

**Mitigation Planning Team  
June 5, 2018**

**MINUTES**

The quarterly meeting of the **Lewes Mitigation Planning Team** was held on **Tuesday June 5, 2018 commencing at 11:00am in the Council Chambers at City Hall**, with the following members present:

Ted Becker, Mayor, Chairperson  
Darrin Gordon, BPW  
Danielle Swallow, University of Delaware  
Charlie O'Donnell, GMB  
Wally Evans, Lewes Fire Department  
Joe Stormer, Resident

**Also present were:** City Manager Ann Marie Townshend & City Planner Tom Spell

**Absent:** Chatham Marsch, Cheryl Hopple, Tom Spell, Dennis Reardon & Wally Evans

1. **Call to Order:** *Mayor Becker* called the meeting to order at **11:00am**
2. **Presentation & consideration of the minutes from the April 10, 2018 meeting.**

**ACTION:** *Mr. Gordon made a motion to approve the April 10, 2018 minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Stormer, all voting in favor, motion carried.*

**3. Update on Grant Applications: DEMA & Community Resiliency**

*Mr. West* reported there will be a meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup> with DEMA to discuss grant opportunities. One of the issues is evacuation routes. There has been some work done but there is concern with the new developments along New Road and the ongoing use. There may be somethings to consider for New Road.

*Ms. Swallow* explained they are trying to approach Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program on a community scale. Funds will become available again in August and will be tied to a hazard mitigation plan that is approved by the State of Delaware or the County. They will have to determine how Lewes sits within this parameter.

DeIDOT will be looking at installing sensors on New Road that will activate when there is water on the roadway and trigger a warning to drivers. It would send a message that New Road is vulnerable and subject to flooding and as development moves forward, it will also let the agencies and the public know that New Road has flooding issues.

*Mayor Becker* reported that Senator Lopez has gotten a commitment from DeIDOT about the elevating of the Canary Creek bridge on New Road due to flooding. It would not be until 2022 before any work in done. He is concerned this might negate the installation of the early warning system. *Ms. Swallow* stated it could, but she feels the water sensor system would be helpful in designing the bridge elevation because they could identify under what conditions the road is flooding and how often. They could factor in future sea level rise and come up with the design threshold. It could be very useful in planning and is worth exploring. *Mr. West* stated there are other things a study like this could do and not just New Road. Savannah Road and Cedar Street have flooding issues also.

*Ms. Swallow* questioned if DeIDOT is open to reclassifying New Road as an evacuation route. *Mr. Becker* stated only after the bridge is elevated. *Ms. Townshend* stated people will use it whether it is classified or not.

*Mr. West* explained this is for communities that have a state certified hazard mitigation plan. That is something they should look at as a part of this process. *Mr. Becker* stated the city has a hazard mitigation plan but is not aware of it being state certified or needing to be recertified. He feels it is something we should look into. *Ms. Swallow* stated the county is the first line that DEMA works with in terms of a hazard mitigation plan. Hazard mitigation assistance funds would only be available to those communities that have a certified plan or have adopted a county plan. *Mr. Becker* did not believe Lewes had done this yet but will look into it. The team needs to look at the county's plan prior to meeting again.

*Mr. West* stated the Community Resiliency Grant opportunity is open until the end of the month. The question is what Lewes would do with the funds if awarded. Each grant has its own parameters and objectives. It focuses on those communities that are looking at resiliency and putting together an initial plan, partnering with state agencies, such as DEMA or DeIDOT. He hasn't been able to determine how Lewes would use the funds but partnering with DEMA would be a good opportunity.

*Ms. Swallow* stated there are limitations on what the funds can be used for. It cannot be used for implementation, or anything that breaks ground due to federal restrictions. It is best for communities that want to move forward with planning and assess their risks which Lewes has already done.

*Mr. Becker* stated the city applied last year and was turned down because Lewes is past the point of planning and looking more for implementation. The Association of Coastal Communities (ACT) has been discussing this grant on behalf of a whole coastal regional evacuation plan. *Ms. Swallow* stated ACT could be a very good candidate. Letters of support from the individual mayors would be very helpful.

There was discussion about evacuation and how it should be done locally and regionally. There needs to be more of an emphasis on preparedness, being self-reliant, and staying in place if not in a vulnerable location. Then they need to identify locations that are less vulnerable for shelters. ACT could be key in an evacuation and re-entry plan.

*Judy Rolfe, 31 Henlopen Gardens*, stated she lives in a condo community. She had discussed with her development about gathering basic information on the residents in Henlopen Gardens for the first responders during an event. This would put the responsibility on the development to reach out to their vulnerable residents when a storm is threatening. She questioned if they saw any benefit to having communities doing this kind of thing or are there legal liabilities. She feels this should be a community effort.

*Ms. Swallow* stated she is doing research on emergency planning for the elderly and disabled. What *Ms. Rolfe* is doing is what she is seeing in her research. It is important to engage homeowner associations to check in on vulnerable residents. Citizen Core is a part of DEMA that will do training for HOAs. Individuals might be more willing to give information to a neighbor than the government.

*Mr. Gordon* stated the BPW would like to support these individual efforts. They would be glad to give a presentation on what they do for preparedness and support them in their efforts.

*Mr. Becker* stated there are many HOAs in Lewes and this kind of effort would be on a voluntary basis.

*Ms. Rolfe* explained an ongoing project down in Norfolk VA on the collection of data regarding flooding and sea-level rise. She would like the Lewes community to get involved in this project also. *Ms. Swallow* stated DNREC is doing similar things and she would have to coordinate with them.

#### **4. Discussion of IPA Project regarding Aging & Resiliency**

#### **5. Discussion regarding planning of community event in September**

*Ms. Swallow* reported on the city of Lewes sponsored workshop, partnering with Sea Grant, on emergency planning with a focus on aging and disabled residents. They are looking at a date in early September. She has been working with *Julia O'Hanlon*, partnering organization such as DEMA and Beebe Hospital, collecting information on emergency planning with the elderly to hold a public workshop in Lewes. The three objectives they would like to accomplish at the workshop are 1) frame the issues and complete an individual need assessment, 2) review and begin forming an emergency communication plan, and 3) connect residents with other resources and a wider support network.

The workshop would be open to the 19958 area, with an emphasis on the aging and disabled population. She would like a representative from the Lewes Fire Department and BPW be a part of the planning team.

*Mr. Becker* stated these objectives fit well with what they have been discussing. He attended a Delaware Development Disabilities Council workshop at the Lewes Senior Center. There was a brochure that may be a tool they want to

consider purchasing for the workshop. It is a good tool for starting the conversation and would be something they could take with them as a resource.

*Ms. Townshend* questioned if it would be beneficial at the workshop to have stations for the different resource groups. They need to include giveaways tied to the completion of different tasks. *Ms. Swallow* agreed, they need to make it as interactive as they can while still being able to supply information through presentations. They will have volunteers available through the Greater Lewes Community Village to help those that are less mobile. First, they will present content and have them fill out emergency cards. Then the participants will be able to meet with the various organizations present.

There was discussion regarding when and where to hold it. It was suggested looking at Cape Henlopen High School on either September 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>. The event shouldn't be more than 2 hours and there needs to be giveaways.

## 6. Member Updates

*Charlie O'Donnell* stated the flooding problem on Cedar Avenue needs to be kept in mind when looking at projects for grant opportunities. It is a tide driven problem that could be solved by the city.

*Tom West* stated the LPC is still updating the zoning ordinance but doesn't believe they will get into the flood plain regulations before the end of the year. He has been working with *Ms. Swallow* on a series of workshops with the University of Delaware landscape architecture program, who are trying to create a program working with communities to build resiliency. They see an opportunity to have this work in Delaware and would be free to the community. They are still working on the details.

The next meeting was scheduled on **July 31, 2018 at 11:00am**.

## 7. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at **12:22 pm**

Minutes submitted by

Alice Erickson, Recording Secretary