

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

Community Disaster Preparedness Committee

MEETING SUMMARY

March 11, 2005

INVITED COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alex Young	United Way of Sarasota County
Bill Little	Sarasota County Health Department
Bob Carter	Senior Friendship Centers
Diana French	Volunteer Connections
David Harrawood	Sarasota County Emergency Services
Major Bert Tanner	Salvation Army—Sarasota Corps
Bryan Pope	Salvation Army—Sarasota Corps
Inaki Rezola	American Red Cross
Dr. Carrie Springer	Coastal Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.
Stewart Stearns	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Chris Stewart	First Step of Sarasota--FEMA Region 4
Linda Wagner	Hospice of Southwest Florida
Kim Kutch	DCF—Suncoast Region
Alberto Suarez	United Way 2-1-1 of Manasota
Rev. Dr. Tom Pfaff	Goodwill Industries
Dr. Kay Glasser	Human Services Advisory Council

INVITED COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Bob Berns	VOAD
Ken Alexander	Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Shannon Staub	Sarasota Board of County Commissioners
Vanessa Carusone	City of North Port
Lois Natiello	DCF—Suncoast Region
Dave Beesley	First Step of Sarasota
Carl Weinrich	Sarasota YMCA
Mike Bigner	Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice

OTHERS PRESENT:

David Turner	FEMA Region IV—Voluntary Agencies Liaison
Aleda Kleckauskas	Hospice of Southwest Florida
Roy McBean	United Way 2-1-1 of Manasota

STAFF PRESENT:

Chip Taylor
Jeanne Hodaian

Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Sarasota County Health and Human Services

The first official meeting of the Community Alliance's Community Disaster Preparedness Committee (CDPC) was held on March 11, 2005 at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, 2635 Fruitville Road, at 9:00 a.m.

Alex Young, Committee Chair, welcomed the invited members and guests and introductions were made. Alex confirmed the proposed name of the new committee being formed—Community Disaster Preparedness Committee—and provided a general overview of the committee's purpose.

Overview and Purpose of the Community-based Disaster Preparedness and Response Initiative

Bill Little provided an introduction of the community-based preparedness concept and introduced Jeanne Hodaian. Jeanne offered a brief overview and purpose of the proposed Community-based Disaster Preparedness and Response Initiative and provided a handout of the presentation information. Members also were provided a copy of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice's Interim Report (Dec., 2004): *Lessons Learned*, which is a review of the regional disaster response.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- 1) The community-based initiative will create a framework for disaster preparedness for Sarasota's human services delivery system, ensuring coordinated preparedness, response and recovery plans that are linked with the county's emergency management plan.
- 2) The initiative will broaden the scope of the County's Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF 8) from just health/medical to include human services as well.
- 3) The plan addresses key problems identified during the 2004 hurricane response activities, increasing agencies' response and recovery capacities and improving coordination of volunteers at multiple levels.
- 4) The initiative will reduce and/or eliminate duplication of activities and improve coordination and communication through planned processes and procedures outlined in standardized disaster plans.
- 5) The plan takes a three-pronged approach to partnership building. Core human service agencies that serve vulnerable populations throughout the county are targeted first. These are designated as "Tier 1" agencies and will be the focus for

initial partnership-building activities. Agencies in this category would include Senior Friendship Centers, Coastal Behavioral Healthcare, First Step of Sarasota, DCF, YMCA, the Salvation Army, and others of a similar size and scope. "Tier 2" agencies would include smaller community-based, non-governmental human service providers. "Tier 3" agencies include faith-based organizations, assisted living facilities (ALF) and skilled nursing facilities (SNF), and other organizations or businesses to be identified.

- 6) A model disaster plan format based on the state/national disaster response plan (NPR) will be developed. The model plan will not replace existing agency plans, but provide guidance to agencies for the enhancement and expansion of their plans, ensuring that an all-hazards approach, interagency linkages, and communication and coordination procedures are standardized across plans and linked to the local comprehensive emergency management plan (CEMP).
- 7) Disaster preparedness education and training activities will provide target audiences with core competencies and operations skills relevant for effective disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities for staff functioning at the Command Post level.

The timeframe calls for Tier 1 partnership development and training activities to be completed by the beginning of the 2005 hurricane season (June).

Discussion

Bill Little clarified the concept of the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its emergency support functions (ESF), with particular reference to ESF-8 (Medical/Public Health) and ESF-15 (Volunteers & Donations), explaining how these functions would be expanded and enhanced through this proposed initiative. Additionally, Chip Taylor added that part of the plan is to use the Health Department auditorium as an ESF-8 Command Post, where the key human service agencies would be located during a disaster response and recovery event, and for pre-event staging and training area.

Linda Wagner (Hospice of SW Florida) stated that hospices and larger ALFs and SNFs should perhaps be added to the Tier-1 category.

Training issues were broached by various participants. Linda Wagner noted that the USF School of Social Work has a Trauma Training Program that may be worth reviewing with regard to mental health issues in disaster response and recovery. Several individuals also pointed to the importance of integrating spiritual care with mental health care activities that should be included in training curricula. Bill Little announced that the University of Miami's Department of Epidemiology and Emergency Preparedness Center (DEEP) will make a presentation at the Community Alliance meeting on March 21 to describe their behavioral health curriculum in disaster response and how they could be of assistance in meeting the behavioral health training needs of

agencies in the community. David Turner of FEMA noted that there are a variety of training courses on the FEMA website (www.fema.gov).

Dr. Carrie Springer emphasized the need to consider a system for pre-identification and/or pre-credentialing of behavioral health volunteers in order to decrease problems encountered by her agency's staff when volunteering at various organizations, where agency policy required re-credentialing.

Bill and others noted that a variety of subcommittees may need to be created to facilitate planning activities for different agency types and populations, such as behavioral/mental health and related agencies, faith-based agencies, elderly and others to be identified in future meetings.

Dave Harrawood highlighted the importance of having a clear understanding of all of the resources available from each agency in the collaborative. It was noted that a matrix of agencies and resources will be developed.

Roy McBean and Alberto Surarez discussed the capacity of the United Way's 2-1-1 database as an importance resource in registering agencies and creating a database of collaborative agency resources. Alberto said the 2-1-1 database technology offers the capacity to collect and utilize all of the agency resource information needed for the community-based effort. (www.uw211manasota.net)

David Turner observed that other counties have very active VOADs and other agencies that we can coordinate with in our plans for inter-county preparedness activities. Bill Little and Bob Carter both reinforced the importance of the inter-county coordination.

Chip Taylor asked if there are other agencies that we should include in the committee, requesting that members inform us of other stakeholders we may want to invite to participate on the committee. Suggestions should be sent to Jeanne Hodaian at the Health Department.

David Harrawood stated that the State Emergency Management Office may be transferring responsibility for the persons with special needs (PSN) shelters, placing this under the Department of Health.

Linda Wagner said that the recovery component in agency plans is essential; this is an area where many plans were lacking and/or hugely inadequate last year.

Rev. Dr. Tom Pfaff broached the issue of how best to integrate faith-based organizations into the disaster preparedness planning process. He suggested that the tiered approach may be a good one that can be adapted to the multiple levels within the faith-based community. It was pointed out that creating a subcommittee of the Community Alliance's faith-based members and charging them with planning this process and developing standardized, coordinated plans for the faith-based agencies might be a good way to approach this.

Inaki Rezola and others raised the issue of Sarasota County's VOAD and the importance of working with VOAD to build their capacity in disaster preparedness response and recovery activities, using this collaborative forum.

Stewart Stearns stated that we may want to consider having a subcommittee of local funders as well, ensuring funder perspectives and involvement in preparedness planning and response.

Next Steps

Jeanne requested that agencies complete the questionnaire sent with the agenda and return this to her by email. This will start the process of identifying strengths and weakness in agency plans that may be a focus for the plan revisions and also begin self-identifying resources and activities that they have to offer in future disaster events.

Alex requested that each agency share its current disaster plan with us, so that we can start identifying the best way to fit the model plan with current agency plans, without asking agencies to create new disaster preparedness plans.

Jeanne agreed to send participants the contact information from the Committee Roster. She also will develop a "glossary of terms" for disaster preparedness and response to assist individuals/agencies unfamiliar with the various acronyms and provide definitions of core concepts in the emergency preparedness field.

NEXT MEETING: April 1, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. at the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), 1660 Ringling Blvd. 6th floor, Sarasota