



## Hurricane Ian After Action Report January 2023

### Background:

Hurricane Ian hit Southwest Florida on September 28, 2022 as a category 4 hurricane. Ian was the deadliest hurricane to hit Florida since 1935 with at least 157 fatalities. Marco Island experienced an average of 8 feet of storm surge and had 304 residential buildings and 63 commercial buildings with significant damage. Over 300 vessels were displaced or damaged. While Marco Island was not impacted as severely as some other communities, Ian was a major event for the City and we are now working through the lessons learned and developing an improvement process as we prepare for the 2023 hurricane season.

Below is a summary of activities conducted in each phase of the event. These lists are not all inclusive but highlight some of the major activities undertaken by City staff.

### Hurricane Preparedness Summary (September 23-26):

- Directors held daily storm preparation briefings and staff meetings
- Directors/managers communicated to employees assigned to work during the event
- Emergency notifications and inspections of all active construction sites were completed by staff
- Public information outreach and media interviews were conducted
- Evacuation criteria was analyzed and decisions were made
- City facilities were secured
- Emergency Operations Center was set up with necessary IT equipment
- Call center was set up and staffed
- Staff coordinated with gas stations, hotels, grocery stores
- City facilities were closed to the public
- Evacuation orders were issued
- City acquired an ambulance for emergency transport

### Hurricane Impact Summary (September 27-29):

- Roads began to flood by 9:00am on 9/28/22 (emergency response limited to one vehicle)
- Requested additional brush trucks and Swift Water Rescue team from the State for additional rescue missions on Marco Island
- Goodland and Marco Island residents were rescued from flooded homes
- Community Room was established as shelter/safe refuge area
- All roads flooded by 5:00pm 9/28/22
- Ongoing vehicle and structure fires were reported
- 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue homes evacuated due to flooding
- Cable/T3 connectivity was lost in Emergency Operations Center (Star Link back-up used)
- Curfew established for public safety
- 18 national media interviews conducted to provide status updates
- 12 City vehicles flooded

#### **Hurricane Recovery Summary (September 30 – January 8):**

- Fueled facility generators and City vehicles
- Located and documented derelict boats
- Established boating ban
- LCEC began restoring power on 9/30/22 (9,000 residents without power)
- Vehicle and structure fires increased
- County 9-1-1 system down for approximately 6 six hours on 10/1/22
- Building and infrastructure damage assessments conducted by staff
- Waterway debris assessments were conducted
- Two Fire Engines arrive to assist MIFR with increased fires in the City
- 152 welfare checks were conducted by MIPD
- Mackle Park opened as a cooling/charging center for residents and meal station for staff
- Public Works conducted traffic signal restoration and cleared roads
- Debris collection began
- Directors met with staff for departmental after-action review

#### **Future Actions for Improvement:**

- Clarify in advance the individual roles and ensure assignments are clear to assigned personnel
- Add position depth in the Emergency Operations Center
- Communicate early and often regarding schedules, sleeping quarters, emergency pay
- Pre-plan safe vehicle parking
- Establish sufficient food supplies for assigned staff
- Develop a continuity of operations plan
- Identify housing for employees who have damaged homes

- Establish separate meeting rooms for City Council and City Manager
- Improve communication with cable and internet providers
- Identify mode of communication with off-island staff and off-island meeting location
- Address expectations of the public regarding wi-fi and cable/internet access
- Identify a community liaison to coordinate unmet community needs
- Establish process/personnel for employee welfare checks
- Identify equipment/resources needs
- Allot employees time to prepare their homes and families
- Update equipment and test City AM radio
- Build redundancy for emergency vendor services
- Outreach to local FM radio stations as an additional line of public communication

#### **City Council Action Items:**

- City Council declared a local state of emergency on September 26, which ended November 23, 2022.
- City Council approved a new emergency pay policy
- City Council approved additional high-water vehicles as a legislative priority

#### **Employee Survey:**

In preparation for the after action report and improvement plan, we sought feedback from all City employees. OnPointe Insights, the organization that conducted our citizen survey in March 2022, agreed to provide a free employee survey following Hurricane Ian. The employee survey was developed two and a half weeks after the hurricane. We sent the survey link to our employees on 10/18/22 and the results were compiled and accessible through an online dashboard by 10/28/22.

We know how important our employees are and we could not plan, respond, or recover from any crisis without their commitment and hard work. The results of the survey have been included in the areas of improvement listed above and will be developed into a thorough improvement plan.

#### **Summary of Results:**

- 149 out of 241 employees completed the survey; of those who completed the survey:
  - 77% were assigned to work during the hurricane
  - 61% sustained some damage to their homes
  - 82% reported feeling minor or high strain in terms of personal impact
  - Employees reported that communicating with them before the event was “most important” and the majority reported a rating of “poor” performance
  - During the incident employees reported that scheduling and food resources for feeding assigned staff were most important and these areas were rated “poor”

- During hurricane recovery, debris pick up was deemed most important and the rating from employees was good.
- Where the City ranked highest was in resuming services (traffic, public safety, water/sewer services)

**Next Steps:**

A planning cell has been established to meet twice a month during January - May to address the issues identified for improvement. Each item will be assigned to a Director and given a deadline for completion. Additionally, the Incident Command organizational structure has been updated to identify the right staff members in the right positions, and each person assigned duties in the Emergency Operations Center will complete the appropriate FEMA courses. In May the executive leadership will be prepared to provide a hurricane preparedness briefing to both the public and all City employees.