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DATE: October 6, 2021

SUBJECT: City of Albuquerque (COA) staff from Senior Affairs and Solid Waste arrive at the Senior Center every morning during business hours to eat breakfast.

FILE NO: 21-0036 C

INVESTIGATOR: J. Shane

STATUS: Closed

Informative Case Synopsis

On September 16, 2021, the Office of Inspector General "OIG" received a 311 complaint alleging that Senior Affairs and Solid Waste Employees arrive at the Senior Center each morning, during business hours, to eat breakfast. Upon receiving this complaint, the OIG determined that the allegations did rise to the level of potential fraud, waste or abuse, initiated a case and began a fact-finding investigation.

Pursuant to City Ordinance 2-17-2, the Inspector General's goals are to: (1) Conduct investigations in an efficient, impartial, equitable and objective manner; (2) Prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse in city activities including all city contracts and partnerships; (3) Deter criminal activity through independence in fact and appearance, investigation and interdiction; and (4) Propose ways to increase the city's legal, fiscal and ethical accountability to insure that tax payers' dollars are spent in a manner consistent with the highest standards of local governments.

While conducting our fact-finding investigation, the OIG Investigator visited the Senior Center at Bear Canyon Road on four (4) occasions. Each time, there were no COA vehicles identified in the parking lot. On one (1) of the occasions, the OIG entered the Center and stayed through breakfast to observe the operations and to determine if there were COA employees eating breakfast. The OIG investigator informally engaged with Center staff and citizens to learn about the meals and services offered and to whom the Center offers.

Citizens did indicate that occasionally they see COA employees eating at the Center but that this is not a regular occurrence. Center staff stated that COA employees are

permitted to eat meals at the Center if they meet certain criteria, which includes age requirements and at some centers they must have the annual membership to access any meal services. Center staff spoken to were not aware of COA staff who consistently attend the Center for breakfast or lunch. Center staff assisted the OIG in understanding the processes related to citizens purchasing meals and how that was accounted for in the computer system. Center staff indicated that it was rare to see City of Albuquerque employees partaking in the Center's services.

The OIG also spoke to the Director of Senior Affairs who confirmed that COA employees may eat at the Center on their allotted breaks if they have the annual membership card. It was indicated that this does in fact occur.

The Center's Director and Manager forwarded a computerized print out from the register of all meals purchased for the month of September. The OIG reviewed the purchases during breakfast hours in an attempt to identify COA employees that are members who consistently visit the Center. Our procedures did not yield a pattern of consistent use by City employees and we were unable to identify meals provided without a membership.

Additionally, the GPS for the City of Albuquerque vehicle identified in the complaint was investigated and it was found that this vehicle had no GPS data for twenty-two (22) days in September and that the vehicle's GPS did not reflect this vehicle at the Bear Canyon Road location during the remaining operational days in September.

The Senior Affairs vehicle referenced in the initial report is utilized for delivering meals so it would not be unusual for it to be at the Center. Documentation from the vehicle's GPS was reviewed and reflected that it was at various locations during the period alleged in the complaint.

Based on the information obtained during our fact-finding investigation, the allegations in the complaint appear to be unfounded and as such this case is being closed.