

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of July 27, 2006

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

South Bay City Hall

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Denny Abbott, P.B.C. Workforce Alliance
Trish Davis, Glades Initiative
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Eric Lewis, City of South Bay
LJ Margolis, P.B.C. Parks & Recreation
Brenda Oakes, Belle Glade Weed & Seed
William Wynn, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Gainer introduced himself and asked everyone to introduce her or himself. He thanked the City of South Bay for providing refreshments.

2. Review of Minutes (June meeting)

Mr. Gainer asked if there were corrections to the June 22, 2006 minutes. There were no corrections to the minutes.

3. Follow-up Issues – June Meeting

Mr. Gainer reviewed the follow-up issues from the last GTAC meeting:

- 1) Dale Erickson commented that someone complained about calling 911 several times and there was no answer – **Response:** At the July meeting, Sgt. Hamilton stated that she spoke with Capt. Michael Andrews and he indicated that all 911 calls come directly to the Sheriff's Office main telephone number. Then from this point, all 911 calls are dispatched. There was a group discussion regarding this issue.

3. **Follow-up Issues** – June Meeting (Cont'd)

Mr. Gainer further commented that the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office would be taking over all of the Glades (Canal Point, Belle Glade, Pahokee, & South Bay).

2) Water pressure and/or distance between fire hydrants –He explained that the County is already in the process of building a water treatment plant and putting in a new water pressure system or gravity system for Pahokee and Canal Point. The City of Pahokee provides the water services for Canal Point. At the last meeting, Mr. Gainer requested Lillie Latimore to send a letter to the Director of Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department indicating the problems and requesting assistance with this issue. **Response:** Ms. Lattimore was absent.

4. **Presentation:** LJ Margolis, P.B.C. Parks & Recreation

Mr. Gainer introduced Ms. Margolis and stated that she is here to speak on the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) hurricane preparedness process. Ms. Margolis is the coordinator of one of the largest areas (area #1 – Wellington to the Glades areas).

Ms. Margolis began by stating that the Palm Beach County Emergency Management Division of Public Safety has established emergency operating areas in the six (6) zones in Palm Beach County. She named the members on her team. Mr. Edward Lowery, Manager of Office of Community Revitalization is on her team.

Ms. Margolis stated that the Emergency Operating Areas (EOA) serves the community by providing a local central emergency management presence. One function of the EOA is to facilitate communications with emergency management regarding the needs of the community surrounding a crisis, such as: emergency food, water, & ice. In addition to the EOA, there are other predetermined locations/sites: South Bay City Hall Complex, Belle Glade City Hall, and Pahokee Community Center. The EOA assist or support the municipalities, the social services agencies, and the community organizations in providing services appropriate to respond to disasters.

Ms. Margolis further stated that if a disaster strikes the Glades, the EOA would operate out of the County complex in Belle Glade. This is where you will receive any updates, report problems, and finding out how the agency will be addressing the various needs. Ms. Margolis further commented that she has a list of the various agencies helping out and is very interested in learning how each agency within the Glades will play a role in recovery after a disaster.

4. Presentation: LJ Margolis, P.B.C. Parks & Recreation (Cont'd)

Ms. Margolis stated that she brought copies of the County's Hurricane Preparedness Guide; which is in Creole, Spanish, & English. She also brought her business cards and she gave the group her cell phone number (561) 261-9532.

Ms. Margolis asked the group for questions or comments.

Denny Abbott inquired about the status of the evacuation plans. Ms. Margolis responded by explaining disaster factors: 1) Breach of Levy (if not a hurricane) – depending on where the breach occurs, only certain areas will be affected and will need to evacuate; 2) Breach of Levy (if a hurricane approaches) – Evacuation will depend on the strength of the hurricane, the water level of the lake, and the direction of the hurricane. Ms. Margolis further commented that Emergency Management is working to develop a decision matrix to plug in all of the variables. The group talked about a sunny day breach - evacuation after a breach of levy with the possibility of it not occurring during a hurricane. She commented that there are ample warning signs and the core is constantly monitoring the dike for any of those warning signs.

Mr. Abbott inquired about the dike's warning sign for water level. Ms. Margolis responded that it is approximately 17" or 18" feet.

Trish Davis inquired about the status of any on-going physical work being done to the dike. Mr. Abbott responded that work is being done on 4.6 miles between Canal Point and Port Mayaca. The work has temporarily stopped because of the intrusion of sand going into the inner wall that they are trying to build.

Brenda Oakes inquired about Department Of Transportation's plans or County plans for getting the information out to the residents. She further commented that the residents are getting really concerned because they have not seen any information on a plan for the Glades. Ms. Margolis responded that they have been discussing ways to get the word out to the residents in the various communities. She further commented that the Hurricane Preparedness Guide was mailed to every household. The EOA is discussing radio stations as a way to get the information to the residents. Also, EOA is looking at the churches because they play a significant role in Glades' community life. Ms. Oakes asked if whether there is a plan in place. Ms. Margolis stated that there is a plan but more time is needed for development.

4. Presentation: LJ Margolis, P.B.C. Parks & Recreation (Cont'd)

Ms. Oakes asked if there was anything, as a community or a representative of an agency could do to help out. Ms. Margolis commented yes, she would like information on agencies so that it could be placed into a database, distribution of the Hurricane Preparedness Guide, and for evacuation preparedness. Ms. Oakes also inquired whether someone from the EOA could do a presentation for the residents. Ms. Margolis responded yes.

Mr. Abbott commented regarding the power going out during Hurricane Wilma. He stated that Workforce Alliance was on the same grid as Glades General Hospital, and the power was restored quickly. Ms. Margolis commented that this is good to know.

Mr. Gainer commented regarding the Hurricane Preparedness Guide. He had a concern for people that may speak a language but cannot read. He inquired how is this information beneficial to someone that cannot read. He further commented that because creole and spanish is spoken differently according to the country, it is also written according to the country. Ms. Margolis agreed that the various spanish & creole speaking countries do have different dialogue.

Mr. Gainer commented that he is on Area 3 team. He mentioned some of the ideas that are being discussed at their meetings, such as: identifying food distribution sites.

Ms. Oakes made a suggestion to Ms. Margolis that it would be a good idea to identify vulnerable populations, such as: senior citizens, disabled, and migrant workers.

5. Participant Updates/Comments:

Eric Lewis, City of South Bay, reported on the following:

- Housing & Community Development (HCD) – Lack of general contractor participation. He sent out bids for fifteen (15) jobs and has not received any back yet.

5. Participant Updates/Comments: (Cont'd)

Eric Lewis, City of South Bay, reported on the following: (Cont'd)

Mr. Gainer commented regarding OCR's Home Beautification Program. He stated that the grant initially was for up to \$3,000 per house, which was increased to \$10,000. This grant is for exterior improvements. William Wynn is the coordinator of the program. There are approximately thirty-seven (37) applicants in the Glades area still awaiting exterior home improvements. The group began to discuss the issue with a lack of general contractors in the Glades, and with getting contractors to come from the coast to the Glades to do the work. A comment was made that maybe the County guidelines or regulations are too strenuous.

LJ Margolis, Parks & Recreation Department, reported on the following:

- They have been serving as a FEMA village since Hurricane Wilma. She commented that the September deadline published in the newspaper was for victims of the 2004 hurricanes (Charlie, Francis, Ivan, and Jean). As far as Hurricane Wilma, the South Bay FEMA village campground there is a recertification team from FEMA that visits once a month to meet with the families to find out their status on what they have been doing to try to secure housing, and attempt to assist them with their efforts. Ms. Margolis further commented that they started out with 72 families, which is about 380 people; and of that 380 people, 180 are age 17 and younger. There are approximately thirty-five (35) families still at the campground. The County built a basketball court and swing set playground for the families at the campground.

Brenda Oakes, Weed & Seed Program, reported on the following:

- Work Essentials Program (15 youth) - The contractor (Rev. Fuse) for the Urban League came out and did a great job. The topics of discussion were: labor & employment, resume, how to tie a tie, etc.
- She talked about the Sheriff's Office taking over the policing in the Glades. She further commented that in the contract, it does not mention the Weed & Seed grant, which is the law enforcement component.
- Safe Haven Coordinator position – They are in the process of hiring someone. The Safe Haven office is located at 224 SW 5th Street, Belle Glade.

5. Participant Updates/Comments: (Cont'd)

Brenda Oakes, Weed & Seed Program, reported on the following: (Cont'd)

- The program was Federally monitored by someone from Washington about two (2) weeks ago. They did a tour of the Weed & Seed areas.
- West Palm Beach – In the NW sections (Gramercy Park, Robinson Village, Springbrook, Saddlebrook, & Carribean Village), they are trying to grow a new Weed & Seed site. On last Saturday, a resident training was held and she met Paster Padgett. She further commented that Boynton Beach is interested in becoming a Weed & Seed site.

Mr. Gainer inquired about the status of Riviera Beach being a Weed & Seed site. Ms. Oakes commented that Riviera Beach and Delray Beach have both graduated. She further explained the process of a site graduating.

Trish Davis, Glades Initiative, reported on the following:

- Hurricane preparedness – Last month, they had a couple of workshops on special needs/special care shelters. She further commented that the EOA Team Coordinator mentioned that last year only five (5) people registered for special needs shelter from the Glades. This workshop was called for the various human health care providers/agencies so they could go back and relay the information to the residents that they serve.
- Community Food Alliance – Coordinating with various agencies, Alliance, and the County in the event that there is a disaster to get food, water & ice to various agencies for disbursement. They have commitments from NOAH, Pahokee Housing Authority, Glades Initiative, and various churches to be distribution sites.

Mr. Gainer commented that there was only one special need shelter, which is the Fair Ground.

Also, Ms. Davis commented that the Glades Initiative works with alzheimer's community care on aging. This was also a topic of discussion at the above-mentioned workshops.

Mr. Gainer commented regarding The Putting Kids First event. OCR has already committed to funding both events (in the Glades and on the coast) next year.

6. Adjournment of Meeting:

The next GTAC meeting will be held on August 24, 2006, 9:30a.m., in Canal Point, at Canal Point United Methodist Church. The next Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) meeting is August 8, 2006, 10:00a.m., at the Clayton Hutcheson Building.

Minutes prepared by:

Joyce Harrell, Secretary
P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

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