Posted 10/16/26

Housing Authority of Avon Park
And
Avon Park Housing Development Corporation
Cornell Colony Community Building
October 20, 2026, 6:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. **Invocation, Roll Call by Secretary**
2. **Public Comments**
3. **Consent Agenda** .....
   - **A. Approval of Minutes: 9/15/2026** **2-3**
4. **Maria Sutherland Evaluation** **4-23**
5. **Adjournment**

Next Meeting: Tuesday November 17 @6pm

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
Cornell Colony
709 Juneberry Street, Avon Park, Florida 33825
Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2026

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

PRESENT:

Crystal Bryant, Chair
Brenda Gray, Board Member
Padrika Sheppard, Board Member (arriving at 6:06)
Louis Bates, Sr., Vice-Chair
Lilly Hilton, Board Member
Lisa Pough, Board Member (arrived 7:10pm)

Maria Sutherland, E.D.
City Council Liaison Berniece Taylor

A. Call to Order by Chair Crystal Bryant at 6:00 PM

B. Invocation by Board Member Hilton.

C. Public Comment: No public comments

Minutes of August 25, 2026. **Motion to approve By Member Gray-Snell with correction that Member Gray-Snell was absent from August 25th meeting and that the meeting began at 6:06PM. Seconded by Member Sheppard. Motion carried unanimously.**

Board discussed an Ethics training day and after carving out dates in November decided on November 14 from 8am-12noon for the 4-hour course to be presented by Atty Mike Durham in the amount not to exceed $800 for the entire course. **Moton by Member Gray and Seconded by Chair Bryant. Motion carried unanimously**

Sutherland discussed the upcoming budget as it relates to the grounds/mowing contract and whether it is better to go "To Bid" for an RFP with a more robust specified work schedule or hire new staff. Current mowing contract is $8,045 per month (total yearly $96,540). Facilities Director Dan Whitlock briefly discussed operational needs and potential pitfall for either method. Board agreed hiring two staff people over a period of time while APHA acquires equipment while coinciding with weather would be appropriate. **Motion by Chair Bryant to hire two-part staff to maintain the APHA grounds beginning Jan 2027. Second by Member Sheppard. Motion carried unanimously.**

Sutherland discussed to go to bid for a contract for legal representation. **Motion by Member Snell; Second by Vice-chair Bates. Motion carries unanimously.**

Board requested insurance documentation from the Veterans group who use the Delaney Heights Club House.

Sutherland evaluation was rescheduled for next meeting (October 20, 2026)

D. Meeting adjourned 8:00 PM

ATTEST: _____ DATE RECORDED September 15, 2026
Maria Sutherland

APPROVED _____ DATE APPROVED _____
Crystal Bryant, Chair

AGENDA ITEM #4

Avon Park Housing Authority
October 20, 2026
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

RE: Maria Sutherland Evaluation

The Board was provided with an evaluation for Maria Sutherland.

Copy of 5 (five) evaluations received to date are attached.

SUGGESTED MOTION: **Board discretion**

	score matrix	max points	RESULTS	AVG SCORE
Substantially below expectations	1	39		
Below Expectations	2	78		
Meets expectations	3	117		
Exceeds expectations	4	156		
Substantially exceeds expectations	5	195		

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Evaluation Checklist

This form may be used by each member of the Board of Commissioners to evaluate the Executive Director's performance in fulfilling each role she plays in the Housing Authority. The Executive Director is rated 1 through 5, with the following scale:

1	=	Substantially Below Expectations
2	=	Below Expectations
3	=	Meets Expectations
4	=	Exceeds Expectations
5	=	Substantially Exceeds Expectations

Each member of the Board should assign scores and present their results at the designated meeting. The forms and any accompanying summary should then be presented to the Executive Director's permanent file.

1. **Personal**

4 Invests sufficient effort toward being diligent and thorough in the discharge of duties.

4 Composure, appearance, and attitude fitting for an individual in this executive position.

8

2. **Professional Skills and Status**

4 Knowledgeable of current developments affecting the management field.

4 Respected in management position.

4 Has a capacity for innovation.

3 Anticipates problems and develops effective approaches for solving them.

3 Willing to try new ideas proposed by the Board or staff.

18

26

3. **Relations with the Board of Commissioners**

4 Carries out directives of the Board as a whole rather than those of any one Board member.

4 Assists the Board in resolving problems at the administrative level to avoid unnecessary Board action.

4 Assists the Board in establishing policy while acknowledging the ultimate authority of the Board.

4 Responds to requests for information or assistance by the Board.

5 Informs the Board of administrative developments.

3 Receptive to constructive criticism and advice.

24

4. **Policy Execution**

4 Implements Board action in accordance with the intent of the Board.

4 Supports the actions of the Board after a decision has been reached.

4 Enforces Board policies.

3 Understands Housing Authority regulations and policies.

3 Reviews enforcement procedures periodically to improve effectiveness.

18

5. **Reporting**

5 Provides the Board with reports concerning matters of importance to the APHA.

4 Reports are accurate and comprehensive.

5 Reports are generally produced through own initiative rather than when requested by the Board.

4 Prepares a sound agenda which prevents trivial administrative matters from being reviewed by the Board.

18

60

6. **Citizen Relations**

3 Accommodates complaints from citizens.

3 Dedicated to the community and to its citizens.

4 Has the capacity to listen to others and to recognize their interests. Works well with others.

3 Willing to meet with members of the community and discuss their real concerns.

3 Cooperates with neighboring communities.

4 Cooperates with the city, state and federal governments.

20

7. **Staffing**

2 Recruits and retains competent personnel for APHA positions.

3 Aware of weak or inefficient personnel and works to improve their performance.

5 Accurately informed and concerned about employee insurance, fringe benefits, promotions, and pensions.

10

8. **Supervision**

3 Encourages staff to make decisions within their own jurisdictions without Executive Director's approval, yet maintains general control of administrative operations.

3 Instills confidence and initiative in subordinates and emphasizes support rather than restrictive controls for their programs.

3 Has developed a friendly and informal relationship with the work force as a whole, yet maintains the dignity of the Executive Director's office.

3 Evaluates personnel periodically and points out staff weaknesses and strengths.

12

42

9. **Fiscal Management**

4 Prepares a balanced budget to provide services at a level intended by the Board.

4 Makes the best possible use of available funds, conscious of the need to operate the APHA efficiently and effectively.

4 Prepared budget is in an intelligible format.

5 Reports the APHA financial position on a regular basis.

17

10. **What have been the finest accomplishments of the Executive Director's this past year?** Maria's persistence to navigate the challenges that were and are still ahead has been a great accomplishment to witness. Your willingness to persevere is what the HA needs.

11. **What areas need the most improvement? Why? What constructive, positive ideas can you offer the Executive Director to improve these areas?** Some ideas that might strengthen what you're already doing is improving your relationship with the residents so they can trust your open door policy. Reinforce the commissioner training, improve the website, offer staff appreciations/incentives. This is a trauma informed approach.

Crystal Bryant
Signature

9/9/26
Date

Signature

Date

145

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5	=	Substantially Exceeds Expectations

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1. **Personal**

4 Invests sufficient effort toward being diligent and thorough in the discharge of duties.

4 Composure, appearance, and attitude fitting for an individual in this executive position.

8

2. **Professional Skills and Status**

4 Knowledgeable of current developments affecting the management field.

5 Respected in management position.

4 Has a capacity for innovation.

5 Anticipates problems and develops effective approaches for solving them.

3 Willing to try new ideas proposed by the Board or staff.

21

29

3. **Relations with the Board of Commissioners**

4	Carries out directives of the Board as a whole rather than those of any one Board member.
3	Assists the Board in resolving problems at the administrative level to avoid unnecessary Board action.
4	Assists the Board in establishing policy while acknowledging the ultimate authority of the Board.
4	Responds to requests for information or assistance by the Board.
3	Informs the Board of administrative developments.
4	Receptive to constructive criticism and advice.

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4. **Policy Execution**

4	Implements Board action in accordance with the intent of the Board.
5	Supports the actions of the Board after a decision has been reached.
4	Enforces Board policies.
5	Understands Housing Authority regulations and policies.
4	Reviews enforcement procedures periodically to improve effectiveness.

22

5. **Reporting**

5	Provides the Board with reports concerning matters of importance to the APHA.
4	Reports are accurate and comprehensive.
4	Reports are generally produced through own initiative rather than when requested by the Board.
3	Prepares a sound agenda which prevents trivial administrative matters from being reviewed by the Board.

16

61

6. **Citizen Relations**

4 Accommodates complaints from citizens.

5 Dedicated to the community and to its citizens.

5 Has the capacity to listen to others and to recognize their interests. Works well with others.

4 Willing to meet with members of the community and discuss their real concerns.

4 Cooperates with neighboring communities.

4 Cooperates with the city, state and federal governments.

26

7. **Staffing**

3 Recruits and retains competent personnel for APHA positions.

3 Aware of weak or inefficient personnel and works to improve their performance.

4 Accurately informed and concerned about employee insurance, fringe benefits, promotions, and pensions.

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8. **Supervision**

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9. **Fiscal Management**

3 Prepares a balanced budget to provide services at a level intended by the Board.

4 Makes the best possible use of available funds, conscious of the need to operate the APHA efficiently and effectively. 17

4 Prepared budget is in an intelligible format.

4 Reports the APHA financial position on a regular basis.

10. **What have been the finest accomplishments of the Executive Director's this past year?**

11. **What areas need the most improvement? Why? What constructive, positive ideas can you offer the Executive Director to improve these areas?**

17

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

155

#10

The organization face an experience a knowledge drain or institutional memory Loss. which cause the program to slow down. also the organization experience operational error, and perhaps temporary undocumented, information knowledge that was critical to daily operation ect. Ms Sutherland has develope knowledge and strategic and # a constructive - plan to better the situation - at hand.

11 (A) How to Involving the Community more effective.

(D) Example:

Community cleanup Day-team - Community Bake/sale ect
food bank - drive - youth Tutoring - Care package ect

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1. **Personal**

3 Invests sufficient effort toward being diligent and thorough in the discharge of duties.

4 Composure, appearance, and attitude fitting for an individual in this executive position.

7

2. **Professional Skills and Status**

3 Knowledgeable of current developments affecting the management field.

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4 Reports are accurate and comprehensive.

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6. **Citizen Relations**

3 Accommodates complaints from citizens.

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7. **Staffing**

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10. **What have been the finest accomplishments of the Executive Director's this past year?**

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Signature

9/20/2024
Date

Signature

Date

130

Score 136

8/25/2026

Scoring for Maria Sutherland, Executive Director – Avon Park Housing Authority

Evaluation Area 3	Score	Comments
1. Personal	**4.0**	Demonstrates professionalism, diligence, and an appropriate executive demeanor in carrying out assigned responsibilities.
2. Professional Skills & Status	**3.5**	Demonstrates strong knowledge of the organization and management responsibilities. Shows good judgment in addressing problems and remains receptive to new approaches and ideas.
3. Relations with Board of Commissioners	**3.8**	Maintains a professional working relationship with the Board, responds to requests for information, and works to carry out the direction of the Board as a whole.
4. Policy Execution	**3.0**	Effectively implements Board actions and organizational policies and demonstrates an understanding of applicable Housing Authority policies and requirements.
5. Reporting	**3.8**	Provides the Board with useful information and reports. Continued emphasis on timely, comprehensive reporting and keeping the Board informed proactively would further strengthen performance.
6. Citizen Relations	**4.2**	Demonstrates commitment to the community and willingness to listen and respond to concerns. Maintains productive relationships with citizens and governmental/community partners.
7. Staffing	**3.8**	Demonstrates appropriate oversight of personnel and staffing matters. Continued attention to employee development, performance accountability, and retention would be beneficial.
8. Supervision	**3.0**	Provides appropriate leadership to staff and encourages employees to perform their responsibilities while maintaining overall administrative oversight.
9. Fiscal Management	**4.0**	Demonstrates responsible fiscal oversight, including attention to budgeting, available resources, and regular financial reporting to the Board.

33.1

Overall Average Score: 3.67

Question 10 – Finest Accomplishments:

Ms. Sutherland has demonstrated consistent leadership in managing the Housing Authority's operations, maintaining relationships with the Board, staff, residents, community partners, and governmental entities, and overseeing the organization's administrative and fiscal responsibilities. Her ability to manage multiple responsibilities while maintaining the day-to-day operations of the Authority is recognized and appreciated.

Question 11 – Areas Needing Improvement:

Continue strengthening communication and proactive reporting to the Board, particularly regarding significant administrative, personnel, financial, and operational matters. Continued emphasis should also be placed on staff development, accountability, succession planning, and identifying opportunities to improve organizational efficiency.

Brenda Gray

Brenda Gray, Board Member

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10. **What have been the finest accomplishments of the Executive Director's this past year?**

11. **What areas need the most improvement? Why? What constructive, positive ideas can you offer the Executive Director to improve these areas?**

Padrika Sheppard
Signature **Signature**

8-28-2026
Date **Date**