

**ARVAC, INC.**  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
**MINUTES**  
JANUARY 22, 2025  
12 PM  
ARVAC CORPORATE OFFICE

**Call to Order by the President**

Judge Cross called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm

Judge Ben Cross welcomed attendees and announced the 2025 Board Officers: Board President, Judge Ben Cross; Board Vice President, Judge Mark Thone; Board Treasurer, Clayton Caldwell; and Board Secretary, Donna Murphy.

**Welcome New Board Members**

Judge Cross welcomed our new board members, Stacey Daughtry with the Dardanelle Chamber and serving the Low-Income Sector and Brooke Kessinger with Staff-Mark serving the Low-Income Sector

**Prayer/ Pledge of Allegiance**

Dr. Hines led the prayer. Judge Cross led the Pledge of Allegiance

**Roll Call/ Determination of Quorum**

Judge Cross determined that Quorum was MET with nine participants.

Present: Judge Ben Cross, Judge Mark Thone, Dr. Lee Lane, Brooke Kessinger, Stacey Daughtry, Clayton Caldwell, Donna Murphy, Connie Gragg, Dr. Hines

Absent: Judge Rickey Bowman, Mayor Allen Lipsmeyer, Celia Carter, Genita Whiting,  
Guests: Stephanie Garner, Amanda Atkinson, Rashad Woods, Sonia Connerly, Taylor Hampton,

**Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting and Approval**

Connie Gragg motioned to approve the previous meeting minutes. Donna Murphy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Reports of Committees**

*No committee meetings since our last meeting in November 2024*

**Discussion of New Business**

**Finance Report**

Judge Ben Cross noted that this was the best financial report he has seen during his time on the board. Sonia Connerly, Chief Fiscal Officer, reviewed the December 2024 Financial Report, which included an overview of the financials and budget report for ARVAC programs and an update on the transition to in-house billing.

Sonia highlighted that December marked a positive financial month, achieving a profit of \$487,811. Also highlighted is that Pathways 2 Learning (P2L) is now catching up financially, with revenues

starting to offset expenses and contribute to sustainability. The in-house billing system has generated \$82,826 for the month of January alone, with an additional \$3,625 pending for the Families of Friends Helping (FOFH) program. Lake Point pending is \$56,518.

The Board of Directors also discussed the proceeds from the 2024 Denim and Diamonds fundraising event.

Clayton Caldwell motioned to accept the December 2024 Financial and Budget Reports as presented. Judge Mark Thone seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Crisis Intervention/Community Programs Report**

Rashad Woods, Chief Operations Officer of Community Programs, recognized the outstanding efforts of ARVAC volunteers for their invaluable contributions to the Food Bank in Dardanelle. The Crisis Intervention/Community Programs Report provided a comprehensive overview of the outcomes achieved through various initiatives, including the Food Bank, LIHEAP Program, TEFAP, and CSFP. The report also highlighted several success stories and included a heartfelt thank-you note, reflecting the positive impact these programs have on the community.

### **Childcare / P2L Report**

The P2L Report showcased a success story as well as Program outcomes, attendance rates, and enrollment.

### **Lake Point Recovery and Wellness Report**

The Lake Point Recovery and Wellness (LPRW) Program Report featured a 2023/2024 Outcomes Comparison, which demonstrated an increase in client enrollment from 2023 to 2024, as well as improved success and program completion rates.

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### **Human Resources**

Taylor Hampton, Chief People Officer provided the HR and Client Experience Report. The report highlighted recent employee professional development activities, current agency vacancies, upcoming events, and new partnerships. ARVAC currently employs 67 staff members.

### **Compliance Report**

Amanda Atkinson, Chief Compliance Officer, reviewed the 2025 ESG Grant Application. ARVAC is requesting \$789,500 in funding to support emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, homeless prevention, and street outreach programs. Amanda noted that ARVAC has successfully applied for this grant for the past 10 years.

She also highlighted that the ESG Grant is now administered by ADFA. As Stephanie Garner serves on the ADFA Board, both Stephanie and Amanda have met with representatives from HUD and ADFA to ensure compliance with all protocols related to ARVAC's application.

Connie Gragg motioned to approve the ESG Application as presented. Dr. Hines seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Amanda Atkinson presented the 2024 CSBG Discretionary Grant, totaling \$35,518. ARVAC plans to use these funds for staff professional development and computer software updates. Dr. Hines

motioned to approve the 2024 CSBG Discretionary Grant, and Judge Mark Thone seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Amanda also presented the agency's *Conflict of Interest Policy* and *Whistleblower and Complaint Resolution Policy*. It is requested that all Board members review and sign these policies to ensure compliance and transparency.

Connie Gragg highlighted the hospital's upcoming 100-year anniversary and expressed her interest in sharing this milestone with her community, patients, and clients. She requested a summary of the services and programs offered by ARVAC to help raise awareness and showcase the organization's impact.

### **CEO Report**

Stephanie announced a potential conflict of interest due to her position on the ADFA Board while ARVAC is applying for the ESG Grant.

Stephanie thanked the Board for the meal and for their heartfelt condolences following the passing of her grandmother. She then shared touching stories from recent interactions with clients and their family members, highlighting the impact of ARVAC's services on the community.

Dr. Lane also disclosed that she serves on the ADFA Board, acknowledging the importance of these funds across the State and in the River Valley.

### **Freedom House Property**

The contract with realtor Sue Ann Straight is set to expire at the end of this month. The property was listed at \$2.9 million, but no promising offers have been received. Stephanie proposed exploring alternative uses for the property, such as developing multi-family, low-income housing or senior housing. She suggested pursuing grant opportunities through ADFA to support a senior housing project on the land, potentially incorporating HUD vouchers. This development could accommodate 30–40 units, depending on the design and funding. The discussion emphasized utilizing the prime real estate to address critical community needs, with a particular focus on providing affordable housing solutions for seniors.

### **Smith Hospital**

Stephanie shared details about her discussions with the Paris Hospital administrators regarding plans to incorporate a childcare center into the renovations of Smith Hospital.

### **New York Times**

Stephanie shared that the New York Times reached out regarding ARVAC's services and programs, particularly in connection with the Arkansas Advocacy for Children. The discussion focused on Medicaid coverage for pregnant women, highlighting a critical gap—Pregnancy Medicaid currently does not cover drug treatment for pregnant women.

### **Board Retreat and Strategic Plan Review**

Stephanie announced plans to schedule this year's Board Retreat, with Petit Jean Mountain at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute being considered as the venue. During the retreat, the Board will

review and update the Strategic Plan for the next five years. A survey will be sent out to gather input and coordinate scheduling.

**Region IX Conference – October – Hot Springs**

Stephanie announced that she has been selected to lead a pre-conference breakout session on gardening. The conference will also include sessions specifically for Board members. ARVAC will cover the expenses for Board members who wish to attend.

**Medical Detoxification Plans**

ARVAC has received a \$2.1 million grant for the construction of a new medical detoxification facility and the integration of withdrawal management services into the Residential Program. The grant will fund the construction of the medical detox building, renovations to the current admissions area, and the installation of at least two generators for the dorms.

Connie Gragg motioned to approve the updated plans for the new medical detoxification facility as presented. Judge Thone seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**Other Agency Business (if any)**

On behalf of the Dardanelle Chamber of Commerce, Judge Thone expressed gratitude to Taylor Hampton and Rashad Woods for their participation in the Dardanelle Job Fair.

Judge Cross invited Board members to introduce themselves, sharing their backgrounds and locations.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 13, 2025 at noon.

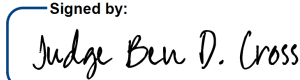
Judge Cross also announced that he completed Chaplain Henry Garner’s annual evaluation and renewal of his 1099 contract in November 2024. He commended Chaplain Henry for the outstanding work he has done over the past two years, noting that his contract has been renewed for another year.

**Adjourn**

Clayton Caldwell motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Judge Mark Thone. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 1:58 pm.

Minutes typed by: Amanda Atkinson, CCO

Minutes approved by:  Signed by: 5B0D7DF1740249E...