

Open Work Session
2022 Wicomico County Hazard Mitigation & Resilience Plan
April 5, 2022

Mr. Lorenzo Cropper, Deputy Director of Emergency Services, came before Council. He introduced Ms. Michelle King and Ms. Virginia Smith with Smith Planning and Design.

Mr. Cropper said the reason they are here is to talk about the 2022 Wicomico County Hazard Mitigation Plan. He said it is basically an update from their 2016 plan with some significant changes. He said mainly they added probably double the size of the Committee. He said they looked for a diverse group and wanted a true representation of their community, so they had people from all walks of life, whether it be industry, education, nonprofits, etc. He said they even went with the Lower Shore Vulnerable Taskforce to get that side, which they were very helpful, especially with their website on the backend, which was the Wicomicohazard.org website, which the ladies did a lot of the work through that website. He said one of the things that the Lower Shore Vulnerable Taskforce did was come up with some verbiage that was not acceptable to certain groups, so they went back and looked at that to get input from different ethnic groups.

Mr. Cropper said the reason for the approved Hazard Mitigation Plan is that FEMA requires one for non-emergency funded grants, i.e. housing elevation grants that they have done in the County, and just other projects they may come up with or the municipalities may come up with. He clarified, this is not only a plan for the County, but the eight municipalities, and they also had participation from the eight municipalities, the volunteer fire service, career fire service, and just about any group in Wicomico County.

Mr. Cropper said they had a few changes besides expanding the group. He said they added a section for active assailant that went more in-depth, as well as expanding on the pandemic section since they were in COVID. He said that was done with help from the Health Officer and Tidal Health.

He said, pending adoption, as this is an approved plan by FEMA, having this Work Session with the Council is the first step before getting it adopted and moving forward.

Mr. Cropper said these young ladies were unbelievable in assisting in this.

Ms. Aclé asked if there is a designated shelter for natural disasters, to which Mr. Cropper responded, there are actually a couple of shelters they utilize in the County.

Mr. Hastings said this is quite a document at 512 pages, and he does not know if there is anything that stands out other than the changes that happened. He said he tried to skim it and make sure that nothing stood out to him, but it looks really great and really comprehensive, and they did a wonderful job. He then asked if there is anything else Mr. Cropper thinks Council should spend time thinking through, to which Mr. Cropper responded, he is not aware of anything specific right now. Mr. Hastings said the outreach was really well received and he thinks Mr. Cropper got a lot of good folks in there. He said he only saw it once on page 200-something where they mentioned the paleo channel, and that is an important resource that he does not think they often say enough about. He said, as they know, there are few other places in the country that have that kind of resource, so any kind of extra protection on that


should really be focused on. He said he knows the County has its own regulations with that, but he cannot overemphasize that enough. He said this was great work.

Mr. Cannon said he does not know how anybody begins to get their head around a 512 page document, and the whole thing was very professionally done. He said Mr. Cropper included all the issues the County had and the recent storms when they lost Barren Creek Road, and it is completely current with everything he thinks they would be looking for, so he applauds them on an excellent job.

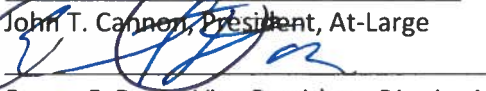
Mr. Cannon asked Mrs. Hurley what the process is from here, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, it requires a Public Hearing, which they can have on April 19. Mr. Cannon asked if the Council will formally adopt this, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, that is correct. She said it only requires advertising one time, so they can do this on April 19 at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Cannon said Mr. Cropper is welcome back for that meeting, but he does not see any problems, as this is a very good project. He clarified, Mr. Cropper is welcome to come to the next meeting, but they would not be upset if he did not show up. He said, if anyone has any questions between now and then, they can reach out to Mr. Cropper and ask.

Mr. Hastings said his wife served on one of the committees, and she enjoyed the process. He said they all did a fantastic job and it is well done. He said it is a great product to read through and is very comprehensive.

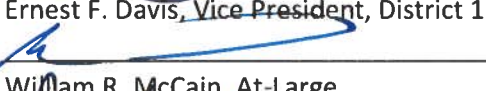
There was no further discussion.



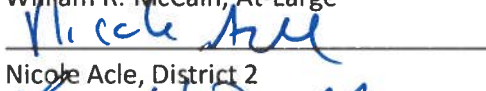
John T. Cannon, President, At-Large



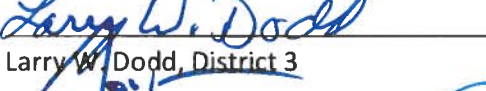
Ernest F. Davis, Vice President, District 1




William R. McCain, At-Large



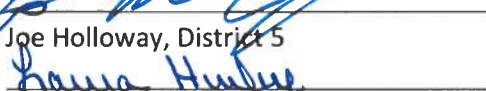
Nicole Acle, District 2



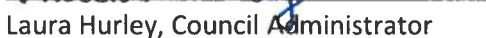
Larry W. Dodd, District 3



Josh Hastings, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator