

**MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA
LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES
October 16, 2024**

A public hearing of the Marion County Local Mitigation Strategy Committee was held on October 16, 2024 at 10:00am in the Marion County Growth Services Training Room, 2710 E. Silver Springs Boulevard, Ocala, Florida.

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am. Members present were: MCSO Emergency Management Erin Miller, Marion County BCC – Marie Brooks, City of Ocala - Randy Hafin, City of Ocala – Wanda Bowlin, Advent Health – Sean Lanier, City of Ocala. Staff members present were: Growth Services Transportation Planner Kenneth Odom, Growth Services Director Chuck Varadin, and Staff Assistant Kelly Hill.

We did not have a quorum.

Erin Miller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was noted that the meeting met the Sunshine Law requirements and Posting of Notice can be found on the Marion County Website.

1. ACTION ITEMS:

1.1 Ocala Electric Utilities

Replace overhead electric utility lines with underground transmission lines around the two downtown hospitals. Ocala Electric Utilities (OEU) is in the process of submitting this application through the FDEM/FEMA Application Portal.

Randy Hahn with the City of Ocala discussed benefits of having underground powerlines in order to decrease interruptions in power to critical care customers including medical care, general surgery, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and other medical services provided by both downtown hospitals. Funding might not be available without a grant. Ken Odom added to the discussion regarding budget availability and splitting the project into phases. Ken Odom will check with other municipalities around the state to see how they have been able to navigate comparable projects and what kind of expenditures they are having

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2.1 HMGP FY 2024 – 4th Quarter Overview

Ken Odom discussed water treatment plants and funding for two backup portable generators in the event power goes down.

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2.2 LMS Five-Year Update Process & 2023 FL Review Tool

East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC) has gotten more involved than in previous years. Their Resiliency Council has dedicated staff to work on the Five-Year Plan. We will also be extending outreach to the public for their involvement. There is a new requirement system that was established last year by FEMA, which includes a scoring system with new areas to be evaluated on when reports are being reviewed.

2.3 Ocala Electric Utilities

The City of Ocala Electric Utility (OEU) seeks funding to convert two electrical power distribution feeder circuits that are currently installed overhead and provide electric power to the Ocala Regional Medical Center hospital and Advent Health Ocala hospital. This project will convert the existing overhead electrical lines to underground lines, thus providing continuous underground electrical connections from the closest power substation to each of the hospitals. This will provide the most reliable electrical connection to both hospitals by eliminating the persistent vulnerability that these overhead lines have from wind and falling branches. Ken Odom to research comparable projects around the state to find out about funding and grants.

3. COMMENTS:

3.1 Steering Committee/Work Group Comments

3.2 Public Comments: There was no one in the audience to bring forward any public comments and the chair closed the public portion of the hearing.

4. OTHER BUSINESS: Next scheduled quarterly meeting: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 10:00 AM in the Growth Service Building – Training Room

5. MINUTES: November 01, 2023, February 24, 2024 and July 17, 2024 minutes were not adopted due to lack of quorum.

ADJOURNED: The meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.


Erin Miller, Chair

10-15-25
Date

Attest:

 for
Kelly A. Hill, Staff Assistant IV
