor Pro-  
37 Tem, also former small business owner, Red Mountain Café, currently work with  
38 South Central Regional Transit District and Workforce Solutions Board. Mr.  
39 Schaljo small business owner, Salud! de Mesilla restaurant, also asked by  
40 Councilor Bencomo. Ms. Moore President/CEO Greater Las Cruces Chamber of  
41 Commerce, member of statewide workforce board, on this committee as chair of  
42 Las Cruces opens recovery task force with 16 organizations within the City and  
43 county. Ms. Martinez, Economic Development Director. Mr. Pallares, Deputy  
44 Director of Economic Development.  
45

1           **1. Selection of the Chair for LCERB:** Mr. Pallares asked to have the  
2 committee have a Chair and Vice-Chair. Mr. Schaljo self-nominated to  
3 Chair. Debbi Moore self-nominated for Vice-Chair.  
4

5           **Introduction and purpose of the board:** Mr. Pallares shared the  
6 resolution that created this Board. The purpose is to make specific  
7 recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the strategies for  
8 gradually reopening the Las Cruces economic affected by the COVID-19  
9 pandemic in a smart, safe, and effective manner that fits the needs of Las  
10 Cruces in alignment with the direction of the New Mexico Economic  
11 Recovery Council. This committee shall be dissolved upon the full  
12 reopening of the economy of Las Cruces.  
13

14           **2. Frequency of the meetings:** Chairman Schaljo asked for  
15 recommendations on frequency. Mr. Pallares stated this Board was created  
16 due to COVID-19 pandemic and once the fully economy in Las Cruces  
17 reopened the board will be dissolved. Ms. Martinez stated there is no  
18 specific time constraint. City Council wants input from this Board as soon  
19 as possible to make decisions based on that input. Board Member Thomas  
20 asked if the Board is looking at how to open in face of the virus or also  
21 looking at economic development new normal and broader than just the  
22 health issues. Mr. Pallares stated the purpose as it was established for the  
23 gradual reopening of the Las Cruces economy as affected by the virus,  
24 smart, safe, and effective manner that fits Las Cruces. Might be elements  
25 associated only to our City that perhaps the City or State is not looking at in  
26 making recommendations. Board Member Thomas asking not just  
27 health/sanitation but with vibrant economy better jobs, better trained  
28 workers. Ms. Martinez states it is up to being fully reopened, longer term  
29 items, better jobs and trained workers, would be more appropriate to be  
30 discussed in a different committee.  
31

32           Board Member Cowan stated this situation is very fluid, frequency of  
33 meetings needs to be at least weekly to get the economy moving. Seems  
34 on a daily basis things change. Chair Schaljo agreed. Board Member  
35 Moore says the longest would be every other week, but weekly, it is fluid  
36 since we are dealing with this since March.  
37

38           Board Member Moore motioned to meet weekly, Board Member Cowan  
39 seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.  
40

41           Mr. Pallares asked if there was a specific date and time of the week.  
42 Chairman Schaljo asked what worked best for the Board Members. Board  
43 Member Martinez just asked that it be same time, same day she can work  
44 it in, but did mention that if it is on Monday they might not have time to  
45 recommend to City Council. Board Member Harris stated Monday morning  
46 is not the best for him as he has another standing meeting at the exact same  
47 time, but Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday he is open. Board Member Moore  
48 she has a standing meeting at the exact time, she recommends at 9:00 a.m.

1 Tuesday. Mr. Cowan stated Tuesday morning would excellent time due to  
2 standing meetings on Monday. Board Member Thomas stated Tuesday is  
3 the County meetings and she needs to attend those periodically. She also  
4 suggested waiting for further Board Members to be appointed. Chairman  
5 Schaljo asked if Thursday 9:00 a.m. Board Member Moore stated she can  
6 do it after 10:00 on Thursday but to 9:00 a.m. Board Member Cowan can  
7 do Thursday after 10:00. Mr. Harris is open all day Thursday. Chairman  
8 Schaljo recommended Thursday at 10:00 a.m. That works for everyone.  
9 Chairman asked if meeting this coming Thursday or June 18th. Board  
10 Member Moore asked when the other Board Members are to be appointed.  
11 Mr. Pallares stated on Monday 15th. Board Member Moore suggested  
12 waiting until other Board Members are present, so start on June 18th.  
13 Chairman Schaljo agreed. Mr. Cowan agrees. Ms. Thomas agrees and  
14 suggested reading the state document.  
15

16 **3. Introduction and purpose of the board:** See above.  
17

18 **4. Current initiatives for dealing with COVID-19:** Mr. Pallares suggested  
19 asking what changes and/or adjustments in each of the industries.  
20

21 Board Member Cowan stated they had to minimize seating in the auditorium  
22 due to distancing requirements, accommodate additional exits so people do  
23 not congregate in the process. Increased sanitation measures. Create  
24 additional opportunities for childcare in the facility, separating by age groups  
25 to be smaller groups. School has gone to virtual learning techniques,  
26 remote learning.  
27

28 Board Member Thomas stated the county transit system has reduced routes  
29 a bit, put shield behind the driver, sanitizer on the buses, people  
30 encouraged to sit with someone they are with but otherwise leave spaces  
31 in between. Ridership down some. Workforce, the staff has bene extremely  
32 busy with the unemployment. Workforce talent group works with local  
33 businesses for better understanding of what jobs are available in our area  
34 from the businesses in our area. Business roundtable aerospace, military.  
35 Good understanding of what the jobs are there, and what kind of training  
36 needed. Discussion is thinking about new normal after this to find ways to  
37 find better jobs for people that already exist in this area and develop better  
38 workforce training programs. And some jobs are not going to come back.  
39

40 Board Member Martinez stated FYI provides many different services in  
41 many different sectors, primary sector remains serving families every day is  
42 the free meals program. Serve over 1,000 families in Las Cruces every day  
43 through the whole crisis. Staff with PPE, hand washing, hand sanitizing in  
44 between each contact. Multiple sites across the City. Congregate care  
45 setting that house children who are runaway, homeless, or some other crisis  
46 that has them removed from the home, 40 children come in out of the facility.  
47 When they come in we are quarantining in a portion of the building, allowing  
48 them two days before having them tested for COVID-19 and waiting on the

1 results before integrating with the remainder of children in the facility. If they  
2 are in a common space do have them wear face coverings which is difficult  
3 to ask children age 12-18 to wear face coverings, pretty annoying to them.  
4 Prevent them from going and having social outings which is problematic  
5 with teenagers. Challenges to keep teenagers entertained and occupied.  
6 Lots of health services have gone telemedicine, 85% by now. Do send  
7 therapists out to homes where families are in high risk situations. Challenge  
8 in not having a direction about fall time for school. Lot of their planning is  
9 centered around what families and children are doing. The university is  
10 going all virtual for the fall, no drop in enrollment or losing teachers.

11  
12 Board Member Harris industry of general technology consulting. Immediate  
13 effect has been relatively minimal. Seeing some challenges in employees  
14 take care of children with uncertainty around what is school going to look  
15 like. Challenges with hiring and placing interns. Core is really software  
16 development and telecom stuff. Safety, everyone who does not need to be  
17 at the office is working from home. Service calls, consulting with people  
18 beforehand, what kind of safety precautions do they want the techs to take  
19 on site. Minimizing having to go out do things in person. Zoom meetings,  
20 screen sharing, and remote diagnostics.

21  
22 Chairman Schaljo represents Salud! which is a decently sized restaurant,  
23 blessed with two patios. Food and beverage industry it has been very  
24 difficult the last few months. Most business owners have had to shift doing  
25 hand handling business, from dine-in guests, wining/dining with experience,  
26 to greeting them at the curb, getting to-go service, delivery service. Now at  
27 50% capacity are still learning what is working and what is not working. And  
28 working with New Mexico Restaurant Association, work with Department of  
29 Health, the Environment Department. Coming with safe practices, best  
30 practices. On the front lines of sanitation and health and making sure  
31 people are staying distant, staying clean in the restaurant, even on the  
32 patios. Working on different business strategy. Bring to the Board how to  
33 move and transition into a different kind of busines model for small  
34 business. Using delivery services, on-line services, making menu more  
35 user friendly to guests and people traveling. Focus on team members and  
36 them staying healthy, and mental health, physical health within the  
37 restaurant, outside of the restaurant, times are difficult.

38  
39 Board Member Moore stated she is on the Las Cruces Public Schools  
40 Reentry Task Force and one of the issues they are grappling with that she  
41 brought to their attention is the challenge with the schedule and how it will  
42 impact this community. They are meeting weekly also. Guidelines from the  
43 State have not been received. Point of how to look at the new norm and  
44 what does that look like, and for the children. Concerned about the out of  
45 school care, how to do that, how it impacts the workforce.

46  
47 Board Member Moore continued with five ways to prepare to reopen. Build  
48 a COVID plan talks about building to make sure measures are in place for

1 safe opening but also how to adapt to that. Also a contingency plan for  
2 another outbreak or continuation of this outbreak. Next is respect social  
3 distancing; create a cleaning schedule, market COVID plan, respect the  
4 process. Many businesses have gone way above and beyond the minimum  
5 requirements that the State has had. Posted the cleaning schedule,  
6 consumer/client what is required of them within the establishment, social  
7 distancing. So the rules of the road as well as State requirements.  
8 Marketing in the establishments and on social media. Be every respectful  
9 of the process, this is a key component. Be kind to each other. Fear of  
10 business owner is to make sure they are protecting themselves. Fear of  
11 how to protect their work family. Third fear is of the consumer. Board  
12 Member Moore noticed the consumer is a bit hesitant about coming back.  
13 Phase 2 is July 1 and all connected with numbers, effective rate, how  
14 working within the County and southwest region. Recovery is simultaneous  
15 make sure all safety precautions are met, health and well being of the  
16 community is first. She believes this committee should talk about how it is  
17 impacting our nonprofits, deliverables there and how to move forward with  
18 the five steps, but also within the guidelines of the industry standards, CSP  
19 put out by the Governor and with her plans. We are doing well with our  
20 numbers statewide.

## 21 VI. Future Discussion:

- 22 1. **Topics to be discussed:** Board Member Martinez stated in their sector  
23 they are struggling, no training or technical assistance center, kind of fend  
24 for themselves in the nonprofits. More represent vulnerable families than  
25 business.  
26

27  
28 Board Member Moore stated one thing they are doing is part of the task for  
29 is addressing specifically the nonprofits, behavioral and mental health  
30 issues. Trying to be very broad based. How to start breaking down industry  
31 sectors and looking for that, and resources. There is a "Certificate" program  
32 from the State that does that, not a rating but go through some training via  
33 videos, primarily pro-hospitality, but see it can be adjusted for general  
34 business including nonprofits.  
35

36 Chairman Schaljo stated that that is important at Salud! They have a five  
37 page document going on cleaning practices and COVID.  
38

39 Board Member Harris noticed when the state started shutting down, his  
40 office closed March 13/14th. General office environments did not. Other  
41 partners in other essential industries were reluctant to even send  
42 nonessential staff home. A lot of focus on restaurants, and hospitality, and  
43 other places the general public goes in. This other sector of people just go  
44 and work in an office and do mortgages or write software, etc. does not  
45 seem to have much guidance on dealing.  
46

47 Board Member Cowan stated one thing to establish people gaining  
48 confidence, 50% is allow, but 50% not showing up yet due to confidence

1 issue with the public. Maintain precautions, do not minimize threat,  
2 important to build campaign for public, employees, staff, teams, confidence  
3 that moving forward in safe measures. Part of the strategy should be help  
4 build public's confidence in getting back into a "new normal." Build policies  
5 and ideas build customers, consumers, and all staffs confidence to help stay  
6 safe and provide services.  
7

8 Ms. Martinez offered the different program managers for the discussion  
9 items that have been brought as potential discussion items, the Business  
10 Program Development Manager, Mandy Guss, speak to what they have  
11 done. Appreciate the idea of coordinating more efforts to serve the broader  
12 small business community. About safe practices related to hospitality, that  
13 program is launching today. Invite Rochelle Miller-Hernandez, Director of  
14 Visit Las Cruces who can speak to that.  
15

16 Board Member Harris asked if suggestions for discussion items can go via  
17 e-mail between Board Members or how that would be handled. Ms.  
18 Martinez stated they can exchange information via e-mail as long as no  
19 action is taken. But she will verify that with the City Clerk  
20

21 Board Member Thomas mentioned Tracy Bryan and Darlene at Workforce  
22 Connection, they are putting together a video on how to look for a job now.  
23 She will send the link to everybody.  
24

25 Ms. Martinez stated that in addition to the Workforce connection also talk  
26 about the pilot virtual job fair that is being planned with Workforce Solutions.  
27 The vulnerable population that Board Member Martinez mentioned would  
28 potentially be some of those customers that we want to reach to. And also  
29 a topic of discussion for the Board.  
30

31 Board Member Moore mentioned transit and safe to ride buses to be  
32 included in discussions in looking for jobs. Maybe the buses need a  
33 marketing campaign to show what they are doing, advertise their schedule.  
34

35 Board Member Thomas stated for the County bus service deep cleaning is  
36 done every night, everything to keep clean, bus drivers with masks, hand  
37 sanitizer available on the buses. She will find out about the City Transit and  
38 what they are doing.  
39

40 Board Member Martinez suggested people identified as customers or  
41 consumers of services in the community. All Board Members are business  
42 sector leaders. Might be interesting to add a family, or individual, or couple  
43 that might make suggestions. Also sectors that are growing due to this  
44 crisis such as food delivery services. Losing economic input from people  
45 not going to hotels, lodging taxes. How do we make recommendations on  
46 how our City, local delivery purchases or systems are taxed in a way that  
47 can compensate for the losses that the City is going to have and other  
48 sectors and industries?

1  
2 Board Member Cowan part of the ability to build confidence, seeing that  
3 businesses are taking things seriously, otherwise possibly deter  
4 consumers/clients. Important to build on successes and mitigate fears.  
5 Believes there is fear and that needs to be mitigated and show successes.  
6

7 Chairman Schaljo agrees with the mental health and the struggle to alleviate  
8 fears.  
9

10 Board Member Martinez we need to inform and help shape the narrative  
11 that is given to the public.  
12

13 Mr. Pallares stated that sharing information amongst the Board Members  
14 would qualify as rolling quorum so that would be in violation of the Open  
15 Meetings Act. Do the discussion in the meetings only. Can distribute  
16 information to the group, just not discussion.  
17

18 Chairman Schaljo suggested including with buses, Uber and Lyft and their  
19 practices. Possible training for health and sanitation, help from the City for  
20 not only small business but also others within the community to help inform  
21 of safe practices, on-line forum/training type initiative.  
22

23 Ms. Martinez stated for community wide educational opportunities to invite  
24 the Community Outreach person to help with that as well.  
25

26 Chairman Schaljo mentioned business development initiatives as an added  
27 discussion topic. Building confidence, mitigating fears. Business  
28 development initiatives. Board Member Cowan suggested talking about  
29 positive rather than fears. Ms. Martinez suggested Jamey Rickman for part  
30 of the that discussion. Board Member Harris suggested transit discussion.  
31 Board Member Thomas would ask David Armijo and Michael Bartholomew,  
32 Directors of County and City transit.  
33

34 Mr. Pallares stated for the next discussion items:

- 35 1. Business development initiatives currently existing to address COVID  
36 by Ms. Mandy Guss. Promotion and awareness campaigns rather than  
37 what is already being done.
- 38 2. Community Outreach training for sanitation including the New Mexico  
39 State program by Jamey Rickman.
- 40 3. Transportation guidelines for buses and workers.  
41

42 Board Member Cowan has been working with National Center for Life and  
43 Liberty and have provided to him quite a bit of information concerning safe  
44 practices and how to help encourage people. He will share some of this at  
45 the next meeting or e-mail to everyone beforehand.  
46

47 Board Member Moore stated MVEDA just finished their second consumer  
48 survey, might consider bringing them in to talk about the surveys that

1 included who would be shopping and coming back.

2  
3 Ms. Martinez mentioned the duration of the meeting had not been  
4 discussed. Chairman Schaljo stated an hour and a half would be fine as  
5 planning for the immediate future.

6  
7 Next meeting - Thursday June 18th, at 10:00 a.m. Board Members please look over any  
8 information of links that have been shared.

9  
10 **VII. Adjournment: Board Member Martinez motioned for adjournment, second**  
11 **by Board Member Thomas. The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:40**  
12 **a.m.**

13  
14  
15  
16 Christopher Schaljo

17 \_\_\_\_\_  
18 Chairperson

19  
20  
21 Approved: *Christopher Schaljo*  
22