

2 The following are the amended summary minutes of the **Senior Programs Advisory Board**
4 meeting held on Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom Webinar in, Las Cruces, New
6 Mexico.

8 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

8 Chair Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large
9 Secretary Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O'Brien Papen Center Representative
10 Dr. Abel L. Chavarria, District 1 Representative
11 Sharlene Wittern, District 3 Representative
12 Rick Jackson, District 4 Representative
13 Cheryl Young, Benavidez Center Representative

14 **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

16 Vice Chair Rudy Alvarez, Eastside Center Representative
17 Manuel Contreras, District 5 Representative
18 Etta Kaufman, District 6 Representative
19 Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative

20 **GUESTS PRESENT:**

22 Sonia Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator
23 Chris Behrens, Recreation Facility Manager
24 Lynn Gallagher, Quality of Life Department Director
25 Toni Flores, Recording Secretary

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28 I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Judy Chavarria, Member-at-Large Representative, called the
29 Senior Programs' Advisory Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 11, 2021, via
30 Zoom Webinar in Las Cruces, NM.

32 II. **ROLL CALL:** A quorum was ascertained.

34 III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rick Jackson, District 4
35 Representative.

36 IV. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chair Judy Chavarria asked the Board to observe a moment of
37 silence and to remember our country and the many souls that have been lost during the COVID-
38 19 pandemic.

40 V. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Board members had no conflict of interest with any item of
41 business on the agenda.

42 VI. **INTRODUCTIONS:** No members of the public were introduced.

44 VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

46 VIII. **ACTION ITEM(S):** R. Jackson, moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2021
47 Senior Programs Advisory Board meeting minutes. Cheryl Young, Benavidez Center
48 Representative, seconded the motion. Roll call was taken. Vote: 5 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried.

50 IX. **DISCUSSION ITEMS - SENIOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** Sonia
52 Saldana, Senior Programs Administrator, provided an update on the COVID-19 vaccine

54 registrations and scheduled vaccination clinics. She reported Senior Programs' staff continue to
55 assist with the COVID-19 vaccine registration process. She announced in partnership with the
56 New Mexico Department of Health (DOH), New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Care Services
57 Department (NMALTS), La Clinica de Familia (LCDF), the National Guard, students, staff, and
58 volunteers a drive-thru COVID-19 vaccination clinic was held on Saturday, March 6, 2021, for
59 individuals 70 years of age and older. A total of 1,002 COVID-19 vaccinations were administered
60 to the most vulnerable population. It was a very successful event. S. Saldana announced a
61 second COVID-19 vaccination clinic for individuals 70 years of age and older is planned for
62 Saturday, March 27, 2021. Senior Programs will distribute flyers to promote the event. She
63 reported Senior Programs currently has 12 staff members who have been trained, by the DOH,
64 to assist seniors with the COVID-19 vaccine registration process. Since the staff now has access
65 to the DOH's portal, staff can now better assist seniors when they call about the registration
66 process. Staff can provide updated registration status information, identify, and complete
67 applications that are incomplete. In the past six weeks the Long-Term Care Services' staff have
68 contacted and helped over 1300 seniors in the community with the registration process,
69 transportation services, and answered questions about the vaccinations.

70 S. Saldana stated many seniors have cancelled their vaccine appointment because they feel the
71 vaccine is not safe. She encouraged those individuals to contact their primary health care
72 physician to discuss any concerns. Their physician can advise which vaccine is appropriate for
73 them.

74
75 S. Saldana reported at a previous Board meeting there was discussion about moving away from
76 the current congregate meals program reservation system. She stated staff have proposed
77 implementing a forecast type of a system that does not require the participants to make or cancel
78 a meal reservation. The reason the Senior Nutrition Program is considering moving away from
79 the reservation system is because not everyone will call or cancel a meal reservation, resulting in
80 extra meals being prepared and then thrown away if the meals cannot be frozen. The new system
81 takes into consideration the daily meal count, the menu being served, and adds a ten percent
82 variance. She stated before the new forecast system is presented to the Board for approval, staff
83 is interested in a conducting a trial run to ensure the system will work. Staff is proposing to
84 conduct a trial run of the new system at the beginning of April or May. She asked the Board for
85 their input. Dr. A. Chavarria stated he agrees with the implementation of the new system;
86 however, his only concern is leftover food. He inquired what is the plan for that leftover food. S.
87 Saldana stated any leftover food will either be frozen or discarded depending on the type of food
88 being served. S. Saldana explained the number of meals is consistent from week to week and
89 there should not be a lot of leftover food.

90
91 C. Young stated if Senior Programs continues to monitor the food trends, the numbers will remain
92 consistent, which will result in less food being wasted.

93
94 After further discussion, there was Board consensus that staff conduct a trial run of the new
95 system forecasting the number of meals to be prepared instead of relying on meal reservations
96 and cancellations. S. Saldana stated the participants will be notified before any changes are
97 made to the meal reservation system.

98
99 Dr. A. Chavarria inquired if Senior Programs has a tentative date for the reopening of the senior
100 centers. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs submitted its plan to reopen the centers to the

102 NMAAA, and it is currently being reviewed by the State. However, the State has not provided a
tentative date for the reopening of the centers. She anticipates this may change with the number
104 of seniors being vaccinated. She stated there were other options being considered such as
outdoor dining. However, several details need to be considered before these options are
106 presented for consideration such as staffing, sanitizing, equipment setup and teardown, shade
structures, equipment wear and tear. Additional information will be provided as it becomes
108 available.

110 Chair J. Chavarria inquired if once the center reopens would it be practicable to ask for
participants to show their COVID-19 vaccination card prior to entering the facilities. S. Saldana
112 stated Senior Programs, as an entity, must follow all HIPPA regulations to ensure it is protecting
and securing the participant's medical information. For this reason, it is not appropriate to ask for
114 a COVID-19 vaccination card prior to entering any of the senior centers.

116 K. Lynn Gallagher, Quality of Life Department Director, was introduced and welcomed. She
commended Senior Programs' staff on their efforts to register seniors 70 years of age and older
118 for the COVID-19 vaccine. She stated Senior Programs has done an excellent job reaching out
to those seniors in the community who may not be able to access these services. She stated with
120 the senior population, staff must take extra diligence in making sure that Senior Programs is taking
the appropriate steps to reopen the centers.

122 **X. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER UPDATES:** C. Young reported at the previous Board
meeting she had concerns about the small portions of food being served at the Benavidez Center.
124 She was pleased that her concerns were addressed, because during this month she saw a
significant improvement in the meals being served. She reported a homebound Meals on Wheels
126 program participant commented that she discovered stems in her Enchiladas. C. Young
monitored the situation and reported it was a one-time occurrence. She was concerned because
128 the client is blind and could not see the stems to remove them off the Enchiladas. When the
participant bit into the Enchiladas, she hurt her mouth and that is when she discovered the stems.
130 C. Young commended JD, meals delivery driver. She stated he is gracious and exceptional. S.
Saldana will forward her compliment to JD's supervisor.
132

134 Sharlene Wittern, District 3 Representative, commented the portion size of the salad served at
Munson Center is inappropriate. She stated the meat that was used for the green chile with meat
136 entrée, was of a very low quality. The meat was extremely rubbery with a lot of fat, and it was
hard to chew. The Beef-a-Roni had very little meat. The frozen meals have less than a quarter
cup of vegetables and are high in sodium. More processed foods are being served which are not
138 healthy for seniors. S. Wittern received comments from participants stating the liver was not
properly cooked, and they had to throw it out. The fish is great. S. Saldana stated she has
140 observed the kitchen staff utilizing the appropriate serving utensils. She will follow up with these
concerns.
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144 Jo Ann Rodriguez-Haught, Frank O' Brien Papen Center Representative, stated her major
complaint was quality control. On one occasion the cookie was missing from her meal. Other
146 than that, the meals are great.

148 Chair J. Chavarria and Dr. A. Chavarria commented they enjoy the meals and do not have any
complaints.

150 Gabriel Montalvo, Munson Center Representative, was informed the instructor of the painting
152 classes held at the Eastside Center will no longer be teaching the class and inquired if a new
154 instructor will be in place prior to the reopening of the centers. S. Saldana stated Senior Programs
is constantly recruiting instructors. Staff will work with the Volunteer Network Center to assist with
the recruitment of a new instructor, so there is an instructor in place prior to the reopening of the
centers.

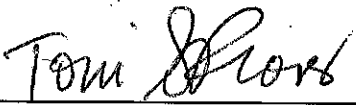
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158 The next Board meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on Thursday, April 8, 2021 from 9:00 a.m.
to 11:00 a.m.

160 **XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair J. Chavarria adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

162 Submitted,

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Toni Flores, Recording Secretary