

Planning & Capacity Branch – Lee County Recovery Task Force

Meeting Minutes

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM | AUGUST 14, 2023 | COLLABORATORY | 2031 JACKSON STREET,
SUITE 100, FORT MYERS, FL 33901 | PUBLIC MEETING

Call to Order

At 2:02 PM on August 14, 2023, Sandy Stilwell Youngquist, Branch Lead, convened the Planning & Capacity Branch meeting with the following members present:

- Sandy Stilwell Youngquist, Branch Lead
- David Mintz
- Matthew Leger
- Eric Pfiefer
- Jennifer Hagen
- David Farmer
- Stephanie Wardein
- Jeanie Richards (on behalf of Lisa Swinto)
- Alvin Henderson

Facilitators and Branch Support:

- Tessa LeSage, Collaboratory
- Laura Munafo, Hagerty Consulting
- Robbie Heere, Hagerty Consulting

Introductions

Members were reminded of the upcoming Lee Board of County Commissioners Workshop on August 15 at 1:30 PM intended to provide an update on recovery efforts and work of the Recovery Task Force. Ms. LeSage reviewed the work of the Recovery Task Force in the development of the ResilientLee Recovery and Resilience Plan (the Plan). She outlined the timeline of the planning process and the next steps of the Branches. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review and validate the Branch Initiative Profiles and the Resilience Overlay and begin to develop the Branch Action Plan.

Overview of RTF Member One-On-One Meetings

Ms. LeSage provided a summary of the One-on-One meetings with the Recovery Task Force Members and their leadership teams.

Update on the Resilience Overlay

Ms. LeSage described the development and visualization of the Resilience Overlay, and how the various initiatives come together across the region. She stressed that the Planning & Capacity Branch will not be recommending where increased density will go, and instead, will make recommendations to consider key areas about where density should go. Mr. Leger asked what can be recommended as far as thresholds for minimum density or locations for increasing density. Members suggested building on infrastructure that can support density and focus on 'building up' instead of 'building out' into green and conservation lands.

Members discussed resilience hubs and asked about the following:

- Available locations to serve as shelters;
- Locations of emergency and community services;
- If they would be located on evacuation routes; and
- If general and special populations could go to resilience hubs for sheltering.

Ms. Munafo explained the current state of sheltering and the importance of educating individuals about available sheltering locations. Mr. Henderson suggested that a transition sheltering plan with tiered approaches for zoning be defined. Ms. Wardein stated the need for a workforce approach for obtaining resources post-disaster.

Branch Members were asked to provide feedback via the ResilientLee email individually.

Review of Draft Initiatives Profiles and Branch Member Feedback

Ms. LeSage introduced the drafted Planning & Capacity Initiatives. Mr. Farmer asked if the measures of success have a timeline associated with the accompanying Initiative. Mr. Romine provided information on where the applicable timeline would be in the implementation steps and stated that it is yet to be determined.

Branch Members were provided a virtual form to provide feedback to Initiatives. The Branch walked through the first Initiative pertaining to 'Assessing emergency logistical

resource needs of critical services and identify funding streams to acquire resources that fill these gaps’.

Mr. Pfiefer asked who would be implementing the plan and Ms. LeSage suggested the Disaster Advisory Council (DAC).

Ms. Hagen asked about the platform that would accomplish the Initiative and who would be the lead or central command for it. Mr. Henderson stated that the primary command would be the Lee County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the platform would be WebEOC. Members had a discussion on emergency resources and impacts from Hurricane Ian and how lessons learned can be included in the planning process. Mr. Leger asked if there is a resource to identify and assess opportunities for public-private partnerships.

Ms. Wardein stated that the existing structure is broader than just awareness; it should include capacity, transparency, and flow of resources outside of the EOC. She stated that this would require a proactive team or platform to expand the network for use during a disaster. Ms. Hagen suggested a universal platform or language to accomplish the goal of a shared system and technological solution.

Ms. Lesage introduced a second Initiative, ‘Develop and maintain pre-existing recovery and distribution centers to streamline recovery operations after a disaster’. Mr. Henderson discussed the DAC and its role across the Lee County region. He stated that the first two initiatives would fall under the DAC purview of logistical resources and planning. Members suggested a group lead for implementation pre, post, and during disasters. Members supported improving the DAC to increase participation and effectiveness as the lead for this Initiative. They suggested periodic testing be included in the plan.

Mr. Henderson stated that the key to the DAC is planning. Mr. Pfiefer discussed the Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Plan and Incident Command Structure. Ms. Hagen asked if the Federal Emergency Management Agency process and tools would be cross-referenced and improved.

Ms. Wardein suggested that the DAC be external partners during the planning and structure development. Mr. Henderson described community lifelines and the City of Cape Coral’s method for sharing information with non-profits and other community organizations. He stated that Cape Coral involves community stakeholders and has received high marks for their use of an After-Action Report.

Ms. Hagen asked how the Long-Term Recovery Group and the EOC will interact in terms of cost recovery and having a shared responsibility during the planning process. Members suggested that the implementation steps need to incorporate planning and access to the

public. Mr. Henderson suggested including sustainability concepts, subject matter experts, and emergency management personnel when planning.

Ms. Hagen asked if the state could amend the comprehensive plan. Members discussed that the comprehensive emergency management plan must be updated every five years or upon personnel change. Members suggested that if programs are put into place, then there should be sustainability and finance programs to support them.

Next Steps

The next Branch meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 7, 2023, from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM.

Public Comment

Sophia Brubaker, a member of Sunshine Mobile Village, thanked the Branch for its work and the creation of a resilience overlay. Ms. Brubaker discussed the six-foot storm surge the community was faced with, along with damage done to the homes. She shared community problems such as residents being unable to return or get proper repairs to their homes. She invited members to a ribbon cutting of new custom-built homes on stilts.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Ms. LeSage thanked the members for attending and then adjourned the meeting at 3:33 PM.