

Recovery Task Force Meeting

Meeting Minutes

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM | FEBRUARY 23, 2024 | COLLABORATORY | 2031 JACKSON STREET, SUITE 100, FORT MYERS, FL 33901 | PUBLIC MEETING | INFO@RESILIENTLEE.ORG

Call to Order

On February 23, 2024, Dave Harner convened the meeting at 10:07 AM with the following Members present:

- Property Appraiser Matt Caldwell, Vice Chair
- Councilman Chris Corrie
- Mayor John Gunter
- Mayor Jon McClain
- Mayor Kevin B. Anderson
- Councilwoman Karen Woodson
- Councilwoman Holly Smith
- Board Chair Armor Persons
- Chief Robert Dilallo
- Board Member David Collins

County Liaisons

- Dave Harner, County Manager
- Christine Brady, Assistant County Manager

Facilitators

- Harrison Newton, Hagerty Consulting
- Tessa LeSage, Collaboratory

Welcome, Introductions, and Minutes Approval

Mr. Dave Harner, County Manager, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Harner moved to approve the meeting minutes from the January 24, 2024 Recovery Task Force (RTF) meeting. Sanibel Councilwoman Holly Smith seconded the motion.

Overview of Recent Efforts

Mr. Dave Harner emphasized the purpose of the meeting was to vote on the final ResilientLee Recovery and Resilience Plan (Plan) and stated that the County had reviewed the feedback from Sanibel earlier in the week and from the Town of Fort Myers Beach earlier the day of the meeting. The County has no issues with the Town of Fort Myers Beach feedback. The County accepts most of the feedback provided by Sanibel. However, the County does not agree with the workforce housing comment on Plan draft page 130. Mr. Harner stated that the language requested is too specific, may not be achievable as written because it describes action in unincorporated areas outside of the County's control, and should be more general to reflect the regional focus of the Plan. The County and the Sanibel City Manager agreed that the workforce housing comment needs to be more regional, and Sanibel will withdraw that comment and just put forth the other requested changes. Mr. Harner also stated the County would prefer that the wording on page 20 be more consistent with the way the Town of Fort Myers Beach presented their comments to include all barrier islands and coastal areas of Cape Coral for consistency. Sanibel requested the wording should also contain all coastal areas within the flood zone. A potential wording was put forth that would read "Sanibel, Fort Myers Beach, along with coastal areas of Cape Coral and unincorporated areas."

Mr. Harrison Newton then stated the purpose of the meeting was to come to a conclusion on comments submitted by Recovery Task Force members. There was a call for further discussion on the document and feedback with Ms. Holly Smith seconding. There was no discussion.

The floor was then opened for public comment. Ms. Marsha Ellis stated she had previously requested a copy of the entire Plan before final approval because it had previously been available online only in "chunks" (Initiatives). She stated it has been an ongoing issue that she still does not have a copy, and she has been in discussion with people who are interested in what was posted and wanted to look at that document and would like to have it. She said she had put forth a herculean effort to provide feedback on the document and that there are other working people who would like to review and have community conversations about the document. She stated she does not think it is her role as a member of the public to have to ask for document access and reiterated her request for a full copy of the Plan. Mr. Newton shared that the full Plan draft under consideration by the RTF at this meeting could be found on the ResilientLee website and had been available to the public for a full month.

Mr. Craig Henderson stated there seems to be some confusion on the funds and the use of funds and asked for an explanation. Mr. Newton stated that the Plan and the jurisdiction of

this plan is to be a long-term recovery plan on the strategic level. The Plan documents long-term objectives for recovery and resilience and is not tied to one specific funding stream. There is a shared, common mission and a separate conversation around the CDBG-DR (federal grant) funds.

There was a partially audible comment by Mr. Henderson that included the question of whether the Plan's actions would be conducted with relief or resiliency funds? Mr. Dave Harner then stated this document is to be used to inform applications for grant. There is no funding attached to the document itself. The Plan can be used as a catalyst to apply for funds. The Plan can inform short-term and long-term grants, both resiliency and recovery. Mr. Harner compared the Lee County Plan to Bay County Recovery Plan, emphasizing that both are long-term plans and that Bay County continues to leverage their Plan to guide progress. CDBG-DR is a separate funding source from this Plan and will focus on housing and infrastructure. The RTF did assist with CDBG-DR, and the County has developed a separate CDBG-DR Action Plan per HUD criteria, but this strategic recovery Plan is separate (other than housing).

There was another inaudible comment by Mr. Henderson and then Mr. Harner stated that numerous meetings have been held in the community with respect to CDBG-DR – each municipality will receive money from it, but it will take a long time. Communication outreach will be held throughout the community.

An RTF member then made a comment that this Plan is a building block – each stakeholder/municipality is tasked within their own jurisdiction to use the Plan and its evolutions over time to find opportunities and grants available – local, state, and federal. This Plan is a hub to come together as stakeholders to focus on short-term and long-term recovery.

Vote for Recommendation

After this, Mr. Dave Harner called the vote. There was a motion and a second and unanimous approval of the plan.

Next Steps

The County will take the Plan to the Board on March 19, 2024 at 9:30 am. The Board will acknowledge the municipalities that have approved the Plan, for those that have considered and voted on the Plan ahead of the March BOCC meeting. If municipalities vote after March 19, 2024, the County will amend the acknowledgement and include the Plan of the municipality following that date. Several RTF members requested a revised final draft

of the Plan that was approved today to provide to their jurisdiction's leadership, and Dave Harner confirmed an updated copy would be made available.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

David Harner provided closing remarks and thanked members for their work. The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 AM on February 23, 2024.