

Lee County  
Multi-jurisdictional  
Program for Public Information  
2021 Annual Evaluation



Lee County  
*Southwest Florida*

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## 1. Annual Meetings

The committee held a meeting on March 25, 2022 for the annual review of the Lee County Multi-jurisdictional Program for Public Information. The review was for PPI Projects implemented throughout the calendar year of 2021. The sign-in sheets and meeting minutes are attached as Exhibit 1 and 2.

## 2. Committee Members

Jurisdiction	Public Members	Private Members
<b>Bonita Springs</b>	Ayita Williams, Floodplain Manager	Bob Rosier, President, Rosier Insurance
<b>Cape Coral</b>	Wyatt Daltry, Planning Coordinator	<del>Craig McElroy,</del> <del>Cape Coral resident</del>
<b>Estero</b>	Matt Noble, Principal Planner	Marilyn Edwards, Estero resident
<b>Fort Myers</b>	Robert Ward, Floodplain Coordinator  Brent Brewster, Flood Plain Manger	Danielle St. Onge, Realtor Association of Greater Fort Myers and the Beach
<b>Fort Myers Beach</b>	Chelsea O’Riley, Public Works Director*  Kristin Schumacher, Floodplain Coordinator	Jacki Liszak, President Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
<b>Unincorporated Lee County</b>	Betsy Clayton, Public Information Officer  Billie Jacoby, CRS Coordinator	Robbie Roepstorff, President, Edison National Bank  Josh Overmyer, resident of North Fort Myers and SFHA
<b>Sanibel</b>	Harold Law, CRS Director	Chris Heidrick, President, Heidrick & Company Insurance

Craig McElroy is no longer a public stakeholder for the city of Cape Coral. The City is actively searching for a replacement.

\*At the time of this report, Chelsea O’Riley has been removed as a public member as she has since departed the Town of Ft. Myers Beach.

Changes to membership will be reflected in forthcoming addendums.

### 3. Objective

The objective of this annual review of the Program for Public Information is to evaluate the unified messages delivered to affected residents and businesses and the actions taken to reduce danger and property damage caused by flooding.

### 4. Target Audiences

TA #1: Residents and non-resident property owners within the repetitive loss areas. Repetitive loss area owners need information on ways to protect their properties from repeated flooding.

TA #2: Real estate and insurance agents and lenders. Key professionals involved with real estate transactions need to know how to help protect house hunters and other looking for property by advising them of potential flood hazard and the benefits of flood insurance.

TA #3: Media. The electronic media, radio and television stations should give listeners and viewers messages on the flood hazard, evacuation procedures, and flood safety measures.

TA #4: Permit Applicants. Everyone considering a construction project, need to know the floodplain management development regulations and the opportunities to include flood mitigation measures in their projects.

Target audiences remain unchanged.

## 5. Messages and Outcomes

Topic	Messages	Rep loss Areas	Key Professionals	Media	Permit applicants	Results/Outcomes (R)
<b>1. Know Your Flood Hazard</b>	1 – Learn your flood hazard, zone and map information and your evacuation zone.	✓	✓	✓	✓	R1 – Increased requests for FIRM information from the jurisdictions – to be tracked by each jurisdiction  R2 – Increased hits to online zone look-ups and other floodplain management web pages, to be tracked by each jurisdiction
<b>2. Buy Flood Insurance</b>	2 – Buy flood insurance for your home and contents.	✓	✓	✓	✓	R3 – Increase in the number of flood insurance policies, to be tracked by each jurisdiction
<b>3. Protect Property from Flood Hazard</b>	4 – Get a print or online copy of the Lee County All Hazards Guide.	✓	✓	✓	✓	R5 – Increased distribution of the Lee County All Hazards Guide; print versions to be tracked by Lee EOC and downloads to be tracked by all jurisdictions
<b>4. Protect People from Flood Hazard</b>	3 – Ask your community floodplain manager about flood protection assistance.	✓	✓	✓		R4 – Increased calls for flood protection information and site visits; to be tracked by the jurisdictions
<b>5. Build Responsibly</b>	5a – Get a permit before you build.			✓		R6 – Fewer violations for unpermitted or non-compliant construction; to be tracked by each jurisdiction
	5b – Know the safety and insurance benefits of exceeding minimum standards.				✓	R7 – Increase in construction projects that exceed minimum standards; to be tracked by each jurisdiction
	5c – Before you remodel, learn about flood regulations and building codes.	✓	✓			R6 – Fewer violations for unpermitted or non-compliant construction; to be tracked by each jurisdiction.
<b>6. Protect Natural Floodplain Functions</b>	6a – Don't block natural flowways.	✓			✓	R8 – Fewer violations of unpermitted filling or blocking of natural flowways; to be tracked by each jurisdiction
	6b – Report blocked ditches, swales and canals.	✓	✓	✓		R9 – Increased requests for action, to be tracked by each jurisdiction
<b>7. Prepare for Hurricanes</b>	7 – Choose your flood warning system.	✓	✓	✓	✓	R10 – Increased sign-up for personal notification, to be tracked by Lee County Emergency Management

## 6. Projects Completed

Project	Audience	Responsibility/Assignment	Status
OP1 Annual letter	Residents in repetitive loss areas	Floodplain manager or CRS coordinator for each jurisdiction	completed
OP2 Annual letter	Non-resident owners of property in the repetitive loss areas	Floodplain manager or CRS coordinator for each jurisdiction	completed
OP3 Permit applicant brochure	Permit applicants	Floodplain manager or CRS coordinator for each jurisdiction	completed
OP4 Annual media event	Media	Lee County PIO	completed
OP5 Media's Hazard Webpage	Media	Lee County PIO	completed
OP6 Annual agent email	Real estate and insurance agents and lenders	Floodplain manager or CRS coordinator for each jurisdiction	completed

\*It's important to note that OP4 was scaled down significantly due to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation related to COVID-19. The Lee County PIO and her team accommodated the major media outlets by lining up one-on-one sessions with the Emergency Management Director. The PIO selected the largest media outlets and scheduled them throughout the day, performing socially distanced interviews at the EOC. The media were able to ask all of their hurricane/flood related questions during those one-on-one interviews while Lee County staff pushed out import flood related topics/messages.

While not included as an annual PPI project list, below are supplemental outreach efforts performed throughout the year:

- The Lee County PIO office introduced a new tool created on the Lee County website. The Resident Information Lookup (RIL) tool can be used to search an address to find pertinent information such as trash pickup, utility information, and **flood zone information** (the tool is specific to Unincorporated Lee County, but also redirects the public to their respective jurisdiction).
- During the Florida Floodplain Managers Association Flood Awareness Week (first week of March), Facebook posts were created to share information with the public since the implementation of using social media in 2020.
- The Lee County PIO also introduced the JIC (Joint Information Center) that was created for communicators in the county originally created due to the pandemic. It can and has been used for hurricane and flooding events as well. It includes a list of any organizations in the county that have a legal officer or Public Information Officer to send information to. It consists of 87-90 agencies or entities as a way to quickly communicate information.

These three supplemental methods of delivery have been instrumental in communications outreach.

## 7. Progress toward Desired Outcomes (trends)

In March 2022, each community reported the statistical trends (for calendar year 2021 projects) to track the progress toward the desired outcomes of the messages. The PPI committee discussed the fact that the trends may be skewed due to the COVID pandemic. The trends are indicated in the following chart.

I	increase
D	decrease
NC	no change

Outcome/Desired Results	Cape Coral	Sanibel	Unincorporated Lee	Village of Estero	City of Fort Myers	City of Bonita Springs	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Requests for FIRM information	I	D	I	I	I	NC	I
Number of flood protection request	NC	NC	D	I	NC	NC	NC
Violations for unpermitted or non-compliant construction	I	I	I	I	NC	I	I
Violations of dumping/obstructing flows in creek, canals, ditches and streams	NC	I	I	I	NC	NC	NC
Reports of blocked ditches, swales and canals	I	D	I	D	NC	I	NC
Online flood zone look-ups & other floodplain management webpages	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Number of flood insurance policies in force	I	D	I	I	I	I	D
Number of printed copies distributed/downloads of the All Hazards Guide	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Construction projects that exceed minimum standards	I	NC	NC	I	NC	I	NC

**Requests for FIRM information** – Jacoby noted these requests increased significantly with the implementation of the Agents/lenders email project. Temporary spikes can be contributed to the timeframe directly after the email is sent. Since there is such a high turnover rate, many of the newer agents aren't even aware of the services that the municipalities provide until that annual email is sent.

**RFA (Requests For Action)** - The request for actions seemed to trend downward, especially during the pandemic. However, there is always an uptick during rain/storm events.

**Webpage look ups** - In year 2020, there were approximately 8,000 visits to the flood protection information pages. In 2021, that number increased to over 14,000.

**All Hazards Guide** - The Emergency Management/Public Safety Department observed an increase in requests for the All Hazard Guide. As a result of these demands, updates were made to the guide and the annual distribution occurred earlier than scheduled.

After reviewing the current outreach projects and the statistical trends toward desired outcomes, the committee concluded that the current outreach projects should continue to be carried out as outlined in the PPI until the next evaluation/monitoring meeting.

## 8. Flood Response Projects

Flood response projects were implemented directly before and after Tropical Storm Fred and Hurricane Elsa in the year 2021. The list of planned projects is indicated in the chart below. Copies of the FRP responses are available upon request. (note that Cape Coral went to a Level III activation for Elsa).

<b>Flood Response Projects Summary</b>			
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Pre-storm	Media	<b>FRP1</b> Pre-storm news releases	Lee PIO
Pre-storm	Media, all residents and visitors	<b>FRP2</b> Social media postings	Lee PIO
Pre-storm	Media	<b>FRP3</b> News briefings in the EOC	Lee PIO
Post-storm	Media	<b>FRP4</b> post-storm News releases	Lee PIO
Post-storm	Residents and owners of damaged property	<b>FRP5</b> Additional postings on jurisdictions' permitting web pages	Floodplain Administrators or CRS Coordinators for each jurisdiction



## 9. Flood Protection Messages and Outcomes

Timing	Topic Outcome Messages	Media	All Residents and Visitors	Residents and owners of damaged property
Threatening storm or flood	<b>Topic 4. Protect People</b>			
	Outcome: People willingly and quickly evacuate			
	Message: Pack your go-bag and your pet needs	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Topic 6. Protect Natural Floodplain Functions</b>			
	Outcome: Flooding is reduced			
	Message: Report blocked ditches, swales & canals	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Topic 7. Prepare for Hurricanes</b>			
Outcome: People willingly and quickly evacuate				
Message: Obey evacuation notices	✓	✓	✓	

Timing	Topic Outcome Messages	Media	All Residents and Visitors	Residents and owners of damaged property
After a storm or flood	<b>Topic 3. Protect Property</b>			
	Outcome: Injury and more serious property damage is mitigated			
	Message: Do life-saving and damage mitigation immediately	✓		✓
	<b>Topic 4. Protect people</b>			
	Outcome: Injury and more serious property damage is mitigated			
	Message: Do life-saving and damage mitigation immediately	✓		✓
	<b>Topic 5. Build responsibility</b>			
Outcome: Flooded buildings properly repaired (New construction meets code)				
Message: Get a permit for permanent repairs	✓		✓	

## 10. Flood Response Outcome Evaluation

FRPs were implemented during 2021. The FRP materials were reviewed and determined to be current and appropriate.

At the annual committee meeting, the PPI committee reviewed the Lee County Emergency Management Hurricane Elsa After Action Report and the approximate damage assessment results published by Lee County to evaluate the desired outcomes of flood responses project.

Projects 1-6 were successfully implemented. The outcomes for the Flood Protection messages are as follows:

**O1 People willingly and quickly evacuate:** Even though the EOC was activated to Level 1, there were no evacuations or sheltering (the two storms were more rain events as opposed to wind events). O1 - outcomes cannot be determined since there were no evacuations.

**O2 Flooding is reduced:** it was observed that the majority of flooding was limited to ditches, streets and yards. Temporary spikes indicate the RFA system was used to report blockages, doubling in numbers than the previous weeks. There were several reports of minor house flooding, but since the Repetitive Loss Data has not been released to communities, a complete assessment of the outcomes of flooding cannot be performed to identify all flooding. Flooding was reduced in an Iona community in Unincorporated Lee County due to the efforts of the DOT crews working to remove a blockage as part of the Request for Action program. The flood mitigation efforts were broadcast in the local media outlets.

**O3 Injury and more serious property damage is mitigated:** n/a (see O1 comment) During Hurricane Elsa, there were no injuries reported.

**O4 New construction meets code:** n/a (see O1 comment).

## 11. Flood Insurance Trends

The PPI committee agreed that the best way to assess and monitor the trends in flood insurance is by updating the tables in the Lee County PPI that look at insurance policy counts by community. The calculations provide information regarding the general trends of insurance coverage in each jurisdiction as compared to trends in previous years.

The data suggests that coverage increased or remained stable for the majority of the jurisdictions, however the coverage decreased in several communities. It is important to note that evaluation was impacted by the following:

- ❖ This data does not reflect private flood insurance policies.
- ❖ This data doesn't reflect policies dropped due to mortgage pay offs.

2021 Number of NFIP Policies					
	Single Family	2-4 Family	All Other Residential	Non Residential	Totals 2021
Bonita Springs	6,481	1,109	4,560	295	12,445
Cape Coral	27,400	1,261	5,658	387	34,706
Fort Myers	3,679	145	1,697	357	5,878
Fort Myers Beach	1036	379	4,711	117	6,243
Lee County	34,657	7,487	22,126	1,972	66,242
Estero	1,321	129	583	57	2,090
Sanibel	2,782	530	3,688	340	7,340
<b>Total Multijurisdictional Area</b>	<b>77,356</b>	<b>11,040</b>	<b>43,023</b>	<b>3,525</b>	<b>134,944</b>

Previous vs Current Trends			
	Totals 2020	Totals 2021	Trend
Bonita Springs	8,696	12,445	↑
Cape Coral	27,673	34,706	↑
Fort Myers	3,685	5,878	↑
Fort Myers Beach	6,366	6,243	↓
Lee County	52,505	66,242	↑
Estero	1,523	2,090	↑
Sanibel	7,527	7,340	↓
<b>Total multi-jurisdictional Area</b>	<b>107,975</b>	<b>134,944</b>	<b>↑</b>

**The overall multi-jurisdictional trend us upward. The desired outcome of increasing the overall number of flood insurance policies has been achieved.**

## 12. Miscellaneous Tasks

- Floodplain managers and CRS coordinators will view website content monthly to update content and test link: **Completed**. Many committee members have noticed that as FEMA continues to revamp their entire site - which redirects to newly overhauled FFMA, ASFPM and Floodsmart.gov websites, there is a constant state of broken links. The County's website tends to be the main source of information for the entire county in times of peril. The data (that can be found as part of the PPI minutes and back up documentation) prove the spikes in webhits before, during and after storm events. The program that we have in place for broken links is successful and ensures effectiveness of our outreach efforts.
- Floodplain managers and CRS coordinators will update insurance statistics charts each time the NFIP distributes updated, to any member jurisdiction and/or when new CIS (community information system) information is available: **completed**
- The Lee County PIO will maintain an updated contact list of local media: **completed**.
- Floodplain managers and CRS coordinators (prior to the annual meeting of the PPI Committee) will update their contact lists of licensed real estate and insurance agents and lending institutions: **completed**

Property Protection Assistance outreach has been successful. Current protocols will continue to be implemented.

Post-Irma, there is heightened awareness of flood mitigation and communication tools. The expanded virtual outreach efforts have been successful as citizens are acutely aware of the damage that even a minor storm event can do. The heightened awareness is likely to influence flood insurance purchases in the future as there has been a positive trend in policies over the last several years. Without up to date and current flood insurance claim information, it is difficult to determine the exact number of building that were affected by the storms of 2021.

## 13. Final Conclusion

Jurisdictions were forced to adapt to the continued pandemic environment, (especially through more virtual efforts) to accomplish the goals of the PPI. The majority of the outreach projects were successful. The virtual outreach method will continue to be implemented due to such positive results.


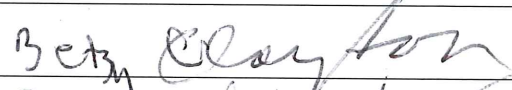
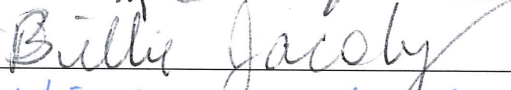
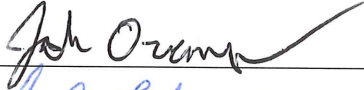
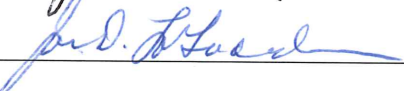

Effective communications result in measureable outcomes. Of course, it is presumed that a variety of other factors (including the rising cost of flood insurance, a relatively active or inactive hurricane season, a relatively dry or rainy summer season) could also affect the outcomes/trends. Therefore, they are viewed as indicators, and not an exact measure of the success of these campaigns.

The committee agreed that other than the simplification of data collection and minor tweaking to the PPI in the form of the usual addendum, there would be no significant changes to the PPI at this point.

Lee County Multijurisdictional Program for Public Information Committee  
Mandatory Annual Monitoring Meeting  
**March 25, 2022**

Exhibit 1

Lee County Community Development/Public Works Center/1500 Monroe St., Fort Myers, Fla. Conference Room 1B

Name	Title/Organization	Community Represented	signature
Ayita Williams Lonergan	Floodplain Manager, Building Inspector	Bonita Springs	Virtual attendance
Bob Rosier	President Rosier Insurance	Bonita Springs	Virtual attendance
Wyatt Daltry	Planning Coordinator	Cape Coral	Virtual attendance
Matt Noble	Principal Planner	Estero	Virtual attendance
Marilyn Edwards	Estero Resident	Estero	Virtual attendance
Robert Ward	Floodplain Coordinator	Fort Myers	Virtual attendance
Danielle St. Onge	Realtor Association of Greater Fort Myers and the Beach	Fort Myers	
Brent Brewster	Floodplain Manager	Fort Myers	
Jacki Liszak	President Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce	FMB	
Kristin Schumacher	Floodplain Manager	FMB	Virtual attendance
Chelsea O'Riley	Public Works Director	FMB	
Betsy Clayton	Public Information Officer	Unincorporated Lee	
Billie Jacoby	CRS Coordinator	Unincorporated Lee	
Robbie Roepstorff	President, Edison National Bank	Unincorporated Lee	Virtual attendance
Josh Overmyer	Resident of North Fort Myers and SFHA	Unincorporated Lee	
Joan LaGuardia	Performance Analyst	Unincorporated Lee	
Chris Heidrick	President Heidrick & Company Insurance	Sanibel	
Harold Law	CRS Director	Sanibel	

Lindsay Hickey	Regulatory Review	Unincorporated Lee	<i>L Hickey</i> <i>CALL</i>
Chelsea Mullens	Regulatory Review	Unincorporated Lee	

## Minutes

# March 25, 2022

## Mandatory Annual PPI Meeting

For  
Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the  
Lee County Multijurisdictional Program for Public Information (PPI)  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

1:00 pm

Please note, the intent of this document is to reflect only the *discussions* held at the annual meeting. The complete annual monitoring report is a separate document that is produced at a later date following the completion of the necessary action items mentioned at the end of this document.

- **Welcome** - Billie Jacoby, CFM, Lee County CRS Coordinator, chaired the virtual meeting and welcomed all those on the virtual conference video/phone call.
- **Introductions** - Committee members in attendance verified by visual or audio introduction:
  - Betsy Clayton, Lee County Public Information Officer;
  - Robbie Roepstorff, Lee County resident and president of Edison National Bank;
  - Billie Jacoby, Unincorporated Lee County CRS Coordinator;
  - Josh Overmyer, Lee County resident (North Fort Myers SFHA);
  - Harold Law, City of Sanibel;
  - Kristen Shumacher, Town of Fort Myers Beach
  - Matt Noble, Village of Estero
  - Ayita (Williams) Lonergan, City of Bonita Springs
  - Wyatt Daltry, CRS Coordinator for the City of Cape Coral;
  - Bob Rosier, (via phone) Bonita Springs resident and president of Bob Rosier Insurance;
  - Robert Ward, City of Fort Myers
  - Danielle St. Onge, Realtor and Fort Myers resident;
  - Marilyn Edwards, Estero resident;
  
  - Also in attendance: Joan LaGuardia, Chelsea Mullens & Lindsay Hickey Unincorporated Lee County
  
  - Absent members:  
Brent Brewster, City of Fort Myers Building Official and Floodplain Administrator;  
Chris Heidrick, Sanibel SFHA resident and principal of Heidrick & Co. Insurance;  
Chelsea O'Riley, Fort Myers Beach, Public Works Director  
Jacki Liszak, President, Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- **Attendance/Quorum** - Attendance fulfilled the requirements for a quorum.
- **Committee Membership Updates** - The Committee agreed to the following membership changes:
  - Craig McElroy, no longer City of Cape Coral public stakeholder. City of Cape Coral is actively looking for a replacement stakeholder

**PPI at a glance summary document** – Jacoby referenced PPI document, which can be found on the Lee County website. She pointed out high importance topics to offer a general scope of the PPI document. Items discussed: target audience identified, mission statement, topics covered, messages used, outreach projects and flood response projects. Jacoby specifically called out the distinction

between the annual outreach projects implemented by Government Staff and the Flood Response projects handled by the PIO (Public Information Officer). Instructions were provided on how to locate the PPI document (and addendums) through Lee County's webpage. Jacoby also verified which communities have adopted the 5 year PPI. The following communities have adopted it: City of Bonita Springs, Sanibel, Village of Estero, Cape Coral, and Fort Myers Beach. Several months after the annual meeting (at the time of finalizing these minutes), Unincorporated Lee County adopted the 5 year PPI. The following communities have not yet adopted it: City of Fort Myers. Jacoby reminded everyone that you must adopt the 5 year 3PPI before your cycle verification visit/CRS audit.

**PPI Project Calendar** – Jacoby provided a brief explanation of the calendar to the newer members mentioning that this document is specifically designed to be used by government members as a guide and reminder to implement the projects at certain due dates throughout the year. It tells us exactly what to do and when it needs to occur by. Response projects are only in storm and hurricane events.

**All Hazards Guide Updates**– The EOC was getting increased requests for the AHG and realized it needed some updates. Jacoby discussed the updated version of the [AHG](#) and explained how to access the online version through Lee County's website. She specifically called out our Flood Preparation sections within the guide. The PRP (preferred risk policy) information has been removed due to Risk Rating 2.0. It is expected to be released on April 1<sup>st</sup>. A news release will be sent out once the updated AHG is available. It will be available in Spanish and Haitian Creole as well.

**Flood Response Projects refresher** - Jacoby provided an outline of what the FRP projects are and when they are disseminated. Stating that if a flooding/hurricane event occurs, during activation of the EOC (Emergency Operations Center), LEE County PIO, Betsy Clayton, will become central spokesperson for the media and will be responsible for communication before, during and after a major storm/flood event. The prepackaged messages (aka "canned" messages) are implemented *only* if the EOC is activated. Within the refresher section in the agenda, a list was provided that displayed the timing, audience, message, project, desired outcome and assignment (who is to implement project).

It was asked if there were any FRP's performed last year. Clayton confirmed that we did have two storm events last year, Elsa and Fred. With Elsa, she stated we were able to use the pre storm and post storm information, because it turned out to be a rather large rain event more so than wind. Even though the EOC was activated, no evacuations or sheltering was necessary. No other communities experienced storm/flood events. Jacoby reiterated the differences between these FRP projects during specific flood/storm/hurricane events as opposed to the normally scheduled yearly PPI outreach projects (that occur in the usual static timeframe as can be seen on the PPI project calendar).

Jacoby shared photos of street/yard flooding in Lee County from Elsa. It mostly created flooding scenarios for Cape Coral, Iona/McGregor, Bokeelia, North Fort Myers, and Captiva. Clayton stated how many newer residents to Lee County called the media upon seeing standing water in the ditch since they may had never been here during rainy season. They most likely did not know that the water was intended to go to those areas in the event of a rainstorm.

**Media related projects** - Betsy Clayton, Lee County PIO reported that she routinely updates the media contact list and provided a hard copy of the lists on record with Billie Jacoby. The list can be obtained upon request. Clayton added that the list is ever evolving due to journalist turnover so it's to be seen as a snapshot in time. The list contains TV traffic reports, bloggers, radio DJs, free newsletter/newspaper publications, Spanish speaking staff and meteorologists. She offered to provide the document at any time during the year, even if it's not related to the PPI, since it is a public document.

**New Virtual Outreach Products** - Clayton touched on the introduction of virtual products that were created out of necessity due to COVID. Their attempt was to provide as many virtual products this year as possible to make the messaging successful. She provided a brief description of the annual rainy season media event relaying that the event usually occurs around June 1 of each year, (in the past, before the pandemic) information stations were set up at various locations in the EOC situation room where media interacted with various county departments/subject matter experts. However, since the pandemic was ongoing in 2021, the event had to be socially distanced and converted to virtual outreach events/projects.

Due to the EOC activation related to COVID-19, Clayton and her team accommodated the major media outlets by lining up one-on-one sessions with the Emergency Management Director. Clayton and her team selected the largest media outlets and scheduled them throughout the day, performing socially distanced interviews at the EOC. The media were able to ask all of their hurricane/flood related questions



during those one-on-one interviews while Lee County staff pushed out import flood related topics/messages.

Clayton cited a new addition to her team who has experience and skills to help create these virtual products. She encouraged any new ideas for any future products. Clayton pointed out that when she is contacted by the media regarding flood related issues, she'll refer them to our webpages for information to share since our webpages are already designed to touch on specific flood related topics as to maintain consistency with the PPI messaging.

During flood awareness week, Facebook posts were created to share information with the public since the implementation of using social media in 2020. Clayton also introduced the JIC (Joint Information Center) that was created for communicators in the county because of the pandemic. It can be used for hurricane and flooding events as well. It includes a list of any organizations in the county that have a legal or Public Information Officer to blast information to. It consists of 87-90 agencies or entities on it for a way to quickly communicate information. Right now, brush fires are being talked about with other agencies.

An example of a communication project that was done recently was for the San Carlos Park flood mitigation project. Money was received post Irma to rip out debris in front and rear yards to prevent flooding in the future. Many people in that area do not speak English in their homes or are renters. A campaign was created by sending a letter directly to the owners, as well as a communication landing page was created with content in English and Spanish. Door hangers were hung throughout the neighborhood as well. Facebook pushes were done also, targeted to that area. It was helpful in learning what works and what does not in communicating with the public.

In summary, Lee County is increasing the ability to communicate using these tools moving forward.

Clayton informed the committee of the restructured All Hazards Guide distribution this year in light of COVID-19. Typically, hard copies are distributed through the County, especially at the Hurricane Seminars and the Annual Rainy Season events. During the pandemic, the public was hesitant to come in contact with the guides and to attend sessions where the guide would have normally been available or distributed. A system was established where anybody could arrange to pick up individual copies or bundles at the EOC at a specific time and location. The process was entirely contact-less to allow the possibility for folks to take those bundles back to their group, community or establishment.

Clayton agreed to provide an "overview" document of media relations/flood messaging communications for 2021.

Clayton introduced a new tool created on the Lee County website. The Resident Information Lookup tool can be used to search an address to find pertinent information such as trash pickup, utility information, and flood zone information. She also asked if anyone had anything that may be helpful to have on this tool to please reach out to her. However, this tool is specific to Unincorporated Lee County. If you are located in Estero, for example the tool will refer you to the Village of Estero for further information in regards to flood zones, etc.

Harold Law inquired as to why other communities are clipped out of tools such as these. Unfortunately, Unincorporated Lee County can only maintain their information. The other municipalities must maintain their own maps, letters of map changes, etc. There was further discussion regarding why exclusions are made in regards to the clipping of other communities from app/website products. Suggestions were made and taken into consideration.

**Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation** – Jacoby reviewed each bullet point on the Implementation, monitoring and evaluation page:

- The Lee County PIO will maintain an updated contact list of local media – **this has been completed.**
- Floodplain managers and CRS coordinators (prior to the annual meeting of the PPI Committee) will update their lists of licensed real estate and insurance agents and lending institutions- **Communities agreed that their lists are kept up to date or they rely on Unincorporated Lee County's robust list to piggy back on for the "lenders/agent" email. It is an ongoing effort due to constant turnover.**

- In year 2020, there were approximately 8,000 visits to the flood protection information pages. In 2021, that number increased to over 14,000. Which shows that our communities are doing a great job linking residents to this site.
- Jacoby shared chart of last 6 years of insurance policy totals. We have had some increases in insurance policies since last meeting.
- Tracking Statistical outcomes: Jacoby noted a new trends document reflected a change in the formatting. Moving forward, we'll show project outcomes as either reduced or increased over time as opposed to granular data. This year's "Trends" document reflects this new simplified approach. Trends documentation for each jurisdiction available upon request.
- Summary of increases/decreases for communities:
- FIRM information requests: All communities saw an increase except for Sanibel.
- Online flood zone searches: All communities saw an increase except for Sanibel.
- Requests for site visits/flood protection information: All saw a decrease except for Sanibel and Cape Coral, which remained the same.
- Violations: All communities saw an increase except for Unincorporated Lee County, which did not have access to data at time of meeting, and Cape Coral, which remained about the same.
- The threshold was discussed in regards to construction projects exceeding minimum standards. Members agreed on 1 foot above freeboard.
- In years when there is a storm event, these items below will also be tracked as outcomes of the Flood Response Projects. This is especially important because we haven't had enough local flooding to establish a good baseline. \* Statistics on evacuation, including occupancy of shelters and traffic counts on major highways – if available \*activation of Lee County and Cape Coral EOC \*General information on the extent of flooding \*general information on injuries and property damage \*statistics on flood-related construction and violations for unpermitted work – **there were two storm events (Lee County activated EOC level 1), however no evacuations or sheltering for any communities.**
- After the PPI committee meets to review the year's outreach programs and the results of outcome monitoring, the annual evaluation report will be finalized and sent to the governing board of each jurisdiction.

Lee County Local Mitigation Strategy is being worked on and will be finalized soon. The LMS is to be adopted by June 19<sup>th</sup> by each community.

**RFA (Requests For Action)** - The request for actions seemed to trend downward. Jacoby speculated the reasoning for this was that during blue skies, there is not a significant need for action compared to rain/storm events. However, we should not back off from putting the message out about RFAs. Even if we can't push messages like "pack your go bag" or "know your evacuation zone" (pre-storm messaging) during a two day rain event or a no-name storm, we should still push the message of reporting of blocked area is right before a storm.

Clayton confirmed she has canned messages for these exact instances (reporting blocked ditches, etc. related to rainy season/no name storms). She doesn't always send out as a news release, she uses it as a response to media once they start covering potential rain events. She suggested that she could take those specific responses that are made to media requests and *format* it like a news release and push it out more frequently.

Jacoby asked for confirmation on any localized flooding events that may have happened this year. There was flooding seen due to Fred and Elsa as noted above.

**Requests for FIRM information** – Jacoby noted these requests increased significantly with the implementation of the Agents/lenders email project. Temporary spikes can be contributed to the timeframe directly after the email is sent. Since there is such a high turnover rate, many of the newer agents aren't even aware of the services that the municipalities provide until that annual email is sent.

**Monthly website content and links check** – Many committee members have noticed that as FEMA continues to revamp their entire site - which redirects to newly overhauled FFMA, ASFPM and

Floodsmart.gov websites, there is a constant state of broken links. Overmyer stressed that this is the very reason that the CRS manual requires communities to check for broken links monthly.

**Flood Insurance Policy trends** – Jacoby brought up the chart showing trends of insurance policies. It appeared that there have been increases in policies in all communities. However, it was noted that many residents are paying off their homes and dropping their flood insurance when no longer required by them.

**Final conclusion** - The committee agreed that other than the simplification of data collection and minor tweaking, there would be no significant changes to the PPI. Robert Ward made a recommendation to insert the url weblink for the All Hazards Guide in the PPI document for easy reference. Harold Law suggested new/updated structural numbers and Overmyer agreed.

**Determination if subsequent meeting is necessary** – Jacoby did not believe any follow-up meetings are required. If needed, email or Zoom communication can be used. The committee agreed.

**Discussion requirements** - Jacoby concluded that the annual meeting discussion requirements were met (as listed on page 8 of the agenda) and the committee agreed.

**Action items** – Small tweaks to PPI, additions to the addendum. The committee agreed.

**Meeting adjourned.**