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The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the **Las Cruces Economic Recovery Ad Hoc Board** on July 31, 2020. The meeting was held via Zoom.

**Members Present:**

- Chris Schaljo, Chairman (arrived approx. 10:12 a.m.)
- Debbi Moore, Vice-Chair
- Michael Harris, Member
- Sharon Thomas, Member
- Veronica Archuleta, Member
- George Miller, Member
- Brooke Montgomery, Member
- Susan Greenwald, Member
- Darleen Lopez, Member
- Jolene Martinez, Member

**Members Absent:**

- Doug Cowan, Member
- Ron Fitzherbert, Member

**Staff Present:**

- Griselda Martinez, Economic Development Director (arrived approx. 10:30 a.m.)
- Francisco Pallares, Economic Development Deputy Director
- Andy Hume, Airport Administrator
- Dominic Aragon, Digital Media Coordinator
- Dania Soto, Executive Administrative Assistant
- Cynthia Villanueva, Administrative Assistant

**Others Present:**

- Joe Parilla, Brookings

- I. Call to Order:** Vice-Chair Moore called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.
- II. Conflict of Interest:** There was none.
- III. Acceptance of the Agenda:** Motion to accept the agenda by Board Member Thomas, seconded by Board Member Miller. Motion passes.
- IV. Minutes for Approval:**
  - 1. Minutes for Meeting on July 23, 2020:** Motion to accept the minutes from July 23, 2020 by Board Member Harris, seconded by Board Member Miller. Motion passes.

1 **V. Discussion:**

2  
3 **1. Inclusive Economic Recovery Framework:** Mr. Parilla works for a public  
4 policy research organization based in Washington, DC. They work on  
5 research that looks at the economic and social conditions in cities, regions,  
6 and states. Audience is the cross sector groups of leaders, government,  
7 but also nonprofit sector and business, as well as higher education. Three  
8 in four business in Las Cruces received loans through the Paycheck  
9 Protection Program. COVID revealed we had a pretty insecure economy to  
10 begin with. Larger predominantly costal metropolitan areas, Bay Area,  
11 Seattle, Boston, San Diego accounted for 90% of the growth in innovation  
12 economy jobs between 2005-2017. As the country was sorting itself  
13 geographically, high paying jobs were concentrating more in the larger  
14 cities, broader challenge around job quality. About 44% of the U.S.  
15 workforce including 54% of African American workers and 63% of Latino  
16 essentially earn less than a family sustaining wage, even before the crisis,  
17 already a lot of economic insecurity.

18  
19 Thursday of last week they launched COVID-19 metro recovery watch  
20 website which provides a framework for recovery, spotlight local efforts, and  
21 also provided index for local communities to see what is happening over  
22 time. This is limited to metropolitan areas of no less than 250,000 residents.  
23 The recovery framework looks at three key principles. Local communities  
24 (cities, regions, counties, states) set goals and objectives for their recovery.  
25 Two part goal; local economy should be increasing prosperity, and take into  
26 effect lingering racial inequities within the country. Job creation, job  
27 preparation, job access. Opportunities for small business owners to access  
28 technical assistance from intermediaries, access to PPE kits, questions  
29 were fielded. Second challenge is around unemployment rates which is  
30 similar to works progress administration during great depression, civic and  
31 public needs that become more acute during crisis. Possibly become a  
32 national service corps support local communities. Finally acknowledge long  
33 standing gaps across neighborhoods in cities. Without addressing the place  
34 based disparities it will be hard to have an inclusive recovery. Advocate to  
35 states to set up funds that would provide resources to locally owned new  
36 investment structures. Therefore locals use these funds to purchase real  
37 estate and dictate how that real estate is used to meet local needs, therefore  
38 local residents benefit, make neighborhoods better. Need new types of  
39 institutional capacity in our local communities and deliver on these  
40 solutions.

41  
42 Board Member Harris asked how effective these ideas are, particularly  
43 strengthening small businesses, give an idea of relative importance of  
44 different resources provided to the business, i.e. rent relief more important  
45 than PPE. Mr. Parilla stated the government should be stepping in or some  
46 sort of civically oriented resources because it is not the businesses fault due  
47 to COVID and only responding to much needed public regulations to keep  
48 the population safe. Heard local stakeholders are lacking practical or

1 technical assistance, help with getting a PPP loan regarding requirements  
2 and process. Board Member Harris asked if there is a demand for City to  
3 stop evictions or provided more direct financial assistance. Mr. Parilla  
4 believes moratorium on evictions a lot of cities did and still ongoing.  
5 Washington, DC extending moratorium in evictions until stop declaring a  
6 public health emergency.  
7

8 Board Member Martinez asked how the City would engage with their  
9 organization in developing a plan. What kind of training and technical  
10 assistance is provided to City Council or City staff that helps them decide if  
11 this partnership with his organization is one that would benefit, and how  
12 quickly can they be turned around? Mr. Parilla do some intense  
13 partnerships with cities, but few and far between. To work together would  
14 be scoping that out from a resource perspective and a timing perspective.  
15 For them it would be hard to take on a new intensive partnership now.  
16

17 Chair Schaljo asked with community investment trust, that sparks interest.  
18 Mr. Parilla stated the idea is about taking a pool of money that would be the  
19 gap filler in the capital stack for kind of specific new projects to move  
20 forward, build new housing, new commercial corridor.  
21

22 Board Member Miller stated even though Las Cruces is not the size to have  
23 a direct partnership with Brookings Institute, are there other city groups  
24 across the country that are working together and sharing information? Mr.  
25 Parilla stated at one level Brookings does research and shares that and  
26 everybody has access, at a second level soliciting through things like  
27 webinars or other network activities, exchange of ideas between cities. The  
28 third way is more doing demand driven briefings and through networks with  
29 other cities, put in contract with other people that are doing work that you  
30 may be interested in. The National League of Cities is the largest  
31 organization that does this work. U.S. Conference of Mayors. The National  
32 Association of County Governments. The Association of Chambers of  
33 Commerce. Board Member Miller asked how to get that inclusive voice  
34 throughout the whole system. Mr. Parilla stated the Center for Economic  
35 Inclusion partnered with Northside Funders Group that supports north  
36 Minneapolis which is traditionally African American community and where a  
37 lot of challenges around racial inequity manifests, that has been the novel  
38 contribution of an organization like this is they straddle credibility with what  
39 you can call elites (governing elites, corporate elites, philanthropic elites)  
40 and grassroots community groups. Work with the groups who are closest  
41 to those residents and using their capacity to lift up the voices. Board  
42 Member Miller asked if there were specific recommendations for a City of  
43 our size and type. Mr. Parilla stated he does not know Las Cruces well  
44 enough to go beyond generic principles. Las Cruces is at a size where  
45 people know each other. Another challenge with scale is there are not as  
46 many resources as a larger community. Consider who within the critical  
47 institutions in Las Cruces is not a part of the recovery conversation. Figure  
48 out how they can plug in with resources other than money.

1  
2 Board Member Thomas, there is currently discussion about New Mexico  
3 developing a public bank.  
4

5 Board Member Moore hearing a lot of good things but what is an actionable  
6 item to take to City Council, in both short term and long term.  
7

8 Mr. Parilla stated there are nine ideas actionable over different timelines.  
9 Small business and worker retraining the service corps are near term  
10 achievable activities. A state level investment fund or public bank is  
11 obviously help spur recovery in a 24-48 month time period. Board Member  
12 Moore stated the advantage of our community is that many of the workforce  
13 things are already in place. The long term would be a great  
14 recommendation.  
15

16 Board Member Montgomery the MBA program has students who form  
17 teams and they reach out to businesses in the community, and those teams  
18 solve real world business problems. It is not marketed very well it might be  
19 an actionable item to reach out to them.  
20

21 **2. Workforce Scholarship for Re-Tooling and Re-Training:** Ms. Lopez  
22 stated they are learning every day that there are different points of metrics  
23 to look at that were not being looked at before. The most important  
24 elements of proposing the scholarship from the perspective of the  
25 Workforce system currently is supporting the alternative licensure and  
26 LEAP type programs. Federal programs are wonderful but do have red tape  
27 and limitations and so challenging to severe any person as every single  
28 situation is unique. Funding stream firewalls are a challenge. Looking for  
29 individuals with barriers, such as low income, disabilities, part of the Native  
30 Nations. Helping and filling the gap for the alternative licensure programs  
31 is a huge chunk of who this proposed scholarship would help. Sector  
32 strategies can limit dollars, but has been proven to be extremely effective in  
33 creating career pathways and developing efficient and effective ways to  
34 spend tax dollars and get a community self-sustaining. They are working  
35 with the Department of Workforce Solutions to figure out how to work  
36 together with local, community colleges and organizations to try and get  
37 sustainable work at the focus point. Workforce spends per participant per  
38 term \$1,155.87. Also supportive services for if they are in training, process  
39 of on the job training, childcare, transportation, medical needs, rent, etc., so  
40 the participant can complete. They reimburse employer up to 75% of  
41 employee wages for up to six months while training. The main limitation is  
42 it cannot be entry level. Also limit to make is \$14.62 an hour. They are also  
43 looking into if they can offer supportive services even if the person does not  
44 qualify with them but does with the scholarship.  
45

46 Chair Schaljo asked if Legal was asked about the anti-donation clause. Mr.  
47 Martinez stated they are still pending more information. Mr. Pallares stated

1 they need the full proposal in order to know exactly what it entails and then  
2 taking it to Legal.

3  
4 Board Member Harris stated Ms. Lopez stated there were 1,315 job  
5 openings currently, and wanted to know what those were. Ms. Lopez will  
6 look into finding that information. Ms. Martinez recommends this being an  
7 actionable item in a couple of weeks rather than next week.

8  
9 **VI. Future Discussion:**

10  
11 **1. Items to be discussed:** Board Member Harris suggested three things to  
12 bring up to the City in the short term, increased PPE availability for low or  
13 no cost to local businesses, something like the Birmingham Service Corps  
14 model, and suggest they have a resolution in support of the state public  
15 bank.

16  
17 Board Member Thomas stated the public bank has been presented to the  
18 City Council and there is legislative paperwork and she can get a  
19 presentation for this Board.

20  
21 Board Member Miller stated businesses might need more PPE. We can find  
22 out what they urgently need to open up, as well as what the extra expenses  
23 are.

24  
25 Chair Schaljo said the state has a program for PPE, but believes there  
26 should be a citywide initiative. Board Member Moore stated they are still  
27 giving away masks at the Chamber. They are going to get more involved,  
28 sanitizer, gloves. On the public bank initiative, do they have a direct tie to  
29 recovery with regards to COVID in their legislation or potential legislation?  
30 Board Member Thomas will check and give a short report next time. An e-  
31 mail would be good and then discussion in a couple of weeks.

32  
33 Board Member Harris stated for the Service Corps to look at the programs  
34 the City has done so far, and look at the differences between that and  
35 Birmingham has done. Prepare a list of the gaps and present that to the  
36 City.

37  
38 Board Member Martinez stated we do have some similarly situated Service  
39 Corps here in Las Cruces already. AmeriCorps Vista and MRC-the Medical  
40 Reserve Corps.

41  
42 **VII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Board Member**  
43 **Lopez. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:48 a.m.**

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46 Christopher Schaljo  
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48 Chairperson

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Approved: Christopher Schaljo