

Housing Authority of Avon Park  
And  
Avon Park Housing Development Corporation  
North Central Heights Community Building  
March 17, 2026, 6:00 PM

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

- 1. Invocation, Roll Call by Secretary
- 2. Public Comments
- 3. Consent Agenda--
  - A. Approval of Minutes: 1/20/2026 ..... 2-3
- 4. ALPI- introduction
- 5. Winter Haven Housing Authority report (report pending)
  - A. Deliverable/framework from agreement..... 4-5
- 6. Darrow Everett, LLP attorney firm contract renewal..... 6-10
- 7. New Business ..... 11
  - A. OCAF
  - B. 5-year plan x 2
  - C. Miscellaneous reports ..... 12
    - A. audit
- 8. Old Business
  - A. IDX/Social security incident report
- 9. Commissioner comments
- 10. Adjournment

**Next Meeting: Regular Tuesday, April 21, 2026**

*Any person who might wish to appeal any decision made by the Avon Park Housing Authority, in public hearing or meeting, is hereby advised that he/she will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which will include the testimony and evidence upon which such an appeal is to be based. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act and Section 286.26 Florida Statutes, any person with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting should call the Housing Authority offices five days prior to the meeting.*

## MINUTES

**HOUSING AUTHORITY of AVON PARK**  
 North Central Heights Community Building  
 709 Juneberry Street, Avon Park, Florida 33825  
**Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2026**

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

**PRESENT:**

Crystal Bryant, Chair

Clifford Godfrey, Board Member

Lisa Pough, Board member

Louis Bates, Sr., Vice-Chair

Padrika Sheppard, Board member

Maria Sutherland, E.D.

City Council Liaison Berniece Taylor

**ABSENT:**

Brenda Gray, Board Member

City Council Liaison Shelly Mercure

- A.** Call to Order by Chair Crystal Bryant at 6PM
- B.** Invocation by Vice-Chair Bates
- C.** **Motion by Member Bates to approve Minutes of 1/16/2025. Second by Member Padrika Sheppard. Motion carried unanimously.**
- D.** Comments regarding request report from Winter Haven Housing Authority-
  - a. Chair Brynat suggested a written report from Winter Haven would be helpful in gauging staff training progress and benchmarks on ED Sutherland. She stated an in-person report would be preferable.
- E.** M Sutherland suggested the APHA Audit be performed by the same audit accounting firm as prior year in order to keep a level of historic continuity. The RFP- Audit Services for Alachua County Housing Authority dated October 2024 from Malcolm Johnson for Alachua County was discussed. Our procurement policy allows for piggy-backing from other agencies seeking the same work.
  - a. **Motion by Chair Bryant to approve to piggy-back off the Alachua County Housing Authority RFP for audit services from October 2024. Second by Member Pough. Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **Motion by Member Pough to approve the Malcom-Johnson agreement for audit services for a three year term and cost of \$22,560. Second by Chair Bryant. Motion carried unanimously.**

**F. Discussion:**

- a. The Board discussed the homeless priority listing and confusion regarding wait list. M Sutherland will speak to staff regarding remedies to flaws in the process of selection and information to the applicants.
- b. M Sutherland met with ALPI staff with very favorable discussion in finding common service amongst residents. It was suggested they be invited to participate with the APHA in giving outlook of their program and how the APHA residents can be assisted in their programs.
- c. A Small Cities Housing CDBG grant was discussed as to funding 100% repairs to one of our communities. Staff has reached out to the same consultants who work for the City of Avon Park and further discussions are needed as to the state allowing rentals to participate in the grant program. Potentially, the APHA could benefit from \$750,000 in funds that are not loaned or matched.
- d. Questions from Vice-Chair Bates regarding the washer and dryers- Do we really need to monitor someone else’s assets and whether it is feasible for the APHA to have its own equipment.

**G. Adjourned 7:47 PM**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Sutherland

DATE RECORDED 2/17/2026

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_  
Crystal Bryant, Chair

DATE APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBIT A

### Winter Haven Housing Authority Professional Services Agreement DELIVERABLES & REPORTING FRAMEWORK

This Exhibit is intended to demonstrate accountability, HUD compliance support, and board-level transparency. Deliverables are advisory in nature and do not transfer operational responsibility from APHA (Avon Park Housing Authority).

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#### A. Monthly Executive & Leadership Support Deliverables

- Monthly advisory meetings (in-person or virtual) with the Interim Executive Director
- Ongoing consultation regarding:
  - HUD policies and regulatory requirements
  - Leadership decision-making during transition
- Identification of compliance risks or operational concerns requiring attention

##### Reporting:

- Monthly summary email or memo documenting topics addressed and key recommendations

#### B. Fiscal & Business Operations Deliverables

- Guidance to APHA Accounts Payable, HR, and Business Operations staff during fiscal year-end
- Support for:
  - Annual audit preparation
  - Internal controls and documentation
  - Monthly coordination with fee accounting firm
- Review of financial workflows and compliance readiness

##### Reporting:

- Monthly checklist-style update identifying completed, pending, or at-risk items related to fiscal operations
- 

#### C. Housing Operations & HUD Compliance Deliverables

- Review and guidance to Property Managers on:
  - Rent collection compliance
  - Move-in and leasing processes
  - Annual and interim recertifications
- Oversight support for:
  - TRACS submissions
  - Timely and accurate HAP reimbursement requests

**Reporting:**

- Monthly operational compliance snapshot noting:
    - TRACS status
    - Recertification timeliness
    - Identified corrective actions, if any
- 

**D. Waiting List & Intake Compliance Deliverables**

- Review of waiting list management practices
- Guidance to ensure compliance with HUD selection and intake requirements
- Recommendations to correct or strengthen documentation and procedures

**Reporting:**

- Periodic written recommendations as issues are identified
- 

**E. Organizational Review & Process Improvement Deliverables**

- Review of existing processes across departments
- Review and recommendations related to job descriptions and role alignment
- Identification of opportunities to improve efficiency and accountability

**Reporting:**

- Written recommendations provided as needed; not necessarily monthly
- 

**F. Maintenance Operations Support Deliverables**

- Advisory support to improve maintenance operations and workflow
- When necessary, deployment of WHHA maintenance management advisors to:
  - Assess operations
  - Review repair and work order processes
  - Recommend improvements

**Reporting:**

- Written assessment summary following any maintenance advisory engagement
- 

**G. Board-Level Reporting**

At the request of APHA leadership or the Board:

- Quarterly high-level status update summarizing:
  - Progress toward stabilization goals
  - Key accomplishments
  - Remaining risks or needs

## Maria Sutherland

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**From:** DarrowEverett LLP <deupdates@darroweverett.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 26, 2026 12:30 PM  
**To:** Maria Sutherland  
**Subject:** Important Update: Saxon | Gilmore Team Joins DarrowEverett LLP



Dear Saxon | Gilmore Clients and Colleagues,

We are pleased to share an important update regarding the future of the Saxon | Gilmore practice. As of today, Jan. 26, the attorneys and staff of Saxon | Gilmore have joined DarrowEverett LLP, a full-service national law firm whose commitment to quality and timely client service aligns directly with our own. This transition marks an exciting next chapter for our team—and, most importantly, for you. By integrating with DarrowEverett, we are expanding the depth and breadth of services available to you while preserving the relationships, experience, and continuity you rely on.

### What This Means for You

- **Our current attorneys remain your team.** You will continue working with the same professionals you know and trust, but now under the DarrowEverett name.

- **Office and phone number remain the same.** Those who visit our office in downtown Tampa can continue to do so, and our office phone number won't change either. You still can reach us at (813) 314-4500.
- **Expanded capabilities.** DarrowEverett offers additional strength in corporate law, commercial real estate, finance, litigation, and private client services—capabilities that complement our longstanding work in public and affordable housing, community development, and public finance.
- **More resources, same personalized attention.** With added support, a larger platform, and a wider geographic footprint, we can serve you more efficiently and comprehensively.

"Joining DarrowEverett represents an exciting new chapter for our team and our clients," said Saxon | Gilmore co-founder and Partner Ricardo L. Gilmore. "DarrowEverett's reputation for excellence and its forward-thinking approach to the delivery of legal services made this an ideal opportunity. We look forward to expanding the resources and capabilities available to the clients we serve."

### We're Here to Make This Seamless

If you have any questions about this transition or how it may benefit you, please reach out to any member of the Saxon | Gilmore team. We are grateful for your trust and look forward to continuing our work together as part of DarrowEverett LLP.

Warm regards,  
**The Saxon | Gilmore Team**  
 Now part of **DarrowEverett LLP**




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**SAXON | GILMORE**

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January 21, 2026

VIA EMAIL ONLY**Re: LEGAL REPRESENTATION**

Hello,

As of January 26, 2026, Saxon Gilmore & Carraway, P.A. ("Saxon|Gilmore") has initiated the closing of its practice and its attorneys and employees have joined DarrowEverett LLP ("DarrowEverett"). You have the right to decide who will represent you going forward. We will not transfer your file or any confidential information to DarrowEverett unless you authorize us to do so.

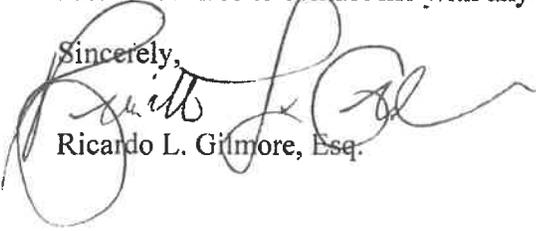
As a client of Saxon|Gilmore, this letter is to provide you the opportunity to elect to have your file(s): (a) transferred with your current attorney to DarrowEverett; or (b) transferred to you and you may select a new attorney unrelated to either Saxon|Gilmore or DarrowEverett. Please indicate your decision below and return a signed copy. If we do not hear from you by January 26, 2026, the attorney who primarily worked on your matter will securely maintain your file and any trust funds until we receive your instructions or as permitted by applicable rules.

If you request the transition of your matter from Saxon|Gilmore or to DarrowEverett there is no disadvantage to you, the client. Irrespective of your choice, you remain responsible for any fees and costs already incurred. Any fees or costs may be deducted from any trust fund balance held by Saxon|Gilmore. If you choose to have your file transferred to you, any remaining balance held by Saxon|Gilmore after deducting fees and costs already incurred will be transferred along with your file. If you elect to continue with your current attorney at DarrowEverett, the firm will complete a conflict check and address any required conflict waiver with you before transfer. We will continue to protect your interests and meet any deadlines during this transition.

Please indicate your decision below and return an executed copy of this letter to the e-mail address above, so that continuity in your representation is assured.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at (813) 314-4500.

Sincerely,

  
Ricardo L. Gilmore, Esq.

January 21, 2026  
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\_\_\_\_\_ I wish for my current attorney to continue to represent me at DarrowEverett. Please transfer my file and any remaining trust funds to DarrowEverett.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to receive my file and select a new attorney unrelated to Saxon|Gilmore or DarrowEverett.

\_\_\_\_\_ Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date



# SAXON | GILMORE

SAXON GILMORE & CARRAWAY, P.A.

*Attorneys and Counselors at Law*

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## Avon Park Housing Authority

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New rates effective February 1, 2024:

### General Services/evictions:

Sr. Partner	\$300.00
Partner	\$300.00
Associate	\$300.00
Paralegal	\$150.00

### Development, litigation, etc:

Sr. Partner	\$310.00
Partner	\$310.00
Associate	\$300.00
Paralegal	\$160.00

## **UPCOMING PROJECTS:**

- 1. OCAF** (Operating Cost Adjustment Factors) is a factor that is established by HUD each year in the federal register and is applied to the existing contract rent (less the portion of the rent that is paid for debt service). OCAF Values are determined by HUD annually and are published in the Federal Register.

### **What is the purpose of OCAF?**

The OCAF for any given year determines how much the subsidy HUD provides increases annually and at renewal for properties with project-based Section 8.

OCAFs are particularly important for any public housing authority that has converted units under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). OCAFs are used to increase rents annually in Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) properties to keep pace with rising operating costs.

APHA converted to RAD for Lakeside Park ( I & II) and Delaney as part of the 5-year plan instituted in 2015 to enable borrowing against its properties to address capital needs/ rehabilitation.

- Lakeside I OCAF rent adjustments from 2020-2025 including baseline Utility Analysis for 2025 for 16 units
- Lakeside II OCAF rent adjustments from 2018-2025 including baseline Utility Analysis for 2025 for 63 units
- Project time: 4 months
- The energy consumption on an individual scale is needed in order to proceed with a required new utility allowance that fits the OCAF worksheet. Staff is to visit with residents to obtain detailed energy use for the analysis.

**2.** 5-Year Plan 2020 plus annual plan

**3.** 5-Year Plan 2025 plus annual plan

**AVON PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY  
PROGRAM STATS**

	2025	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	
Current assisted families															
Delaney Heights--50x12=600	46	45	48	48	47	47	47	48	48	48	49	49	50	573	96%
Lakeside Park I--16x12=192	13	16	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	183	95%
Lakeside Park II--63x12=756	59	57	58	58	58	59	59	61	59	59	58	58	59	703	93%
Ridgedale 36x12=432	24	27	28	28	29	30	30	30	31	33	33	33	33	359	83%
NCH I 40x12=480	37	36	38	38	39	39	39	37	36	35	35	36	35	441	92%
NCH II--32x12=384	29	28	27	27	26	26	26	27	27	27	27	27	26	324	84%
Cornell--44x12=528	42	43	42	42	41	39	39	37	38	39	40	39	40	482	91%
														3065	

	2024	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	
Current assisted families															
Delaney Heights--50x12=600	49	48	49	49	50	47	47	47	47	47	47	46	46	572	95%
Lakeside Park I--16x12=192	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	13	13	9	9	9	151	79%
Lakeside Park II--63x12=756	57	55	52	52	52	53	55	55	57	57	58	56	56	660	87%
Ridgedale 36x12=432	17	19	22	23	25	23	24	24	23	24	26	25	25	276	64%
NCH I 40x12=480	38	38	37	35	36	35	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	435	91%
NCH II--32x12=384	26	26	29	30	31	31	31	31	29	30	30	28	28	349	91%
Cornell--44x12=528	39	38	36	35	38	36	40	40	39	39	40	41	41	462	88%
														2905	