

AT A SPECIAL MEETING WORKSHOP OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON FEBRUARY 05, 2018 AT 4:00 P.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

Present: Brenda Holt, District 4, Chair, Present
Eric Hinson, Vice Chair, District 1 (Arrived late)
Dr. Anthony “Dr. V” Viegbesie, District 2, Present
Gene Morgan, District 3 Absent
Sherrie Taylor, District 5 (Arrived late)
Dee Jackson, Interim County Administrator
David Weiss, County Attorney
Beryl Wood, Deputy Clerk

1. Welcome(Commissioner Brenda Holt, Chairperson)

Chair Holt called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m. with two Commissioners present. She welcomed everyone to the Emergency Management Workshop at the University of Florida’s IFAS Center.

General Business

2. Introduction of (Mr. Bryan Koon, Vice President of International Security and Emergency Management Dee Jackson), (Interim County Administrator)

Bryan Koon is the former Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management and serves as IEM’s Vice President of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. He said his company focuses improving emergency response operations and engaging communities in becoming better prepared for emergencies and disasters.

3. Overview of Presentation (Brian Koon, Vice President of International Security and Emergency Management)

Mr. Koon provided a detailed PowerPoint of the Emergency Management process.

Commissioner Hinson entered at this juncture of the meeting 4:21 p.m.

Natural and Technological Hazards

- Hurricanes
- Tornadoes
- Floods
- Drought
- Wildfires
- Severe Thunderstorms
- Severe Heat and Cold

Technological Hazards

- Terrorism (WMD)
- Mass Migration
- Radiological (REP)
- Hazardous Materials
- Special Events
- Transportation
- Accidents

State Emergency Response Team (SERT)

- Comprised of response partner from other state agencies, voluntary agencies and private organizations.
- Grouped by Emergency Support Function
- 18 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)
- Emergency Coordinating Officers (ECO)

SERT Activation Levels

- Level 3: Monitoring
-Normal, day to day Situational Awareness.
- Level 2: Activation of SERT
-Individual ESF's notified and staffed according to the needs of the event.
- Level 1: Full –Scale Activation
-All ESF's present with the 24-hour operation as needed

4. **Emergency Management Processes in the United States, Florida, and Gadsden County** (Brian Koon, Vice President of International Security and Emergency Management)

Emergency Support Functions

- ESF 1: Transportation (DOT)
- ESF 2: Communications (DMS)
- ESF 3: Public Works (DOT)
- ESF 4: Fire Fighting (DFS)
- ESF 5: Info and Planning (DEM)

Emergency Support Functions

- ESF 6: Mass Care (DBPR)
- ESF 7: Resource Support (DMS)
- ESF 8: Health and Medical (DOH)
- ESF 9: Urban Search and Rescue (DFS)
- ESF 10: Hazardous Materials (DEP)

Emergency Support Functions (further discussion below)

- ESF 11: Food and Water (DOACS)
- ESF 12: Energy (PSC)
- ESF 13: Military Support (DMA)
- ESF 14: Public Information (EOG)

Emergency Support Functions

- ESF 15: Volunteers and Donations (VoIFL)
- ESF 16: Law Enforcement (FDLE)
- ESF 17: Animal Protection & Agriculture (DOACS)
- ESF 18: Business and Economic Stabilization (DEO)

SERT Activation Levels

Level 3: Monitoring; Level 2: Activation of SERT; Level 1: Full – Scale Activation

Commissioner Taylor entered at this juncture of the meeting 4:32 p.m.

ESF 12: Energy (PSC) – Contingency Plans in place with Nursing Homes during Erma: Establish a good communication line with the power company. Find out what the restoration time is. What is needed most and may have to negotiate. Encourage them to communicate directly with their customers and some power companies have apps.

ESF 13: Military Support (DMA) – All federal military; National Guard only Governor can call up.

ESF 14: Public Information (EOG) – Need people in place that are pushing out messages. He stressed that this was a very important person. He said that most importantly they were part of a virtual operation support team.

ESF15: Volunteers and Donations – (VoIFL) Churches utilize them: Tap into them, find out what they need to get the job done. Have open conversations with them what they can and can't do. He suggested they find out what the capacity was. He said to not task them with more than they can do to be successful.

Mrs. Jackson said they currently contract out with the Sheriff's Office for the Emergency Management. She asked him to speak to that whether it was feasible to contract or keep in-house. She said the purpose of the workshop was to speak to the pros and cons of the Emergency Management Division whether to keep in-house or contract out. She asked what the day to day operation would look like.

Mr. Koon referenced the handout of The Role of Elected Officials during Disasters. He commented on the Laws and Authorities.

Chapter 252, Florida Statutes (2009) "State Emergency Management Act"

"State policy for responding to disasters is to support local emergency response efforts. In case of a major or catastrophic disaster, however, the needs of residents and communities will likely be greater than local resources. In these situations, the state must be capable of providing effective, coordinated, and timely support to communities and the public. "Chapter 252.311 (3), Florida Statutes (2009). The Florida Division of Emergency Management is charged with providing "for the rendering of mutual aid among the political subdivisions of the State, with other states, and with the Federal Government with respect to carrying out all emergency management functions and responsibilities." Chapter 252.32 (c), Florida Statutes (2009).

Mr. Koon replied if they wanted to receive funds from the State, they had to have an Emergency Management Program. He said it did not dictate what it looked like; it just said you must have a person that worked a certain number of hours. He said on funding two main things that counties receive Emergency Performance Grant across the country was about a \$350 million a year. He said Florida receives about \$14 million that they split between the State and the locals. He said in the State of Florida there is another called the Emergency Management Preparedness and

Assistance Trust fund that is funded by surcharge on insurance policies, whatever insurance you have you pay an extra \$2.00 or \$3.00 and that goes into a pot of money that is split between the state and federal government that is about \$12 million a year. Florida get's about \$26 million a year to split between the state and the local. He said the NPA fund is set across the counties each county receives the same amount about \$140,000 a year. He said federal funds are based on population size. He said the state roughly gives the County around \$185,000 for Gadsden County from those two funds. He stated that some counties put in money and some counties don't. He said to receive that funding you have to do what is stated in Chapter 252, it says you must have an Emergency Management Program with dedicated personnel to do it. It doesn't say how you must structure in the County. He noted there were three basic structures in the State of Florida some counties use the Board of County Commission (BOCC), Fire, or Law Enforcement Sheriff. He said he would not offer an opinion on which was better. He said it came down to what that individual county decided to do. He said he could talk about the pros and cons in all. It was not broken down by size. He said you tend to see the ones in law enforcement go on the smaller sized counties. He stated fire could run from smallest to largest counties. He said it depended on how you wanted to run things eternally in your county.

He discussed how it would run if it was kept within the Sheriff's Office. He said normally it fluctuated. He recalled there were some counties that pulled it from under the Sheriff's Office and placed in back with the County. He said Walton County was one. He said others such as Lafayette moved it from the County to the Sheriff's Office. He said you could get more bang for your buck with it under the Sheriff's Office because they had other resources to pull from. He referenced additional counties that were run by the Sheriff's Office such as Marion, Ocala, Baker, and Lafayette. It was noted that Leon County just moved from under the Sheriff's Office back to the County. A con under the Sheriff's Office, when given to a Constitutional Officer, would be you give up a little more control.

Commissioner Viegbesie commented on the Sheriff's Office where there was one person helping to make decisions, the actions would move more expeditious he felt than a 5 member board with different perspectives. He said from his personal point of view that letting the Sheriff's Office run it was good as long as they communicated with the County on a regular basis. He felt it would help provide services to the citizens during emergency situations much more effectively and efficiently.

Mr. Koon said from his personal experience working with County Commissioners has proven to be fairly expeditious when dealing with emergency events. He said not always, sometimes an evacuation didn't happen like he would have wanted it to happen.

Commissioner Taylor stated with a department of such importance as Emergency Management, if the County chose to do it in-house, there would be a department in the house that would glean the resources from ESF and all the different levels that would be able to direct the Board to what the County needed. She said there would be some guidance and leadership in-house to help the Board make decisions. She stated they wouldn't be sitting without the resources to make intelligent decisions. She said they would task the Administrator to get someone with just as much experience, training to make decisions collectively, she mentioned it had been done in the past. She said she was more of a component of doing in-house. She said her reason was they too often get called on as elective officials about what was going on and they were not there to give them the correct information. She said they were more sensitive to the needs of the

community because they were the ones that put them there (elected). She said in her opinion she wanted more information and that they all receive the same information at the same time, real-time information. She recalled the other day where a train turned over in Gadsden County. She said she has yet to hear about that and it was reported on the news that there were low-grade chemicals on the train. She said it was her belief when something like that happened Emergency Management kicked in by it being hazardous and something that could affect that community. She said she would like to have a little more hands on so they could be more effective with constituents.

Mr. Koon commented that he had seen good and bad. He said change did not impact how well it could be. He said good communication can flow was essential.

Commissioner Taylor asked based on best practices with this government we would know. She felt it would be improved especially with communication.

Mr. Koon spoke of the pro's of the Sheriff's Office and if he needed a resource of support he could go directly to the Sheriff or his appointed person. He said they would be able to do the same thing with the County only they would need a strong County Administrator or Deputy County Administrator who was able to leverage Public Works or someone to get those things done. He said the Emergency Management Director may not have the same sway as if they were under the Sheriff's Office. He said the power of the Sheriff gets a little bit more resources than what might be seen.

Commissioner Taylor said the structure mentioned earlier, transportation, law enforcement there was Public Works and Emergency Management, etc.... a bunch of services that needed to come together. She mentioned that 90% of the services in place are under the County, not the Sheriff. She said the Sheriff would have to come to her with 90% of his services before he could move effectively. She said based on that most of the services were under the auspice of the County. She said she knew the Sheriff would support any effort to support the citizens.

Mr. Koon replied that Commissioner Taylor was correct; they could have a strong Emergency Management in any of those three structures. He said what it required was strong communication and a central point that made sure all the stakeholders paid attention to the Emergency Manager and got things done. He stated if they were going to go for Sheriff to County Commissioner your point person needs to be able to go to have the support of the Commissioners and be able to go to the different county agencies and say this is how things are going to work. He said the Emergency Manager needed to have the trust and confidence of this person to get those folks engaged with it. He pointed out if it was the Sheriff's Office it was the Sheriff, the County the Administrator and Fire it would be the Fire Chief.

Chair Holt asked what the responsibilities were to work with agencies and Sheriff's Office. She said that way the Commissioners could look and observe then choose plan A or plan B. She said that they wanted to gather information.

Stacey Hannigon of the Health Council posed her question under decision making if it was under the BOCC or an outside entity the response protocol would still be the same.

Mrs. Holt recalled in 2002 Red Cross was over the Emergency Management. She said, in either case, they all reported to the Chairman of the County Commission.

Chair Holt referenced the handout. You shall do these things.

Mr. Koon said the State does mandate that the Counties have an Emergency Management for funding. He said the communication flow could go both ways. State deals with the County, not the cities.

Commissioner Hinson asked about cons with the Sheriff's Office. He reiterated the communication factor. He said there was a perception that an Emergency Management Office under the Sheriff is more law enforcement centered.

Mr. Koon said the con was more fire focused – natural disasters; the sheriff is more law enforcement, county more citizens orientated.

Commissioner Hinson said he just wanted them all to make great decisions. He referenced the last hurricane for the State. He said it was reported that they didn't have an emergency and they lost out on stormwater projects. He commented he thought the Sheriff was doing a wonderful job; it was just that they needed to have good communication before they make a decision that impacts the entire county.

Mr. Koon clarified that because a state of emergency was declared no additional funds are allocated. You get additional funding from the federal government when you have a Presidential Disaster Declaration. He said the Governor could only do a State Emergency. He said with Irma it was his belief they did a State of Emergency across the entire state. He said no additional funds were allocated for that. He stated the funding comes when you have a Presidential Disaster Declaration. He said it goes County by County, one for individuals who are impacted and homeowners, who are impacted, the other is for cost to the government such as the cost of emergency response, road damage, bridge damage, etc. He said there is a threshold one at the state and one at the county level on a per capita basis. He gave for example the State of Florida to receive a Presidential Disaster Declaration it has to be around \$28 million uninsured damage to the State. He said at the local level it is based on about \$3.40 per capita, \$160,000 in uninsured cost.

Commissioner Hinson said the County may not have had a huge hit, but they had a lot of trees to fall on people's homes which should have totaled over a \$150,000. He said he was not there, but he knew for a fact there was more than \$150,000 of uninsured damage.

Mr. Koon replied on the public assistance side it was added up by how much overtime they paid police officers, firemen, the potential damage to roads and bridges. He said on the individual side it went by the number of homes that received different kinds of damage, how many homes that were destroyed by having major damage, minor damage or a little bit of damage. He said they took into consideration all of that. He said it was the totals they give to the County with the help of Red Cross and others to find out how many homes were impacted and in what way and then they would give to the Federal Government and they would say yes it exceeded capacity or no it didn't. He said it would be the same thing on the public assistance side although it was cut

and dry. He said here was the dollar figure. He said regardless of the structure if the Board, Fire or Sheriff, it was whether you met that threshold or not. He said homes fall under the individual assistance program and governmental was schools, road, etc.

Major Shawn Wood of the Gadsden Sheriff's Office responded that the only time they have been able to qualify for assistance was when other counties were contingent upon us. He said they have never been a threshold. He said they have allowed them as a small county to receive help through being associated with a larger county.

Mr. Koon reiterated it was hard for small counties to get a declaration unless a big county in the proximity got it. He said it was difficult to get Presidential Disaster Declaration.

Mr. Andre Walker of BOCC Fire Services thanked Mr. Koon for his presentation and said it was very helpful. He asked that Mr. Koon discuss preparation and preparedness in getting communities ready for disaster.

Mr. Koon said every County has an Emergency Comprehensive Plan and what was important was that they write the plan; get the right stakeholders together. He said they find out who had what resources and what they would be doing. He said you then train and practice the plan.

Commissioner Viegbesie added for an effective Emergency Management execution, no matter what organization was responsible there must be unity. He was striving for continence communication "Unity of Purpose".

Mr. Koon said that could be achieved by all parties coming together. He gave an example, the Board coming together to meet with the Sheriff, the Fire Chief, the Board having internal communication with the County Administrator.

5. **Responsibilities of Local Elected Officials**

(Brian Koon, Vice President of International Security and Emergency Management)

Chair Holt expressed to Mr. Koon he had about 15 minutes before time was called.

Mr. Koon replied that always happens when he presents, he only makes it halfway through.

Commissioner Hinson said he would like for the discussion to be continued. Chair Holt said she would like to see where the County would go next with the Board.

Mr. Koon presented all the things that are required in county emergency.

- Special Needs Registry of all citizens
- Maintaining Shelters
- Generators
- Comp Emergency Plan
- Emergency Plan
- Notification System
- Administration of Grants system

- Mutual Aid Agreement
- Develop Evacuation
- Flooding, Training, and Exercise
- Inspection of Nursing Homes
- Hazardous materials making sure they are documented

6. **Current Issues in Emergency Management and Implications of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria**

(Brian Koon, Vice President of International Security and Emergency Management)

Mr. Koon said priorities in the first 72 hours were very important. He said it was important to first know the order of priorities, second know who was in charge and third know your powers and limitations. He presented the Standing Orders:

1. Establish Communication with impacted areas.
2. Search and Rescue/Security
3. Meet basic human needs (medical, water, food, shelter, emergency fuel-in that order)
4. Restore critical infrastructure
5. Open schools and local businesses
6. Begin the recovery process

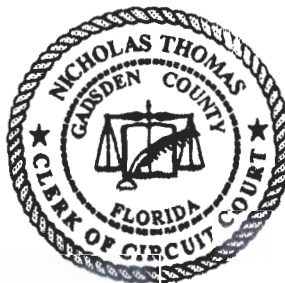
7. **Questions & General Discussion(ALL)**

Chair Holt thanked Mr. Koon for his presentation. She said they would need a follow-up meeting. She mentioned territorial limits that exist, but citizens did not understand. She said they just need to notify the Chairman and all Commissioners when things arise. She said the only problem was lack of communication.

Citizens Requesting to be Heard on Non-Agenda Items (3-minute limit)

Adjournment

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR HOLT DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:00 P.M.



GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

BRENDA HOLT, CHAIR
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, CLERK