

# Economic Recovery Branch – Lee County Recovery Task Force

## Meeting Minutes

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM | NOVEMBER 14, 2023 | COLLABORATORY | 2031 JACKSON STREET, SUITE 100, FORT MYERS, FL 33901 | PUBLIC MEETING

### Call to Order

At 10:00 AM on November 14, 2023, Chad Criswell, Branch Co-Lead, convened the Economic Recovery Branch meeting. The following Members were present:

- Chad Criswell, Co-Lead
- Shane Spring
- Jim Magnus
- Jonathan Gabel
- Frank Bonafilia
- Bill Johnson, Jr.
- Ben Siegel
- Jay Johnson
- Steven Weathers
- Ben Spence
- Kevin Barbot
- Donna Germain
- John Lai

#### County Liaison:

- Katie Welton
- Tatum Walker

#### Facilitator and Branch Support:

- Tessa LeSage, Collaboratory
- Robbie Heere, Hagerty Consulting
- Tracey Phillips, Hagerty Consulting

## Introductions

Ms. LeSage provided an update on the work of the Recovery Task Force and the Recovery and Resilience Planning Process.

## Upcoming Community Engagement

Ms. LeSage summarized the upcoming community engagement series regarding the Initiatives of the ResilientLee Recovery and Resilience Plan.

## Updated Initiative Review

The Support Team introduced each Initiative for discussion with Branch Members.

### **Affordable and Adequate Insurance**

- Members suggested removing the examples included to ensure the Initiative gives provides a wholistic view of global challenges to insurance.

### **Building Continuity of Operations for Regional Businesses**

- Members suggested adding the Visitor and Convention Bureau to the Stakeholder List.
- Members suggested generalizing the Stakeholder List by adding language stating, “including but not limited to.”
- Members suggested verifying that Lee Tran can respond and recover so public transportation can resume.

### **Sourcing Disaster Focused Loans and Grants**

- Members suggested sharpening the objective statement by highlighting the sense of urgency and the importance of quickly lending or expediting funding.
- Members discussed including a business education component. Research is required to determine the criteria for grantmaking to assist small businesses who often do not have the resources. Continuity planning and education is needed for effective recovery.
- Members discussed implementation for how to prepare business owners.

### **Expanding Lifelong Learning to Support the Workforce**

- There was no feedback from members.

### **Supporting a Diverse and Resilient Workforce**

- Members emphasized the need to nurture existing businesses and discussed the intent is not solely on attracting new business.

### **Other Initiatives: Diversify and Strengthen the Region's Emergency Shelter Network**

- Members discussed the importance of schools and sheltering plans.

## **Questions and Next Steps**

Members reviewed the next process steps, including being notified of the next Branch meeting schedule.

## **Public Comment**

There was no request for Public Comment.

## **Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

Ms. LeSage thanked the members for attending and adjourned the meeting at 11:13 AM.