

# City of Albuquerque

## Department of Senior Affairs

### Advisory Council



Anna M. Sanchez, Director

1 Civic Plaza NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

DSA Advisory Council, In-Person Meeting  
Highland Senior Center – 131 Monroe NE, 87108  
Monday July 17, 2023

## Minutes

- I. Roll Call
- II. Meeting Called to Order by Chair Evan Thompson at 12:02 PM
  - a. Present:
    - i. Advisory Council Members: Evan Thompson, Steve Borbas, Henry Shonerd, Ray Taylor, Martha Medina, Shiela Hundley, Louis Carlentine, Dubra Karnes-Padilla
    - ii. DSA Staff Members: Anna Sanchez, Jenifer Gonzales, Agnes Vallejos, Angel Montoya, Ed Ackron, Natasha Montoya, Marie Llamas, Viridiana Flores-Rodriguez, Lisa Casman,
  - b. Not Present: Lucy Lopez, Havens Levitt and Theresa Haering.
- III. Approval of Minutes & Agenda (May & June)
  - a. Henry motions to approve minutes, Dub seconds. May and June Minutes were approved.
  - b. Steve motions to approve June and July agenda, Louis seconds. June and July agendas were approved.
- IV. Public Participation- Ms. Jill Henry, Danielle Slupesky & Jeffrey Scott
  - a. Ms. Jill decided to attend this meeting to suggest a few items to be added to senior centers. Ms. Jill mentioned she attends Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center but would like to know other activities that are being offered at other senior centers. She mentioned a flyer listing all activities at all senior centers would be beneficial for her and other members. This will allow them to choose which center to attend and participate in the variety of activities. Another item Ms. Jill mentioned was that she would like the opportunity to have an income such as creating arts and crafts and sell them.

Director Sanchez commented this is something administration is currently working on, to improve our communication channels. She thoughts this was

a good idea to improve cross-sharing our communication across centers. Our website gets updated regularly but we recognize it is not the best. Reference employment, our Program Manager, Agnes Vallejos, is working on providing resources and connecting to those services that can be a resource to seniors. However, some of the conversation are in the infancy stages but Ms. Vallejos is designing working on designing a plan to help older adults with encore careers. These resources will help retired older adults get back on the job market, for example, to educate adults on how to work with Etsy and sell online. Our concept is a larger conversation as we have a large segment of individuals to engage them and help them earn extra income, that is our overall plan Director Sanchez added.

- b. Ms. Slupensky, an end-of-life Coach and Death Doula, owns a small business and attended to learn about the resources available for the community as she helps people connect to the resources they need. Ms. Slupensky offers services from helping individuals create a power of attorney to offering workshops to learn ways of expressing and processing grief. Ms. Slupesky has shared flyers to events she will be hosting on August 11th at Albuquerque Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and has cordially invited everyone present.
  - c. Mr. Scott is a small company owner within the retail industry. He sells Durable Medical Equipment (DME) such as canes, wheel chairs, and other medical supplies that are hard to find and/or afford over the counter. Mr. Scott thought it was a good idea for him to introduce his retail store to us as he is also helping our senior community find these resources. Mr. Scott mentioned he does not own a regular store and is not committed to the tag price, he can negotiate prices to better assist the senior population. Mr. Scott has cordially invited all present to visit his store or refer him to someone that may need it. His store is located at 5700 North St.
- V. Introductions of New Staff – Viridiana Rodriguez-Flores, Senior Companion Program Supervisor, Marie Llamas, Foster Grandparent Program Supervisor and Lisa Casman, Case Management Coordinator
- a. Ms. Rodriguez-Flores, Ms. Llamas and Ms. Casman introduced themselves to the council and they all stated are very happy to be in their new roles assisting and working with volunteers which are a backbone to our department and the seniors, towards serving senior within the community and combat isolation.
- VI. Center Manager Report – Julianna Brooks, Highland Senior Center Manager
- a. Ms. Brooks provided a brief report of the Highland Senior Center to the board.
  - b. Ms. Brooks reported multiple remodeling ongoing projects. The fence is going up as we speak around the center and is going to be beneficial for safety purposes, Ms. Brooks stated. Painting phase for multipurpose room tarts today and will be done in next two weeks. Originally, the multipurpose room was composed of two separate rooms, these were removed to create

a bigger classroom as social hall was getting too full. The fitness room was also moved to the old billiards' room and billiards was relocated to room one.

- c. The center hosted a pride event in June. It was a smaller event than anticipated due to construction. However, it was a beneficial event for everyone that assisted. The event held a variety of groups to educate the community and to better understand the LGBTQ groups and be more accepted.
- d. The center has increased 70 reservations a day due to ala carte menu. The center is very busy for lunch time, as a result, bingo has to be canceled as the lunch systems are complicated to utilize and multiple staff are necessary to be upfront helping seniors when ordering their lunch.
- e. Director Sanchez added we are currently working with IT to resolve the system's issue and help us improve this process.
- f. Ms. Brooks also announced that the kitchen renovation is in the works and will keep everyone informed.
- g. Ms. Brooks offered and encouraged everyone to tour the center, especially if this was their first time visiting.

## VII. DSA Administrative Updates

### a. Jenifer Gonzales, Nutrition & Transportation Program Manager

- i. Ms. Gonzales reported her team is currently working on finalizing the wrap on vehicles, 16 trucks have been wrapped, only 9 more to go. The wraps identify the department more fairly, Ms. Gonzales added.
- ii. Our Head Cook position is vacant and are actively recruiting for it. A new position advocated by Division and Program Manager to alleviate the workflow when staffing analysis was conducted is a Floating Cook. This position will alleviate the managing of a total of eight kitchens.
- iii. The new Meal Site Coordinator is starting on July 27th as well as a Driver position interview will take place next Tuesday.
- iv. Ms. Gonzales reported the division is working to host educational nutrition classes with dietician that can educate on dietary needs and healthier eating habits.
- v. Lastly, the numbers of meals at meal sites are increasing and as a result, they are seeing more socialization among these sites. Arts & crafts classes is also coming up.

### b. Ed Ackron, Social Services Program Manager

- i. Mr. Ackron reported Social Services is fully staffed with 7th case manager recently being hired. That being said, Mr. Ackron mentioned the Case Management Unit is outgrowing their current work space which is at Barelak Senior Center and are working on finding additional space.
- ii. Mr. Ackron stated the new I & A supervisor has been working hard at finding new outreach clients and finding more opportunities. I & A

will be hosting a family medicine open house and hoping to reach a total of 1500 individuals to attend.

- iii. Another event I & A is working on is to collaborate in the NM Aging Conference to connect with seniors in the community. Director Sanchez advised she will provide the date for this conference and all other information.
- iv. Home Services has partnered with the Sustainability Department in a small project helping seniors get home projects done quicker such as moving unused vehicles out of driveway to ensure their front yard is free from unnecessary items that make their way into their homes safer.
- v. The Summer Volunteer Program is also working on projects to help out the community with a variety of home services.
- vi. Mr. Ackron reported another partnership in the works is with Albuquerque Fire Department. This collaboration will work along with a landscaping company to do yard work for seniors in the community. More information will be provided.
- vii. Lastly, Mr. Ackron reported I & A calls have been increasing tremendously and one reason this could be happening is the phone number being on the new wrapped vehicles; they have received a total of 6,000 calls within a six-month period, these calls are for home repairs, maintenance, installation of AC's, installing grab bars and transportation requests.

c. Angel Montoya, Recreation Division Manager

- i. Ms. Montoya reported the Recreation Division has been very busy this month. This past Saturday Manzano Mesa participated in a cool operation along with Parks & Rec and the center stayed open longer for families to be able to enjoy the water in this warm weather.
- ii. Construction for the Martineztown Multigenerational Center is in process, Ms. Montoya invited everyone present to drive by and check out the location.
- iii. Pride Day at Highland on June was a success. We had a photo booth, total of eight vendors, refreshments and performance by Paul Pino. Construction projects at Highland are also in progress as Ms. Brook mentioned earlier.
- iv. Ms. Montoya also reported June stats; Recreation division had a total of 1,057 new members join our centers and 1,412 in renewals. North Domingo had the highest renewals and new members.
- v. Covid-19 shots are still being offered and we continue to have a great turn out.
- vi. The Summer Program ended last week and we had a total of 4,004 young kids that attended.
- vii. Our Talent Show is happening this Friday evening at North Domingo Baca; we will have 3 judges, Taylor Dunn, Dennis Parras from Mayor's office and a special guest, John Conrod, from Chicago Talent Coach. Ms. Montoya cordially invited everyone to join us.

d. Anna Sanchez, DSA Director

- i. Director Sanchez reminded everyone present there is no Advisory Council meeting next month (August).
- ii. Associate Director Peone is out on FMLA for a couple weeks.
- iii. Ms. Anna Sanchez mentioned in the prior meeting our Deputy Director, Chris Sanchez touched on our quarterly report which we are turning it into City Council. That being said, we are diligently working on improving our data collection process and carefully analyzing the information to present this information to City Council. Our first item is the meals program which we have implemented a donation-based meal. We understand that this will allow more seniors to take advantage of this as Covid-19 assistance is no longer a resource and inflation is a huge problem within the US. We received a budget \$900,000 to support that lunch donation-based program, however, we are being impacted due to inflation. For example, the coffee price has increased 60%, this is a cost to the city and we are building a case to justify why we need more funds, Director Sanchez stated.
- iv. Director Sanchez also provided an update on the complete facility assessment. Historically, all previous administrations have focused more in cosmetic updates than really looking into electrical panels, secured gates, air conditioning systems, etc. We are looking at facilities that need major capital improvements.
- v. One other assessment we are looking into is our operational and staffing capacity. The goal is to determine if we have enough staff for all the operations we are conducting as it is crucial for the department to have all appropriate resources in order to support the level of work we do, Director Sanchez added.
- vi. Our quarterly meeting will be on October 27th and we are looking to have it at an offsite location. We will provide you all with an invitation.
- vii. Deputy Director Sanchez is working on another proclamation to recognize all supervisors that were part of the accreditation program.
- viii. Lastly, DSA has been allocated 7.5 million for capital improvement plan for the Cibola Loop Multigenerational Center. We continue to advocate for more funds, Director Sanchez stated.

VIII. Advisory Council Business- Status of Terms

- a. Director Sanchez stated we are working on resetting the new calendar year. which will include sites that are not as well known to the public including CASA and 1st St. The public announcement will be sent out to give the opportunity for folks to attend.
- b. We are also looking at the history of terms as we were informed there are three members currently serving on expired terms. We want to ensure those members' applications are up to date. We currently have six new applications of individuals interested in joining our committee and will be reviewed to fill in vacancies. More information will be communicated.

IX. Council Member Reports (Optional)

- a. Mr. Borbas wants to share a personal announcement to everyone present. The Story Riders Organization have put a book together about 67 veterans of Vietnam War to write a short story about their adventures and struggles. This organization convinced these 67 veterans to tell their stories and included them in this book. The organization requested Mr. Borbas' permission to use his "Holes in our Hearts" sculpture to use as a cover for this book.
- b. Ms. Karnes-Padilla mentioned UNM has an association named "Successful Aging," in which supports our growing senior population remain independent longer. Ms. Karnes-Padilla suggested our department to contact them and perhaps form a partnership and work together.
- c. Ms. Hundley expressed her excitement about the companion program as working at the hospital she can see how this will benefit many individuals.

X. Announcements

- a. Ms. Natasha Montoya announced the RSVP is hosting their annual breakfast on August 4th. She will email formal invitations to everyone and asked to confirm attendance if possible.
- b. Director Sanchez gave kudos to Ms. Natasha Montoya and her team for working hard at coordinating the RSVP Breakfast as the department works hard to recognize staff and volunteers that make a difference on a daily basis.
- c. Activities catalog came out this week, if anyone needs one they are available at each center.

XI. Adjournment

- a. Mr. Thompson motioned to adjourn meeting, Dub seconds. Meeting adjourned at 1:27 pm.