

Collier County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group (LMSWG)

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 17, 2025; Time: 9:43 AM

Location: Joint Information Center, 3rd Floor, Collier County Emergency Services Center, 8075 Lely Cultural Pkwy, Naples, FL 34113

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The January 17, 2025, meeting of the Collier County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group (LMSWG) was called to order at 9:43 AM by Working Group Chair, William Lang. He welcomed attendees and conducted a roll call, confirming that quorum was met.

Attendees:

- **William Lang** – Working Group Chair, Collier County Planning & Resiliency
- **Amy Howard** – Emergency Management, LMS Staff Liaison
- **Lisa Koehler** – South Florida Water Management District
- **Dan Summers** – Collier County Emergency Management
- **Carl Alvarez** – NCH Life Safety Coordinator
- **Beth Petrunoff** – City of Naples, Elected Official – Interested Citizen
- **Natalie Hartman** – City of Naples
- **Josh Bauer** – Greater Naples Fire/Rescue
- **Josh Starrett** – Collier County Emergency Management
- **Kevin Carter** – Port of the Islands CIP
- **Tania Selmeski** – Collier County Growth Management
- **Gabriel Torres** – Collier County Public Schools
- **Chris Mason** – Collier County Community Planning & Resiliency
- **Tim Rygiel** – Collier County Facilities Management
- **Phil Snyderburn** – Collier County Solid Waste
- **Karen Vivian** – Lee County Electric Cooperative

Excused:

- **Chris Byrne**, Marco Island
 - **Jeanene McPherson**, Collier County Parks & Recreation
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2. Approval of Minutes

William Lang requested approval of the November 8, 2024, meeting minutes. Amy Howard confirmed the minutes were included in the agenda packet and offered copies if needed.

- **Motion:** Gabriel Torres moved to approve the minutes.
 - **Second:** Chris Mason seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.
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3. Project(s) for Review

Lisa Koehler from the South Florida Water Management District submitted a project to enhance the resiliency of the aging **H1C coastal structure**, built in 1980. The project aims

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to improve flood control, protect water supplies, and address vulnerabilities related to storm surge and sea level rise.

Key project details include:

- **Objective:** Redesign and construction of new structures to enhance flood protection and minimize environmental impacts.
- **Funding Source:** HMGP post-disaster assistance.
- **Current Status:** The required benefit-cost analysis (BCA) was not completed in time for full approval.

Discussion Points:

- The group agreed the project qualifies as mitigation rather than repair.
- A phased review will be conducted, with an initial focus on environmental impact and project suitability.
- Lisa Koehler will provide additional project details for further evaluation.

Action Items:

- A special meeting will be scheduled if the BCA is ready before the next regular meeting.
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4. Quorum Confirmation

Quorum was confirmed for the meeting, allowing official business to proceed. Amy Howard provided a jurisdictional attendance sheet, from 2020 to present. William Lang emphasized the need for ongoing member participation to ensure compliance with FEMA requirements.

5. Membership Updates

The group discussed the importance of active participation in the LMSWG to maintain FEMA compliance. Several agencies have been inactive, which could impact project approvals. Outreach efforts will be made to encourage participation.

Key Discussion Points:

- Member agencies with low participation will be contacted.
 - The group agreed to enforce participation policies to maintain consistency.
 - Elections for Chair and Vice Chair positions will take place at the next meeting.
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6. Grant Opportunities and Funding Updates

William Lang provided updates on current grant opportunities, emphasizing the importance of timely preparation for upcoming deadlines.

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Funding Updates:

- **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) and BRIC:** Applications due by February 17, 2025.
- **Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR):** New funding allocations released.
- **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP):** Pending announcement of funds related to Hurricane Milton.

Stakeholders were encouraged to prepare “shelf-ready” projects to maximize funding opportunities.

7. Resilient Florida Program Rulemaking

The group was provided information regarding the Resilient Florida program.

Discussion Points:

- Participation in webinars and workshops was encouraged.
 - Anticipated rule changes could impact local mitigation strategies.
 - Staying engaged with program updates will help align local plans with state requirements.
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8. FEPA Annual Meeting and Training Opportunities

William Lang highlighted upcoming training opportunities through the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA). Emphasizing that membership into the association is required to attend FEPA working groups.

Key Events:

- **FEPA Annual Conference:** January 27-31, 2025, in Orlando, FL. Information was provided regarding the conference agenda and schedule.
 - Training sessions and workshops include substantial damage assessment and the Elevate Florida Program.
 - Members were encouraged to attend to gain insights into new mitigation strategies and funding programs.
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9. Collier County LMS Plan Update and Other Business

Amy Howard provided an update on the LMS plan, noting that it had undergone its first state review with minor corrections pending. Public review is ongoing, and members were encouraged to submit feedback using the provided Adobe link provided in the agenda.

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Key Updates:

- Municipalities must readopt the LMS plan following FEMA approval in every planning cycle.
- The State submission deadline for final corrections is February 11, 2025.
- William Lang added that the county is actively working on repetitive loss area analysis to identify vulnerable properties.

Action Items:

- Members were urged to review the LMS plan and submit feedback.
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10. Public Comment and Open Discussion

The public comment session included discussions on the importance of local government support for mitigation efforts. An elected official from the City of Naples inquired about how local leadership could better assist in moving projects forward.

Key Takeaways:

- The need for additional resources and staffing to manage floodplain programs effectively.
 - Importance of interagency collaboration to streamline decision-making.
 - Challenges in maintaining FEMA compliance and securing grant funding.
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11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned following a motion by Gabriel Torres, seconded by Carl Alvarez, and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting:

- **Date:** April 18, 2025
 - **Location:** South Regional Library
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Action Items Summary:

- **South Florida Water Management District Project:** Complete and submit the benefit-cost analysis.
- **Membership Outreach:** Contact inactive organizations and encourage participation.
- **LMS Plan Review:** Ensure members review and provide feedback.
- **Watershed Management Plan Endorsement:** Prepare and submit an endorsement letter for Collier County and the City of Naples.