

EMERGENCY MEETING

HURRICANE WILMA

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

OCTOBER 21, 2005

An Emergency Meeting was held this day at the Murdock Administration Complex. The following were in attendance: Chairman Sara J. Devos and Commissioners Thomas G. Moore and Tom D'Aprile. Also in attendance were County Administrator Bruce D. Loucks, County Attorney Janette S. Knowlton, and Supervisor of Minutes Diane J. Nice. The meeting was called to order at **3:00 P.M.** (Commissioners Cummings and DeBoer were not present for the meeting.)

Chairman Devos explained the purpose of the meeting and turned the meeting over to the "Best of the Best" who manages the County's emergency needs. Wayne Sallade, Emergency Management Director, showed the 11:00 AM forecast advisory from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that is issued every six hours; reported he attended a meeting on Tuesday in Tallahassee, the projected land fall was almost the same as the current projection at Marco Island, and it has been consistent for 48 hours; the models have been very consistent based upon the path of the cold front which will leave temperatures in the low to mid 50's; and reviewed the projected path of Wilma through projected landfall on Sunday along the Southwest Florida coast. Mr. Sallade reported the NOAA forecast group from McDill Air Force Base in Tampa flew the G-4 Gulf Stream Jet in and around Wilma in the Caribbean; the GFS model reflects Wilma going over the Yucatan for two days and being reduced to a tropical storm; then the cold front picks it up and moves it rapidly east and east northeast towards a Florida land fall as a hybrid; considering possible changes, this area may experience tropical storm force winds and possibly hurricane conditions although landfall is projected somewhere between Ft. Myers and Key West. Mr. Sallade stated information will be disbursed through numerous television stations; recalled four hurricane hits and threats last year and this year there have been Dennis, Katrina, Rita, and now Wilma; never before have there been three

Category V hurricanes in one year but this year e.g. Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, the strongest hurricane ever in the Western Hemisphere, that bottomed out at 882 millibars yesterday during the over night hours which was 6 millibars below the Great Gilbert of 1988. Mr. Sallade reviewed the animated path map reflecting wind velocity and directions; tropical storm force winds are anticipated in Charlotte County at about 11:00 A.M. EDT on Sunday, October 23, 2005; the winds are from the east to the west with a significant degradation of winds over land so tropical storm force winds will be experienced only along the outer coast; tropical storm force winds of 39 mph or greater may last 19 hours with 20 mph to 25 mph winds over the land area; winds at landfall are projected at 121 mph (Category III) with the eye on Marco Island and the highest storm surge of 16 feet towards Everglades City and Goodland (to the right and south of the eye); the model consensus has moved the track further south towards the Ten Thousand Islands area; hopefully, the storm will stay south of Charlotte County; it is too early to recommend and take protective measures except the Lemon Bay High School and the Port Charlotte/Punta Gorda High School football games have been moved up to tonight; related the Miami Dolphins/Kansas City Chief's game has been moved up from Sunday to tomorrow night in Miami; the Miami Hurricane's game has been postponed until November 2005; schools will be in session tomorrow; and introduced Gerry Mallet for an update on shelters. Gerry Mallet, Emergency Coordinator, explained a Level 2 or partial activation is anticipated for tomorrow and Saturday and, if a full activation is necessary, it will commence at 6:00 A.M. Sunday and continue until the storm is over; and if shelters and special needs become necessary, staff will look at them tomorrow afternoon to make announcements on the evening news cycle. **Commissioner D'Aprile** requested confirmation of the landfall and questioned the cold front impacts. Mr. Sallade explained pre-eye landfall hazard time when conditions prevent movement safely of people and emergency vehicles; pointed out yesterday, Wilma reached 175 mph extending out 15 miles from the center with a 2-mile wide eye; and advised the wind field will expand as the storm weakens. Mr. Sallade explained numerous possibilities exist for Wilma's landfall and path ranging from Charlotte County to the south edge of Cuba, across middle Cuba and out through the Bahamas and pointed out this will be the first real strong cold front of the season. **Commissioner Moore** requested a schedule for evacuating barrier islands and bridges. Mr.

Sallade advised bridges along the coast are under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard and bridges over I-75 and the Peace River are under Florida Department of Transportation; staff will be working with the agencies to limit such travel when sustained winds reach 45 mph. **Commissioner Moore** questioned the time line to evacuate Manasota Key. Mr. Sallade stated his preference is to commence evacuations at daylight, possibly Saturday; informed the Board that Wilma is not a storm surge event, only a wind event and residents should consider in-place evacuations; if the tract continues more southward, Charlotte County should not get any significant rain or wind and no surge; and there will be a significant tornado threat in Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties based on the projected path. **Chairman Devos** requested comments from Dr. Gayler. Dr. David E. Gayler, Charlotte County School District Superintendent, advised schools will be open tomorrow but Monday is questionable; indicated staff will be working with the Board, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) officials, and the Sheriff's Office; School officials have been in constant communication with EOC and steps have been taken to ensure the safety of students and staff to the maximum extent possible; and email advisories have been sent out and more information will be sent out regarding the NTI calling system. **Commissioner D'Aprile** questioned the availability of schools for shelters. Dr. Gayler stated there are no certified Red Cross shelters but several schools have been hardened including Kingsway Elementary, Port Charlotte Middle, and Liberty Elementary; Vineland, and L.A. Ainger are available for sheltering in West County; and no schools are available in Punta Gorda. **Chairman Devos** announced representatives are present from the School Board, Sheriff's Office, Fire/EMS, City of Punta Gorda, various hospitals, and County staff; requested everyone to pay close attention to radio and television broadcasts for up-to-date information; and suggested telephone calls be directed to 2-1-1 for hurricane information. **Chairman Devos** requested a motion to approve the resolution. **COMMISSIONER D'APRILE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE ADOPTION OF AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION #2005-209 OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DECLARING A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY AND PROVIDING FOR EMERGENCY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS RELATED TO HURRICANE WILMA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MOORE AND DECLARED UNANIMOUS (3:0).** Bruce D. Loucks, County Administrator, stated this is not a time to panic but to be aware and be prepared to shelter within your home; and

shelter information will be made available within the next two days.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 3:30 P.M.

Signature on file in Commission Minutes
Sara J. Devos
Chairman

ATTEST:

BARBARA T. SCOTT, CLERK
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND
EX-OFFICIO TO THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

By: Signature on file in Commission Minutes
Deputy Clerk

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