

MINUTES

HOUSING AUTHORITY of AVON PARK

**North Central Heights Community Building
709 Juneberry Street, Avon Park, Florida 33825**

Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2025

Meeting was called to order by Crystal Bryant, Board Chair @ 6p.m

PRESENT:

Crystal Bryant, Chair

Louis Bates, Sr., Vice-Chair

Lisa Pough, Board member

Padrika Sheppard, Board member

Clifford Godfrey

Maria Sutherland, Interim CEO

City Council Liaison Berniece Taylor

City Council Liaison Shelley Mercure

ABSENT: Brenda Gray, new Board Member (excused)

A. Call to Order by Chair Crystal Bryant at 6PM

B. Invocation by Member Clifford Godfrey

C. Chair Crystal Bryant welcomed two new Board Members- Clifford Godfrey and Brenda Gray. Member Godfrey provided a brief history of his professional expertise in law enforcement, municipal experience and maintenance expertise for developments. Brenda Gray called in advance of the meeting expressing her unavailability to attend based on a prior commitment.

D. Consent Agenda:

Motion by Member Sheppard to approve the Consent Agenda/ Minutes from October 21, 2025. Second by Vice-Chair Bates. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Interim CEO explained the agenda item "IDX incident Response Services". The report explained the cost breakdown of the services to be rendered for the social security number breach that affected approximately 86 residents. IDX will provide "turn-key" services for two years from mailing letters, monitoring responses and a toll-free number for the individuals affected. Interim CEO Sutherland will notify the individuals affected with a "heads-up" letter with APHA contact info prior to IDX work.

Motion by Chair Bryant to contract with IDX for \$1119 for their services. Second by Member Sheppard. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Discussion of employee 2026 payroll, raises, bonus and medical insurance.

Sutherland provided information on the increased medical premiums for 2026. The amount totals \$145,904.16 and is based on age related census. The premiums will increase year by year. Sutherland proposed a monthly \$700 "Super Stipend" to each employee so they could purchase their healthcare insurance on the Healthcare Marketplace or self-direct to a private agent. The reduction/savings in medical insurance premium costs with the Super Stipend is approximately \$53,504. The savings were suggested to be used for employee raises of \$1 for FY 2026 with an additional .50 merit raise after individual evaluations in July 2026. The increase in payroll would still yield a reduction in medical liability affording savings to the general account that can be used to pay down highest interest loans. Bonus payments going forward will have a cap of \$2500 for all employees including the CEO position for current and future years and will be factored by specific number of either 40 or 60 hours x hourly rate, plus number of months employed at \$8.33 per month. When available, this computation holds an equitable distribution of bonus funding. Also, the long-term and short-term disability, vision and dental coverage will be eliminated from employer benefits and replaced with higher Whole Life, ADD and newly formed MeMD which is a web-based telemedicine for the employees and their family. This service provides mental health and urgent care with ability for prescriptions provided by physicians and other medical professionals through Aflac.

Motion by Chair Bryant to accept the FY2026 option "19" as referenced on the spreadsheet matrix with proposed increases:

- **\$1 per hour pay per employee starting January 1, 2026;**
- **a max merit raise for employees of .50 cents per hour at mid-year after performance evaluations;**
- **a onetime bonus for FY2026 of 60hrs regular pay plus \$8.33 per month of employment with max \$2500**
- **a \$700 monthly Medical Super Stipend.**

Motion seconded by Member Sheppard. Motion carried unanimously.

After discussion of unknown computations that yielded seemingly arbitrary bonus payments- Interim Sutherland expressed a new methodology that is mathematically based. The new amounts provided for 2025 & 2026 were still less than 2024 bonus payouts and were discussed with two options for Board consideration. Either choice would still be below previous 2024 bonus amounts.

- 1.) 60hrs x current rate of pay plus \$8.33 per month of employment for each employee which includes a cap of \$2500 or,
- 2.) 40hrs x current rate of pay plus \$8.33 per month of employment for each employee which includes a cap of \$2500.

Motion by Vice-Chair Bates to approve the 60hr x rate plus 8.33 per month for 2025. Motion failed for lack of a Second.

Motion by Chair Bryant to accept the 40hr x rate of pay plus \$8.33 per months of employment for 2025.
Second by Member Pough. Motion carried unanimously.

G. Other discussion focused on Ethics training. Pending availability- the APHA attorney's presence will be requested.

H. Adjourned 9:18 PM

ATTEST:  _____

DATE RECORDED 11/18/2025

Maria Sutherland, Interim CEO

APPROVED _____

DATE APPROVED _____

Crystal Bryant, Chair

SEAL