

**HMPU 2020**  
**Steering Committee**  
**December 3, 2019**  
**Meeting 4 Notes**

The meeting began with a welcome from Jennifer Gerbasi, Recovery Planner and presenter at the revised location in the Robert J. 'Bobby' Bergeron Government Tower. Participants were asked to please sign in and pick up the materials available. Mr. Mike Toups, Parish Manager, was able to attend the meeting and also welcomed the participants. The presenter briefly went over the agenda for the day, and invited the subcommittees to have the floor if they had reports. They did not have reports at this time, and reiterated their commitment to a longterm and ongoing interest in the subcommittee topics.

As the first order of business, discussion of the Meeting Notes was invited, which were accepted as sufficient at the motion of Rachael Ellender.

After a brief discussion of the past process, the meeting turned to the discussion of the projects and initiatives that will be necessary to reduce the residual risks faced by the Parish. This included updated maps, a reminder of the previous meeting presentations, a recap of project types available through The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) initiative kicking off next year for FEMA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program and the FEMA Strategic Plan approach and priorities.

### **Advanced Assistance for Modeling and Data Updates**

The group thought that Advanced Assistance applications would be useful to provide studies and modeling that should be available for the Parish to be able to ascertain the value and impact of various activities. These included an update to basin models, drainage studies, and a review of the models used by FEMA to eliminate inaccuracies.

### **Transportation**

Transportation was the most discussed new option from the BRIC program. Highway 90 is a main evacuation route, but it is exposed to overtopping by flooding at several places along the route, which is used by New Orleans and other populations beyond the Parish. Portions of the highway were impassable for a month in 1998 as a result of Hurricane George. This and our internal evacuation routes should be reviewed and the risks mitigated if possible. Oneil Marlborough stated that the lack of any benefit cost assessment for the loss of a major artery was a barrier to receiving federal funds towards the improvement of any of the routes. This will be revisited after study in the next meeting. Mart Black further discussed the importance of mass transit to move people to jobs and

commercial activities in recovery, and the need to have roads clear and our buses present. All agreed that the transportation for evacuations run by the Parish was significantly improved since Gustav/Ike, and no further suggestions were made. Mark Stevenson suggested that the airport is underutilized and needs at least a generator if not a new tower to be certain that it is fully functional after an event.

### **Public Education**

Public Education was a recurring theme in the meeting. Many items, including the six (6) parish evacuation routes available covered in the transportation discussion were identified as available, but not publicly known. To provide a culture of resilient residents, the opportunities, assets, contacts, or procedures must be known, maybe through social media.

### **Safety**

Regarding safety, the Levee District requested safe room, and Chris Pulaski suggested that during the design process for all public buildings built hereafter we should consider whether a safe “room” should be incorporated into design if the whole structure does not need to meet the Category 4 or 5 requirements. The current after event shelters were rejected as options for hardening for safe rooms due to the expense, but generators should be available for use on the auditoriums and schools.

### **Standards and Financing**

There was a suggestion that public buildings should all be built to the 500 year standard. Also, Katie Tabor suggested that designs should be forward thinking and make allowances for maintenance and increased height of the levee system and other construction to adjust for sea level rise or subsidence. The Morganza to the Gulf, Reggie Dupre explained, has a long term maintenance plan that is supported by tax dollars. He also stated that some in the investment community are shying away from the Parish/coast, and they need to be educated as to the steps that have been taken in the Parish for our economic stability and resilience. To save and maybe raise funds, a wetland bank to pay for terraces to protect the levee system and marshes was proposed. Nia Picou-Bowens educated the group on the requirement that the bank had to offer the same type of wetland or other property type that was being replaced through the mitigation bank. Coastal marsh or estuary may not be in high demand as most wetland loss is in more upland areas, comparatively. Tara Lambert and Reggie Dupre introduced the need to use Law and Ordinance coverage to help substantially damaged homes to come into compliance.

There were several lists of projects that will be captured in the next presentation, and suggestions for changes to the objectives. The meeting wrapped up with a quick introduction of the model that will be used to prioritize projects in the next meeting including cost effectiveness.

The meeting was adjourned.