

Initial Debrief of Hurricane Milton Response

The Town's senior staff held an initial forensic review and debriefing meeting concerning the Hurricane Milton incident, which primarily impacted the Town by way of a tornado moving from South to North through the Town.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the response and preparation for the event and what went well and what could be improved upon in the future. The overall assessment was that staff, especially those working in the field, had performed well and the response to the tornado, in part due to happenstance, as the crew was immediately available, because of the timing and location of the tornado's movement through the Town, was exceptional.

Issues that were identified for improvement in future events were:

1. Familiarity with debris removal contracts and contractors and Insuring availability of contractors on a pre-storm basis. Earlier contact as an event is imminent even before an emergency is declared in order to assure availability in case of impact is suggested.
2. Earlier identification and training of damage assessment teams prior to hurricane season. Some of this will have to be flexible because of staff turnover and availability.
3. Education outreach as to what the purpose of damage assessment is and what it reflects and the fact that it does not include non structural damage to properties.
4. Need to stay calm about the timing of damage assessment reporting and focus on accuracy.
5. Use of drones to assist in damage assessment was effective, need to consider having contract for such services and availability of services determined on a pre-storm basis as a part of the preparedness checklist.
6. Make sure sufficient vehicles are available for staff to perform all functions including damage assessment. Consider whether contract for rental vehicles should be in place prior to event/season.
7. Need to have sufficient shirts/identification of Town Employment appropriate for tasks available, especially for personnel whose normal function is not in the field.
8. Make sure employees called in are aware that normal office attire and footwear may not be appropriate for the post event assignment.
9. Operation of radio system needs review. Exploration of utilizing school board antenna needs to be done.
10. Generator operation and making sure there are portable generators available for gate operation in case of power outage is essential.
11. Role and coordination of expected functions of outside partners including CERT and volunteer and relief organizations has to be done on a pre-season basis so they have clear understanding of responsibility and Town has clear lines of communication with partners after event.
12. Need to work with Council on their role and function during and after event, especially from a communication to resident's perspective as we don't want contradictory or erroneous information to be released.

13. Communications through website and social media sites was improved because of the event but much work was done in response rather than in preparation to event.
14. SCADA system needs improvement as a priority
15. WIFI being down is problematic for remote operations
16. Pre storm identification of staging and debris removal sites in case of impact
17. Establish contacts with radio stations to communicate information to public in case of widespread power outages impacting more modern communication means
18. Identify organizations outside of Town Employees who are tasked with identifying and monitoring people in distress as it is not a primary function of the Town's team
19. Continued training and off season meetings needed to make sure people know their roles under ICS
 - a. Avoid being reactionary by having more clear roles
 - b. Avoid duplication of assignments and work
 - c. Consider standing briefing meetings to ensure leadership has a common understanding of situation, response, and assignment
20. Consideration of additional support for EMD at EOC
21. Establishment of communication tree for employees

For issues we need to continue to do as part of the recovery effort

22. Review of need to identify damages caused to system including Canal Banks
23. Review of recordkeeping importance and responsibility
24. Review and revise EMP based on experience
25. Follow up debriefing meetings on continued recovery efforts