

Pinellas County

*Pinellas County Cooperative Extension
12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo*



Minutes - Final

Sunday, July 4, 2021

4:00 P.M.

Emergency Meeting

Board of County Commissioners

*Dave Eggers, Chair
Charlie Justice, Vice-Chair
Rene Flowers
Pat Gerard
Janet C. Long
Kathleen Peters
Karen Williams Seel*

ROLL CALL - 4:05 P.M.

Present: 5 - Chair Dave Eggers, Vice-Chair Charlie Justice, Rene Flowers, Pat Gerard, and Janet C. Long

Absent: 2 - Kathleen Peters, and Karen Williams Seel

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; and Chris Bartlett, Board Records Supervisor

1. Consideration of Local State of Emergency for Tropical Storm Elsa

Chair Eggers and Mr. Burton provided introductory comments, and Mr. Burton related that the Emergency Operations Center is at a level-three enhanced monitoring of Tropical Storm Elsa; and that staff has been coordinating with city managers, partner agencies, and other County departments during the past several days in preparation for the storm.

Director of Emergency Management Catherine Perkins referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided information regarding the storm, indicating that tropical storm force winds will likely arrive Tuesday evening; that the rainfall projection is two to four inches with isolated amounts up to six inches, and storm surge of one to three feet above ground level; and that there is concern for potential flooding in certain areas. She related that a storm risk tool is available on the County website to show the potential storm surge risk; whereupon, she encouraged residents who live in the coastal or low-lying areas to utilize the tool to determine flooding risks for their homes.

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri urged everyone to listen to the advice and guidance from Emergency Management and noted that his personnel are on standby to assist with flooding, if needed.

In response to queries by Chair Eggers, Attorney White advised that the proposed Local State Emergency (LSE) would provide the County with operational discretion by waiving the procedural requirements pertaining to response and recovery measures; and that the July 8 Work Session meeting notice should be revised if the Board would be taking action to suspend the LSE at that time, rather than letting it expire in a week.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Long, Sheriff Gualtieri related that he does not foresee utilization of the Barrier Island Re-Entry Program, but it is available for use during mass evacuations due to a hurricane or tropical storm; whereupon, he encouraged beach residents and businesses to register with the program to receive passes for island re-entry after such an incident, noting that the passes do not expire.

In response to a query by Chair Eggers, Ms. Perkins provided insight relating to how the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service work to properly assess the severity of a tropical storm and its potential to become a hurricane, emphasizing that staff will continue to monitor the current situation. Mr. Burton indicated that the Executive Policy Group will have a call tomorrow afternoon to solidify decisions regarding preparedness and response; and that the Group's recommendation is to adopt the LSE.

No one appeared in response to the Chair's call for public comment.

Upon suggestion by Chair Eggers and following discussion, with input from Mr. Burton and Attorney White, the members did not object to the advertisement being revised for the July 8 Work Session to provide flexibility in rescinding the LSE, should it be appropriate.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Gerard, that the proposed resolution declaring a Local State of Emergency be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Eggers, Vice-Chair Justice, Commissioner Flowers, Commissioner Gerard, and Commissioner Long

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Peters, and Commissioner Seel

Resolution No. 21-43 adopted, declaring a Local State of Emergency as of 4:00 P.M. on July 4, 2021, as provided in Section 252.38(3)(a)5, Florida Statutes.

ADJOURNMENT - 4:27 P.M.

ATTEST: KEN BURKE, CLERK

By _____
Deputy Clerk

Chair