

Minutes

Indian River County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group Meeting

Indian River County Emergency Operations Center
4225 43rd Avenue
Vero Beach, FL 32967
October 16, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

John King, Chairman of the Indian River County Working Group, regrettably had a last minute commitment and was unable to preside over the meeting. The meeting was led by Etta LoPresti, who began the meeting with the welcome and introductions.

Etta LoPresti, Indian River County Emergency Management, explained that due to the disaster declaration following Tropical Storm Fay, all counties in the State of Florida are eligible to apply for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

Ms. LoPresti discussed the importance of having hazard mitigation projects/initiatives listed on the LMS Project Prioritization List (PPL) as projects will not be funded if they do not appear on the list. The PPL was distributed to the group for their review and it was requested that all previously submitted projects be reviewed for elimination from the list. Discussion of current projects will continue at the next meeting. She explained that the following issues can change the list:

1. Projects are completed
2. New needs surface
3. New funding opportunities arise
4. Events occur that affect priorities

It was explained that we have been mandated by the state to update our LMS by January 2010 and that we will be conducting regular LMS meetings between now and then to accomplish the updates to that plan.

The HMGP program suffered from prior criticism so the group was asked to share their experiences with HMGP. Chief Prime shared with the group that although the process was extensive, a great deal of money was received from the program to build new fire stations following the damage from the 2004 hurricanes. It was encouraging to note that the work was worth it.

Ms. LoPresti explained that FEMA has assigned a state liaison to each county and our appointed mitigation planner is Ms. Anne Borland. It was suggested that Ms. Borland be invited to a future LMS meeting to discuss the direction of LMS and to assist with the application process. FEMA has advised that the program has improved with new guidance documents available on their website.

Project Proposal Forms were distributed and the group was asked to think about potential projects. Copies of Chapter 9G-22, rules regarding HMGP, were distributed and reviewed. Project eligibility was discussed and the group was reminded that only local governments, state agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and non-profit organizations and institutions are eligible applicants under the HMGP program.

A Notice of Funding Amount (NOFA) has not yet been announced so we do not know how much money has been allocated at this time. This announcement should occur very soon.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next meeting of the Indian River County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group will be announced at a later date.