

Presenter: Kelvin Bledsoe, Department of Emergency Management (D.E.M.)

Presentation: Hurricane Preparedness

Discussed how PBC addresses flood mitigation; Belle Glade, South Bay and Pahokee may not have opportunities dealing with floods such as when sea-level rises. Explained that he is person responsible for distribution of FEMA money and ensuring projects are funded. Therefore, on a monthly basis, he meets with the County to discuss Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS).

He also explained the ‘point system’ in making their projects equal – due to all municipalities having their own plans for use of FEMA money. In writing a LMS plan, he explained PBC addresses 12-core habits/factors including fire, pest control and communicable diseases. The County’s 38 municipalities are co-signers for the LMS; if one municipality does not sign for any reason, the plan must be re-written and as example, a plan from 2009 is being re-written. As for ‘mapping out’ a route to evacuate a population, example 1.3 million in the County, as public servants, this is a challenge – how do we manage to get people to evacuate without putting ourselves at risk during the course of our duties. For this, he recommended the importance of the 4-step plan to minimize the impact of a disaster (this information can be found on our website)

1. Know your zone
2. Make a plan; use the hazard approach (red – move; run from a surge; and hide from wind)
3. Build a kit
4. Get involved – be informed

A question was raised by Red Cross representative regarding shelters and service dogs – he explained that service animals are licensed and they serve to help in a person’s daily activities. As example, in family, a wife with a service dog applies only to the wife, not the entire family. If there is a child with special needs in the family, the service-dog accompanies the wife and the child with the father.

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Mr. Tate engaged in a discussion regarding a fundraiser through a juke-joint type of event and provided a copy of a recommendation sheet seeking input from committee members. Committee/audience member Andrew talked about the historical value for the Glades area if this was done. Given that Mr. Tate has organized food for an event where the community can spread the word in support of the juke joint music festival and to also include setting up high school bands. Mr. Tate encouraged the audience to review the recommendation sheet adding their ideas paying attention to the last 4-pages while he and the committee would review the front/first piece. Andrew stated the event would be September 20 and the Dolly Hand Center and atrium in Technical building (Palm Beach State College/Glades campus) is location. He added that this event was started right after World War 1 lasting into the 1960’s. Mr. Tate added that this is still in existence in Alabama. In summary, both Andrew and Mr. Tate explained if the community supports this, then it may be an annual affair, soul food and free admission. Mr. Tate thanked Mr. Dardel for knowing his history and that this event would be a collector of history as well. They will be working on proving more information and send flyers through email.

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Mr. Gainer solicited audience questions then the discussion continued about the upcoming REAP curriculum and meeting location. Mr. Gainer explained he had approved with Mr. Glucksman of Quiet Waters but will check with management again. In the past 5 years, they have used the County’s central location but that is now unavailable; the schools also have different catering requirements so overall Quiet Waters being centrally located is accessible for the community to be able to attend. Mr. Tate this meeting being his only one where 2 of 3 Commissioners and the City Manager were in attendance. Mr. Gainer adjourned the meeting.

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