

**Hernando County
Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
20 North Main St., Room 160
Brooksville, FL 34601**

Meeting Date: October 9, 2025

Members Present: 8 – Jerry Campbell, Kelly Long, Charles Wilson, Yvonne Woods, Whitney Dinu, and Lashaundra Ellison

Members Absent: 1 –Terry Beverly, Joseph Pastore, Beth Powanda

Staff Present: Veda Ramirez, Velvet Burris, and Erin Gleason

Guests Present: None.

Call to Order: Ms. Long called the meeting to order at 10:00am

Roll Call: As evidenced by the sign in sheet and the verbal roll call, a quorum was met with six (6) members present.

Public Comment: Ms. Reynolds introduced herself as a 45-yr resident of Florida, who is here to listen and would like to see more residents of Hernando County in attendance. Mr. Campbell thanked her for attending, stating public input is valuable as we serve at the will of the people.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Long requested approval of the minutes for the September 2025 meeting. Ms. Long moved to approve, and Mr. Wilson and Ms. Dinu seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business: Ms. Ramirez advised the 21/22 annual report was submitted to the BOCC and and t to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation and was approved by both. Our office is moving forward with closing out 22/23 in the next coming months. Our office has 3 years to complete each fiscal year's funds issued.

Ms. Ramirez informed the group that we followed up with Hernando County Planning Department regarding the number of expedited applications processed and they stated their system is not set up that way, however they are working with a consultant for their new system to try and include that function.

Ms. Ramirez also conveyed to the committee information regarding Hernando County being categorized with Tampa Bay/St. Pete MSA. Ms. Ramirez was forwarded to everyone by email. The US Office of Management & Budget determines Hernando County residents are commuting to Tampa/St. Pete area which categorizes Hernando County into their MSA.

Ms. Burris stated the incentive strategy report is being brought to the next AHAC meeting in November for their review and approval. It has been drafted, and it is going to the BOCC in December, then it will

go to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation before the end of the year. Ms. Ramirez advised there would be a notice provided to the public as well for public comment.

New Business: Ms. Burris updated the committee with the following update on SHIP program. There have been 3 closings for Down Payment Assistance in September, the 22/23 remaining amount of SHIP funds is fully encumbered, and there are several emergency repairs and owner-occupied rehabilitation projects happening and underway. HHS accepts all applications for all SHIP strategies. 4 projects for Owner-Occupied Rehab are wrapping up, and 13 are pending bid submittals/award. Additionally, our office funded one project in September with You Thrive through our non-profit construction strategy on a property they are building on Melbourne Street. Mr. Wilson asked if the next cycle is 25/26 – Ms. Ramirez stated we are moving forward with and using 23/24 next, but 25/26 funding is provided in increments and used as needed.

Ms. Ramirez conveyed that the SHIP program has helped a lot of clients and local businesses. Down Payment Assistance has gone from about 2-3 to 3-5 each month and rehabilitation has increased by nearly 90 percent because barely any was being performed. We are always accepting new contractors and our contractor application is on our website. Mr. Campbell asked about who “vets” the contractors we select. Ms. Ramirez confirmed our office selects the contractors provided they are aligned with the County and County’s procurement procedures. The homeowner does provide estimates to our office, but our office will select the contractor out of the estimates provided by the homeowner. If a person does not have a contractor or knows of one, then our office will assist in providing a list of contractors to them to obtain estimates needed.

Ms. Ramirez advised our office does review and address complaints and grievances we receive through our programs. We have a procedure in place for complaints and grievances. We have been able to rectify the complaints and grievances between the homeowner and contractor. Additionally, the homeowner signs an agreement with the contractor, and the contractor provides a warranty on the work performed. Ms. Dinu confirmed if the complaints and grievances for the SHIP program and the complaints and grievances towards the contractor utilize the same procedure, and Ms. Ramirez confirmed yes.

Ms. Ramirez stated our office does review and address conflicts of interest. At this time, there has not been a concern for conflicts of interest, however, Ms. Ramirez does have an employee (Tomika Harris) who works in the Health & Human Services Department that has applied for a housing strategy under the SHIP program which falls under Ms. Ramirez’s department. Ms. Ramirez stated Ms. Harris applied for the program prior to being hired with the County, and she does not have any affiliation with the approval process of the SHIP Program other than referring clients to program. Mr. Campbell confirmed if Ms. Ramirez is requesting any special accommodation. Ms. Ramirez stated we are only advising the committee of the situation as it may be perceived as a conflict of interest, but we also like confirmation from the committee to move forward with assistance. The committee confirmed and recommended assisting staff through the program.

Ms. Woods requested if there is a program at this time for non-profits and churches disaster recovery such as flooring and paint. Ms. Burris and Ms. Ramirez elaborated on the program through Florida Commerce that will be opening an application process for the public and non-profit organizations.

Ms. Burris shared information regarding the Hernando County Housing Harvest on Oct. 25th from 11AM – 3PM. Ms. Burris extended the invite to the committee and requested them share the information to others. Mr. Wilson asked about how we are advertising the event, and Ms. Ramirez stated there are Facebook postings, media releases, website, and distribution to apartment complexes sharing with their tenants, vendors, and other notices being put out. Mr. Wilson asked about WWJB, and it was confirmed we will be looking into that type of advertisement. Ms. Dinu asked if we had access to the school system bulletin board system, Peach Jar. Ms. Ramirez stated we will also be reviewing that as an avenue as well.

Ms. Burris and Ms. Ramirez shared information regarding the South Brooksville Block Party taking place Nov. 15th from 9AM – 12PM, in which a housing workshop will be held at the Sheriff's substation. We are advertising this event to the public to educate residents about the particulars of the various housing strategies and programs.

There being no further business, Ms. Long requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn, and Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.