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The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the **City of Las Cruces – Economic Development Policy Review Committee** on October 21, 2020. The meeting was held via Zoom.

**Members Present:**

- Kassandra Gandara, Mayor Pro-Tem
- Gil Sorg, Councilor (arrived 10:15 a.m., departed 11:30 a.m.)
- Yvonne Flores, City Council
- Ana Berrun, Member
- Darlene Lopez, Member
- Davin Lopez, Member
- Debbi Moore, Member (departed 11:33 a.m.)
- Mary Ulrich, Member

**Members Absent:**

- Sandra Espiritu, Member
- Kathy Hansen, Member

**Others Present:**

- Griselda Martinez, Economic Development Director
- Liz Vega, Event Manager for Visit Las Cruces
- Elizabeth Teeters, Economic Development Coordinator
- Dania Soto, Executive Assistant (departed 11:44 a.m.)
- Andy Hume, Airport Administrator
- Bill Hamm, Real Estate Administrator
- Cynthia Campo, Management Analyst
- Kyle Metzgar, Senior Planning Technician (departed 11:35 a.m.)
- Cynthia Villanueva, Administrative Assistant
- Sallie Traxler
- Marcella Shelby
- Casey Anglada DeRaad

- 1. Call to Order:**
- 2. Conflict of Interest:**
- 3. Acceptance of the Agenda:**
- 4. Minutes for Approval:**
  - a. Economic Development PRC Meeting of August 19, 2020:** Councilor Gandara motioned to approve the minutes of July 15, 2020; seconded by Councilor Flores. Motion passed unanimously.

1  
2 **5. Discussion:**

3 **a. Cluster Development for the Unmanned Aerial Systems Cluster:** Sallie  
4 Traxler gave the presentation. She mentioned someone who once was on  
5 the Airport Board but is now a part time employee to help move the project  
6 forward. The Droneport Network is about sharing information and bringing  
7 together leaders. A year ago people who are interested in doing droneport  
8 development were asked what a community needs to think about to do this;  
9 the response was having the right people engaged. Droneport benefits here  
10 include New Mexico State University Integrated Pilot Program, a great  
11 relationship with the FAA, and local talent within the Community College  
12 and Economic Development.

13  
14 An appropriate plan for the community needs to be built for stakeholder  
15 support to include what they want to do and what the business space will  
16 be, after which they can align the necessary resources. Conversations  
17 need to happen with United States Department of Agriculture, Small  
18 Business Administration, Economic Development Administration, and  
19 etcetera for these resources. Ms. Traxler will send the presentation and a  
20 page on what the community needs to do and think about to the Board.

21  
22 Dr. Martinez asked if Ms. Traxler could highlight elements she has seen that  
23 was needed for a successful cost for development to have a discussion  
24 among the Members and see what it would look like for Las Cruces. There  
25 was discussion regarding how to bring everyone into the conversation, such  
26 as network building or information sharing. Comparison of other UAS  
27 places included the Kansas Department of Transportation is in charge of  
28 UAS which is more regulatory but in Oklahoma it's the Department of  
29 Commerce which makes it more of a business. They worked with Kansas  
30 State University as they were the best conveners to work on making sure  
31 the people who should be involved are included. More examples were  
32 given of comparing bigger companies and smaller companies that need to  
33 work together to make the UAS work well. Items that were brought in order  
34 to bring it all together included manufacturing, workforce development,  
35 recruitment of companies, sharing of information, availability of capital:  
36 venture capital, angel capital, and how all those things fit together.

37  
38 The MVEDA Board has been discussing this for years. Davin and his team  
39 made the slogan that Las Cruces and Southern New Mexico has the right  
40 space for these businesses. Councilor Sorg has experience with this item  
41 and he and Councilor Jack Eakman met with the PSL team at NMSU and  
42 Pat Hines from the Space Consortium about collaboration with North  
43 Dakota in this field. There was discussion as to if this was part of the  
44 consultants plan related to the airport and what their goals are to increase  
45 traffic. There was also questions as to background, what the discussion  
46 have been internally and who has been involved. A mineral systems as a  
47 sector has been spoken about for years; one of the reasons is due to  
48 NMSU's Physical Science Lab expertise in research and development. The

1 PSL were providing guidelines for drones which is a competitive advantage.  
2 The hangar for PSL is located at the airport and in the Master Plan for the  
3 airport one runway was to be utilized specifically for UAS testing and things  
4 related to that industry. It was recommended by Davin Lopez and  
5 discussions have included how they take this opportunity to grow it from a  
6 strategic perspective.  
7

8 Member Lopez stated that they have been attended trade shows in regards  
9 to UAS for roughly 15 years. There was discussion comparing how  
10 Oklahoma entered into the UAS field versus New Mexico and whether that  
11 contributed to the push for everything to work together; Oklahoma seemed  
12 to make a declaration to inform the world whereas New Mexico didn't.  
13 There was a governor's UAS council before the IPP applications went in  
14 where Oklahoma looked at a strategic plan to leverage their aerospace  
15 history. Las Cruces Department of Commerce participates with the  
16 Oklahoma Department of Commerce at AVSI; Oklahoma has support from  
17 all levels and everyone is on the same page for their business recruitment.  
18 Oklahoma recently recruited NavaTech and Sky Dweller as well as home  
19 grown businesses they support because they have a direct relationship with  
20 OSU and OU and their research capabilities.  
21

22 There was discussion on who brought this to the table, what Economic  
23 Development's recommendations moving forward, and what situations  
24 need to occur from both a municipal and state standpoint; are the airport  
25 consultants a part of this as there seems to be duplication of efforts with  
26 MVEDA and Economic Development. The matter was brought to the PRC  
27 in order to revive the topic as a priority, learn of other successful models,  
28 discover if the Committee sees this as a priority, and find what the next  
29 steps are in terms of policy. It is a recommended target industry in the  
30 Industrial Park and Airport Master Plan. With the leadership at the  
31 University and the Physical Science Lab expertise and resources to help  
32 grow the sector it is an opportunity to revive and continue the vision of the  
33 UAS. There have been efforts to not duplicate efforts such as attending the  
34 UAVSI conferences specific to drones; two years ago they were a part of  
35 the New Mexico Department of Transportation Aviation Division at a  
36 conference. This is an opportunity as a community to continue the  
37 discussion, leverage the partnerships, and opportunities to learn from the  
38 successful models but customize it to the area. Using UAS as an economic  
39 opportunity for economic vibrancy in different place can be successful.  
40

41 Currently they are in preliminary conversations on what the next steps may  
42 be rather than have someone hired to guide them. There was discussion  
43 regarding what program may be needed moving forward based on assets  
44 and what is currently happening. One asset is to be supportive of the  
45 technical experts such as the Physical Science Lab; the new director Eric  
46 Sanchez and the new team member Dr. Shelby were brought in to realize  
47 the vision of UAS. The next step should be finding a way to convene all the  
48 partners and identify additional items that need to be a part of the

1 discussion. Policies from a municipal and state standpoint are to be  
2 determined as they gain more understanding and research.

3  
4 Member Lopez added that he doesn't believe there has been any  
5 redundancy or overlap of services. Under Dr. Martinez's guidance they  
6 have brought more assets to the discussion to help build the industry. The  
7 airport plays a strategic role with Mr. Hume positioning the airport in a way  
8 to be an asset to attract and grow the industry. There was discussion of  
9 what is missing; design of niche strategies that work for Doña Ana County  
10 and Las Cruces. A previous attribute included being one of the only place  
11 in the United States people could test UAV's in a public airspace; roughly  
12 five years ago the FAA came out with different centers of excellence so  
13 more places can test. They have shared airspace with SpacePort America  
14 and are adjacent to White Sands Missile Range which means they have a  
15 unique opportunity to allow a company to use public airspace as well as test  
16 high altitude or Department of Defense testing. The last 15 years the FAA  
17 gave unclear instructions on how commercialization can take place; some  
18 instructions are clearing up as companies are moving toward  
19 commercialization rather than just testing. This could be a wonderful  
20 opportunity for business in the area. PSL was complimented for having the  
21 vision to begin this sector 15 years ago.

22  
23 There was discussion regarding if there was a missed opportunity years ago  
24 to move forward in this sector. Years ago the City didn't have an Economic  
25 Development that was looking at strategic ways to grow an industry. It is  
26 difficult to say if an opportunity was missed because the industry is  
27 restricted by what FAA regulations and clarity were. From a state  
28 perspective there was probably some things missed; compared to  
29 Oklahoma's push into the sector New Mexico wasn't as strong with  
30 investments. Now that it is beginning to commercialize there is an  
31 opportunity to grow the sector. The timing is right for growth and PSL is  
32 already recognized internationally which will help; if there can be investment  
33 and research to get Las Cruces into the spotlight there is opportunity to grow  
34 the sector.

35  
36 Mr. Hume was thanked for his vision and having an apron available for  
37 continuing this direction. Recently there are good relations between Las  
38 Cruces Airport and the FAA. Mr. Hume commented that he believes they  
39 are poised to move forward and are a Class E airspace. He agrees all  
40 groups involved need to be brought together for discussions to be  
41 beneficial. There is plenty of airspace to share and the precedent from PSL  
42 for communication has been outstanding. From an infrastructure  
43 perspective the conditions are enough to support growth. Utilities need to  
44 be extended and put in place but can be addressed as they move forward.

45  
46 Marcella Shelby introduced herself as part of the PSL team and reiterated  
47 that the new PSL director has made a big effort to ensure discussions are  
48 going on with other organizations to build on the expertise that PSL has with

1 UAS and utilizing their assets. They are one of the 15 assure university's  
2 around the country. She suggested inviting Dr. Kathy to join at another  
3 meeting as he is their preeminent expert and would love to share  
4 information as well as give a tour of the hangar. The Chancellor recently  
5 designated PSL as an economic development asset. There is already  
6 collaboration between PSL and the UAS division with MVEDA and other  
7 entities to ensure companies that need the expertise of PSL are connecting  
8 to other economic development initiatives. Many time companies are  
9 interested in hiring students so they are creating an internship program to  
10 support students as they move into the workforce opportunities; they  
11 connect the businesses with the students while keeping studies at the  
12 forefront. The last couple weeks they have been on calls with companies  
13 that were referred to them by the Canadian Embassy; a global reach  
14 opportunity to bring business to the Las Cruces region.

15  
16 There was discussion regarding hangars the City has built at the airport and  
17 when they were built. The City is not building hangars; they are privately  
18 built. They have been working on constructing infrastructure that would  
19 support hangar development. The City currently owns two hangars that are  
20 leased out. There is need for hangar development in this area. The hangar  
21 on the east side was acquired but the hangar close to the terminal is  
22 questionable as to whether the City built it or not. The last time a hangar  
23 was acquired was either 2013 or 2014. Hangar space is an important part  
24 of economic development. There was discussion on taking a tour of PSL  
25 as well as doing a presentation of this to City Council. Councilor Gandara  
26 would like to hear from the consultants weighing in on this as well as bring  
27 the legislators to the table to have a deeper understanding of what will be  
28 entailed moving forward. She would also like to look at the possibility of  
29 involving the SpacePort; there are good relationships between them. She  
30 needs more information to be able to understand this more before she feels  
31 comfortable guiding it forward.

32  
33 This is an amazing opportunity with many connections to the strategic plan  
34 related to internships and apprenticeships; to include with Las Cruces  
35 Public Schools, the university, and the branch. Member Lopez clarified that  
36 he doesn't think the state needs to take the lead but rather they should take  
37 the initiative to define what they want to accomplish. Then go to the state  
38 and inform them of their strategies and needs moving forward. Dr. Martinez  
39 summarized what they accomplished from the discussion: to revive the topic  
40 of UAS as a key potential economic driver for the community, lessons  
41 learned from the successful model, vision that PSL has at NMSU, and  
42 comments from the Members. The next step they will do is convene the  
43 partners to begin conversations on specific strategies that can be outlined  
44 as a priority and highlight the policy related items to bring back to the PRC.  
45 Chair Flores would like to participate with the meeting of the partners if  
46 possible.

1           **b. Cluster Development for the Commercial Space Cluster:** Casey  
2 DeRaad gave the presentation; she is the director for New Space New  
3 Mexico. Ms. DeRaad agreed that communication is key to moving forward  
4 as well as supporting the organizations. She gave a background of herself  
5 to include being from Taos, New Mexico and has a Bachelors and Masters  
6 in Electrical Engineering from UNM. She has worked on Air Force research  
7 satellites as well as NASA to develop technology partnerships between Air  
8 Force and NASA. She helped start the nonprofit New Space New Mexico;  
9 a synergist to pull together, break down the silos, and figure out how to grow  
10 the space industry and take advantage of the new opportunities out there.

11  
12           The name New Space New Mexico was decided as a term for the  
13 commercial and privately funded space going on; almost as a new space  
14 age. There is a new push for space travel with various organizations and  
15 the cost of launch has gone down which enables more commercial  
16 companies to start. New Mexico was a leader in the first space age and is  
17 poised to be one in this new space age. The first picture of the earth from  
18 space was taken from the B2 Rocket in New Mexico and Dr. Harrison  
19 Schmitt was the last astronaut to stand on the moon with Apollo 17. There  
20 was discussion on the space heritage in New Mexico.

21  
22           The global commercial market is estimated to grow roughly eight times in  
23 the next 20 years. In 2010 the majority of space investment was the United  
24 States government; roughly \$40 billion. In 2018 and 2019 it rose to \$400  
25 billion; the growth is expected to continue at this level. UAS is separate  
26 from space but there are overlaps for planning and partnering. New Space  
27 New Mexico is here to cultivate a collaborative and innovative driven new  
28 space ecosystem; connect ideas, people, resources, and investment  
29 opportunities. The goal is to create a universal voice with partnering at  
30 industry, academic, and government levels. The vision is to grow the space  
31 industry from New Mexico to benefit the nation. The New Mexico  
32 companies will have the first opportunities to benefit and then move  
33 throughout the nation.

34  
35           First they looked at the assets in the state; finding a list of space companies  
36 in the state which were over 100. There were examples of various  
37 companies that work with space such as SolAero Technologies who provide  
38 solar panels for over 50% of the space systems in orbit. Other assets in  
39 New Mexico include the SpacePort which will be the first commercial space  
40 travel with over 600 astronauts, three organizations at Kirtland that are part  
41 of the new space force, possibility of space command with Department of  
42 Defense, the White Sands Test Facility, NASA, two national DOE  
43 laboratories doing over \$500 million per year in space work, UNM Center  
44 Cosnac specifically for aerospace, New Mexico State University  
45 Arrowhead, PSL, and New Mexico Tech. There is also RND that they are  
46 working to figure out how to leverage the intellectual capital to help the  
47 space industry.  
48

1 New Space New Mexico strategic focus areas include four items. One is to  
2 build relationships to understand stakeholder needs, research capabilities,  
3 and discover all the opportunities; such as set up a NewSpace Alliance.  
4 Two is facilitate connections to help the companies be introduced to the  
5 customers. Three is innovation programs to grow and support the  
6 companies. Four is marketing and communication efforts to effectively  
7 communicate what is available, what the companies are, what connections  
8 are being built, and how to communicate the innovations being driven. The  
9 NewSpace Alliance is an initiative started in December that includes over  
10 250 stakeholders in the informal distribution. Currently they are trying to get  
11 the stakeholders to join the NewSpace Alliance. To be a member of the  
12 Alliance you need to fill out a survey that gives information on the company;  
13 there is no membership fee. Their website is NewSpaceNM.org. They are  
14 currently doing a feasibility study on an innovation hub where they aid the  
15 companies to connect their innovations to the customers and workforce.  
16 The hope is to create physical hubs or nodes in places to connect others  
17 within the state and eventually out of the state.  
18

19 Councilor Gandara commented that she's appreciative about this and she  
20 believes the PRC should be a part of the Alliance to help connectivity with  
21 entities. Member Ulrich added that DACC has a lower level Associates  
22 Degree and certificate of completion in aerospace technology for  
23 technicians. They are looking to grow that area and are working with  
24 Mayfield High School to create those opportunities for the youth to get into  
25 the field. She will send Ms. DeRaad links to that information. Ms. DeRaad  
26 listed people they have to advise them with New Space New Mexico to  
27 include Joe Bollington with Jacobs and Dr. Eric Sanchez. Quarterly they  
28 pull together the companies and have three industry leaders lead  
29 discussions on programs to move the space program forward. There was  
30 more discussion on having connectivity within the state.  
31

32 The discussion moved to how to get youth involved. There are workforce  
33 initiatives waiting for funding to begin in 2021. Ms. DeRaad mentioned other  
34 programs she worked with that included youth workforce programs. There  
35 have been discussions with the secretary of workforce solutions to support  
36 internships. Another program waiting for funding is called ThinSat; a  
37 program at the middle school level where they develop a small satellite.  
38 The companies would sponsor middle schools for this program. Currently  
39 they met with Tracey Bryan from Bridges of the Southwest to try and  
40 leverage what is already happening and add more to bring everything  
41 together. For a company to be successful they need three things: initial  
42 investment, customers, and workforce. New Space New Mexico is trying to  
43 work with all of those and bring them all together.  
44

45 Dr. Shelby commented that one product out of PSL is that they are actively  
46 involved in STEM outreach. Within the next two weeks FAA will be  
47 collaborating with a STEM outreach month. The team will be releasing  
48 different activities in collaboration with other partners throughout the

1 country. This will be a great opportunity for the public schools to be  
2 engaged. She will share the information with the Board. PSL has also had  
3 students move into classified ready positions which can be difficult and long  
4 to get into. This year they launched the first part of their CREW program,  
5 Classified Ready Employee Workforce. This will be a two year fellowship  
6 where the students go through seminar series about national security,  
7 policy, classification, and the challenges. They will also have co-ops with  
8 companies and earn their security clearance as participation in the program.  
9 Students include sophomores and juniors. The teacher teaching the  
10 national security is a retired Colonel, Jamie Sutton. They have had an  
11 advisory board partnering with them to ensure the program meets their  
12 needs. Ms. DeRaad mentioned other internship programs where students  
13 can get their clearances and will send that information to Dr. Shelby. Chair  
14 Flores thanked everyone who presented today and participants.  
15

16 **6. Future Discussion:**

17 **a. Topics to be Discussed:**

18  
19 Dr. Martinez suggested they will contact the Members to find topics for next  
20 month's meeting.  
21

22 **7. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.**  
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28 Chairperson  
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32 Approved: \_\_\_\_\_