

**Mitigation Planning Team
January 10, 2018
MINUTES**

The quarterly meeting of the **Lewes Mitigation Planning Team** was held on **Wednesday, January 10, 2018 commencing at 11:00am in the Council Chambers at City Hall**, with the following members present:

Ted Becker, Mayor, Chairperson
Chatham Marsch, Mitigation Team Coordinator
Darrin Gordon, BPW
Danielle Swallow, University of Delaware
Charlie O'Donnell, GMB

Also present were: City Manager Ann Marie Townshend & Recording Secretary Alice Erickson

Absent: Wally Evans, Tom Spell, Tom West and Councilperson Dennis Reardon

Mayor Becker called the meeting to order at **11:00am**.

1. Introduction of Danielle Swallow, Sea Grant Coordinator for Unv of DE

Mayor Becker welcomed and introduced Danielle Swallow. *Ms. Swallow* is the new Sea Grant Coordinator for the University of Delaware and is the Coastal Hazard Specialist. Prior to this she worked at DNREC for 3 years focusing on flood mitigation and sea level rise. She has an interest in community preparedness and response.

2. Presentation & consideration of the minutes from the October 18, 2017 meeting. A quorum was not present, therefore the minutes could not be considered. They will be on the next meeting agenda.

3. Discussion on the November 27, 2017 Resilient & Sustainable Communities League (RSCL) Workshop

Ms. Swallow explained RSCL was created about 2 years ago by professionals at the state level who were working on these issues but not seeing a lot of coordination. They came together to form RSCL and meet on a quarterly basis. They will be holding these kinds of events to promote information sharing and networking. Over time it is there goal to help build capacity of the towns and communities around Delaware by providing technical assistance and information.

They were pleased with the number of participants that signed up for the workshop. They received very good feedback with most indicating they learned something. The problem with this topic is that it is very broad and there are so many topics within it to focus on. They will not be able to address everyone's concerns and will chose a specific theme each year.

Mayor Becker stated he felt the workshop was a success but that it focused more on the problems and not the solutions. *Ms. Swallow* agreed solutions are the missing piece. It is very difficult because there is not a one size fits all solution to some of these problems. They will work to showcase some of the local success stories and lessons learned.

Ms. Swallow explained they will be hosting "Coffee Sessions" which will be a very informal setting for people to chat about different topics. She will forward information on these sessions as soon as they are finalized.

Ms. Townshend stated that Lewes was very well represented by the city government and the local residents.

4. Report on Grant Application to the Community Environmental Fund

Mayor Becker stated Tom West could not be present but provided the following information:

The grant application was filed to DNREC by the October 2, 2017 deadline. Mr. West and Mr. O'Donnell presented the application to the Community Involvement Advisory Council on October 17, 2017. Mr. West spoke with James Brunswick, Community Ombudsman on January 9th and indicated that there has been process delays but hopes to have the projects reviewed by the Secretary next week. He will contact the city.

Mr. O'Donnell explained the grant would be for a stormwater study of the system along Savannah Road on the beachside. In 2007 they did a physical study to identify the various elements that would need to be updated. This study would update this information and to look at some improvements to increase the quantity and quality of the stormwater discharge, if possible. The area is very flat so there is only so much that can be done. It is a 75%/25% grant, with the city paying 25%. The anticipated cost of the project is \$27,500 and the city submitted a grant application for \$20,000.

Mayor Becker questioned if there has been any consideration given to the installation of flaps in the discharge areas? *Mr. Gordon* stated because the area is so flat, the flaps become a maintenance issue more than a help. *Mayor Becker* stated it will be interesting to see what new technology is available to help with this issue. *Mr. O'Donnell* stated this area was identified as one of the city's vulnerable spots. It floods whenever there is a really high tide.

5. Discussion regarding possible community education regarding preparedness

Mayor Becker stated they have done a variety of annual events, usually in the summer to encourage the residents to be better prepared and aware. *Mr. Marsch* and *Mr. Gordon* have spoken about emergency preparedness and ways to be proactive which has had very good response. This questions is, how do we get people to leave these workshops, go home and do something. Generally speaking people are not proactive, they react to a specific situation.

Ms. Swallow stated the question is what the local homeowners can do to make their homes more resilient. She feels that homeowners have a lot of misconceptions about risk. They are focused on carrying flood insurance and if they do then they become complacent feeling that are covered and the risk is taken care of. They don't realize that if there is an event and they have damage, they will have to submit a claim and their live will be disruptive. They need to help people understand the risk more and possible steps beyond having flood insurance that will help minimize their risk. Her coworkers in the Sea Grant Program have been trained in a program called "Strategic Doing". This is a facilitated exercise that focuses on people really doing something so there are measurable outcomes at the end. She has spoken with her colleagues and they are very open to discussing the subject with the Mitigation Team. The Lewes community is open to the concepts of sea level rise and flooding but what is difficult is getting people beyond this into actions.

Mayor Becker stated many of the residential properties are owned by absentee owners. There can be many challenges for themselves, their neighbors and the city. Vacant homes can cause problems and anything that can be done to encourage people to buy into the process will be a benefit to the entire community. There is generally a strong interest among the residents and there are good HOAs within the city with proactive leadership. He feels they can involve the Chamber of Commerce in working to get the businesses involved also.

Ms. Swallow stated there are so many different topics around resiliency it is important for the city to determine their priorities. *Mayor Becker* would like there to be a small group to work on a plan.

6. Update on ACT

Mayor Becker reported the Association of Coastal Towns (ACT) continues to meet to discuss beach replenish, dredging and community resiliency. There are seven communities engaged with some state representation. They need to create state-wide participation to reach the upstate legislators.

Mayor Becker distributed a letter regarding a position of the repealing of the clean power plan. *Mayor Becker* will be signing on behalf of the city of Lewes and all members of ACT will be signing also. The Governor is taking the initiative also.

7. Report on dredging/beach replenishment at Roosevelt Inlet

Mayor Becker reported on the beach replenishment project at Roosevelt Inlet. 57,000 tons of sand has been trucked in and needs to be distributed along the beach. *Ms. Townshend* stated after this phase of the project is completed, the dredging of the inlet will begin. Also, the beach replenishment at Cape Shore is in process.

Mayor Becker reported the city is moving forward with the dredging at the Canalfront Park Marina, in conjunction with several other local marinas. There was discussion about the dredging of the Lewes Rehoboth Canal. It will be an ongoing battle to get it funded by the state of Delaware.

8. Other Information

National Hurricane Conference: *Mr. Marsch* stated he would like to attend the National Hurricane Conference March 26-29, 2018. *Mr. Gordon* feels *Ms. Townshend* should attend this year also.

Beebe Healthcare Update: *Mayor Becker* stated *Ms. Hopp* could not attend but provided the following report:

- Beebe planned for and did well with the storm with very little issues except staff trying to get to the hospital because sub-developments weren't plowed.
- They are working with the Sussex ARES group on the upgrading and replacement of some HAM radio equipment.
- Between the blizzard and a water leak, they are getting practice using their command center.
- They are having a cyber-attack exercise next month for the whole hospital.
- They are working on getting supplies and being prepared for a mass event like an active shooter with "Stop the Bleed" carts and having supplies on hand if we needed to treat patients in the parking lots or wherever needed.

Sussex County Water Contamination Exercise: *Mr. Gordon* reported there will be a table top exercise on January 17th at 9:00am in the DNREC building. It will include Lewes, Rehoboth and Tidewater.

9. Schedule next meeting: The next Mitigation Planning Team meeting will be held on **April 10th at 11am.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:56am

Minutes submitted by,

Alice Erickson
Recording Secretary