The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the Las Cruces Economic Recovery Ad Hoc Board on February 4, 2021 at 10:05 am. The meeting was held via Zoom.

Members Present:
- Chris Schaljo, Chairman
- Debbi Moore, Vice Chair (arrived at 10:13 a.m.)
- Michael Harris, Member
- Veronica Archuleta, Member
- George Miller, Member
- Ron Fitzherbert, Member
- Darleen Lopez, Member (arrived 10:07 a.m.)
- Sharon Thomas, Member
- Jolene Martinez, Member (arrived 10:14 a.m.)
- Susan Greenwald, Member
- Brooke Montgomery, Member

Members Absent:

Staff Present:
- Francisco Pallares, Economic Development Deputy Director
- Griselda Martinez, Economic Development Director
- Cynthia Villanueva, Administrative Assistant
- Eric Enriquez, Assistant City Manager (attended 10:08-10:48 a.m.)

I. Call to Order: Chair Schaljo called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

II. Conflict of Interest: There was none.

III. Acceptance of the Agenda: Motion to accept the agenda by Board Member Harris, seconded by Board Member Thomas. Mr. Pallares stated the Economic Development Department discusses regularly how to help the 3,000 businesses within the City. He was wondering if there were additional people or resources the Board could provide to assist in the outreach of offering the businesses resources that other organizations have to offer. Motion passes.

IV. Minutes for Approval:

1. Minutes for Meeting on January 7, 2021: Motion to accept the minutes from January 7, 2021 by Board Member Thomas, seconded by Board Member Harris. Motion passes.

V. Discussion:
1. **COVID-19 Task Force:** Mr. Enriquez stated Mayor Miyagishima suggested the vaccine task force to try and get as many people vaccinated in the county. The mission of the task force is to implement appropriate support mechanisms to deliver and promote vaccinations in our area by engaging community leaders, organizations, and trusted messengers to support outreach and engagement in our general population. The vision is that Doña Ana County will have 80% of the population vaccinated by the end of the year. Thus far, 17,000 vaccinations have been administered. There is a delay in the delivery of the vaccine, and dealing with the Pfizer and storage put us behind from other counties in New Mexico. The task force includes the Department of Health, Dawn Sanchez giving a lot of information and input and how this community and task force can help them. There is a partnership with the City and Department of Health with the convention center as a site. NMSU Burrell College is on the task force and they have 72 students who are ready, willing, and able to administer and help out the Las Cruces Fire Department, who is also on the task force. County and their volunteers on the task force. Another site for the future, Doña Ana Community College on the East Mesa Campus. Working with local pharmacies, Walgreens and Walmart and also coordinating those through the Department of Health. They are still working on the 1A group which are health providers and first responders, and now focusing on the 1B which is 75 and older.

Chair Schaljo asked what the community leaders are actually doing, what is their role with being on the task force. Mr. Enriquez stated that Mountain View Hospital members were there and shared that they have the freezers available if more sites are opened up. Burrell College is already partnering with NMSU in giving some vaccines, but they have more students involved. Doña Ana County clerk on there and looking at the resource of mailing, registers, property owners, different ways of reaching out. City communications department, Mandy Guss to see how to communicate and educate and get the message out. Other resources for the elderly, homebound vaccines or having wheelchairs available for those with difficulty walking at the convention site. Also DOH sharing the document to see how to help, such as the difficulty walking.

Board Member Thomas stated she had her first shot two weeks ago and the next one tomorrow, but it was unbelievably well organized, hundreds of cars, traffic direction, everyone friendly and helpful. Board Member Montgomery asked when people with heart conditions would be eligible for the vaccine and also about COVID positive people and what that process was. Mr. Enriquez stated the State mandates the tier system that is in place, 1A, 1B, 1C. Currently as there have been some delays with the vaccine it is difficult to pinpoint when the next tier will take place. He mentioned discussing with someone in the medical field concerning COVID positive and getting the vaccine. Board Member Montgomery stated she had issues in trying to get tested at the ER and wanting a second opinion, and was
wondering if there were people to help advocate for getting COVID tested. If not, can we help advocate. Mr. Enriquez stated they are dependent on the Department of Health, CDC, and WHO to take care of these questions. They'll look at that to make sure people in the community are directed to where they're needed, but continue to wear masks, wash hands, and keep distancing.

Board Member Moore agreed with Ms. Thomas on the wonderful organization and efficiency of the process at the convention center. Board Member Lopez asked what the City's contingency plan if the number of people rejecting the vaccine exceeds 20%. Mr. Enriquez stated the surveys to this point show that more than 50% are willing to. They also did one for the organization and that was close to 65%. As more people have been vaccinated, more people seem to be willing to be vaccinated. They don't really have a contingency plan, more so as being advocates. Board Member Martinez mentioned that there may be a migrant family resurgence and we also still have the pandemic and asked what the City's plan to house and/or vaccinate the migrants. Mr. Enriquez stated there were some meetings with Border Patrol for the intel, and also communicating with Hospitality Coalition who had helped out with the last asylum refugees program. Currently the migrants will stay in El Paso and be transported from El Paso. Also mentioned that New Mexico has 14-day quarantine, which poses a problem for those entering the state. They are also in communication with Homeland Security in the State. This is being monitored closely, but so far looks like they will be staying in El Paso. Chair Schaljo asked if there was anything this board could do. Mr. Enriquez stated he believes there will be in the future once we are receiving the vaccine on a consistent basis.

Board Member Martinez mentioned they pay handsomely to have an HR advising company. As an organization they are still deciding on mandating the vaccine for their employees. Maybe a small grant for accessing HR advising who give advice on: This is what you can do, versus this is what you should do, versus this is how you protect your business, versus this is how you protect your personnel. She believes that advice needs to be on the table in terms of making the best decision for the organization. This situation is all risk management and smaller businesses might not have easy access as larger businesses.

Board Member Harris stated that if a restaurant is going to require a vaccination card to enter that the task force and chambers are going to need to answer those questions.

2. Vaccine Registration and Businesses: Mr. Pallares mentioned this was added to the agenda for discussion on potential campaigns or what could be done to support the vaccination from the business side.

Chair Schaljo mentioned on a recent trip to Albuquerque that south of Socorro there were few billboards, but north of Socorro there were plenty,
"we are all in this together," "go to 'x' website, call this number, get your vaccine," "sign up, get tested, know your status." So maybe some media marketing, such as e-mailing small businesses within the City of Las Cruces, fliers, how to sign up to get your vaccine, benefits of getting vaccine, statistics of the vaccine. Be colorful, put Las Cruces Safe Promise on it.

Board Member Montgomery mentioned seeing the School Board and that there is less distribution in the southern part of the State, and was wondering what the distribution truly was. Chair Schaljo stated this is really not for the Economic Recovery Board. Board Member Harris stated the distribution question has been asked but no solid answers are forthcoming as of yet. Board Member Moore stated she received information for statewide encouragement for vaccinations that can be customized to agencies/organizations and she is certainly willing to share. Board Member Martinez mentioned that New Mexico’s distribution rate is one of the best in the country. Board Member Montgomery feels others in the State are getting the vaccine more than in southern New Mexico.

Motion made by Board Member Montgomery to use the Department of Tourism template and distribute that with the City logo across the City to get the word out on vaccinations. And also possibly some money in the budget for billboards. Seconded by Board Member Moore. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Economic Development Support of Business Services: Board Member Moore stated they were in discussion with several other agencies recently and discussing resources, what businesses need and it is the intention of the group to go on a telephone campaign to tell people what resources are out there, i.e. SBDC, what the City offers, chambers offer, discover greatest needs. She asked if there were any volunteers to help make the phone calls. The questions would include what are the current issues and also connecting people to PPE and other financial resources. Ms. Martinez stated this is business services support coalition is formed of small business development center west, LiftFund, Chambers, City of Las Cruces. The purpose has been to discuss the needs of the business community. The latest discussion concluded there is a big gap in businesses being aware of the resources available for their survival. Board Member Greenwald stated DLCP would like to be a part of the coalition, and handle the downtown businesses. Board Member Lopez also offered to help. Ms. Martinez stated they hoped to have all the materials and begin calling next week. Board Member Moore asked if a motion would be needed for the Board for this. It was stated a motion would not be needed, but to reflect the opportunities of volunteering. Board Member Harris suggested sending out an e-mail of the survey and then waiting a few days to start phone calls. Ms. Martinez stated that surveys have been discussed and the response rate is very low and having a conversation is more effective.
VI. Future Discussion:

1. Topics to be discussed: Chair Schaljo stated they already have one which is the marketing material going out to small business about where to go, how to sign up, etc., as well as looking at billboards. He mentioned the legislature and a new liquor bill, new tax relief bill, and many to help business. Board Member Harris thought that discussing pending bills in the legislature would be a good topic. Also what are some policies that the City could implement that would help people get back into business, get people back to work eventually.

Board Member Harris mentioned a presentation given to City Council recently by Strong Towns, no specific policy proposals, but basically planning and zoning and permitting should be overhauled to go back to a pre-Great Depression style of development where businesses and residences were allowed more freedom in how they developed land. This may make it easier for people to get back into business. Chair Schaljo stated they had dealt with permitting a few months ago, and asked Board Member Harris to contact the City and see if there any anything there that as a Board they are about to discuss. Board Member Thomas mentioned that much of what Board Member Harris mentioned is in the comprehensive plan, Elevate Las Cruces. And that the City has hired a consultant to redo the zoning codes, subdivision, and design standards and this will take a couple of years. She also mentioned a group discussing the Solano and El Paseo Corridors. Chair Schaljo suggested Board Member Harris and Thomas get together and return with an actual discussion topic.

Board Member Lopez suggested there are plenty of initiatives in progress with some coming soon. She can present that information and see what they are doing to start getting people back to work, initiatives for educating employers and enriching the conversation and relationships with the employers. Board Member Thomas mentioned being on the board of Work Force Connection and the biggest push is to organize businesses in the region and see what the real needs are. Board Member Harris also mentioned the information of here is what to do to protect your customers from your employees, or employees from customers, but no focus on protecting employees from each other. So the Las Cruces Safe Promise could also promote safe place employees. Board Member Moore mentioned the New Mexico Safe Certified program which employees do have to go through that program. Chair Schaljo stated they will add to the agenda to add some verbiage to the Las Cruces Safe Promise.

VII. General Announcements: Mr. Pallares mentioned that Jamey Rickman has asked to acquire input from the Board as to how to disperse ideas specific to the moratorium (eviction moratorium which is extended until March 31). E-mail address is for these ideas is clcengage@las-cruces.org. Board Member Martinez mentioned that FYI will be doing a third round of the meal voucher program for the City, which is local residents who need food to restaurants who need support. She
would appreciate any help in this area. Board Member Montgomery stated Ms. Martinez has funded a program to help with social media and some additional needs of businesses. There are businesses that can make logos.

VIII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Board Member Thomas, seconded by Board Member Martinez. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:40 a.m.

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Chair

Christopher Schaljo
Chairperson

Approved: ____________________