Board of Commissioners met on Monday, October 17, 2016 at 4:00 PM in the Eugene James Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina.

Board Members Present:

Beth B. Ward, Chair  
Melvin McLawhorn, Vice-Chair  
Tom Coulson, Commissioner  
Charles H. Farley, Commissioner  
Jimmy Garris, Commissioner  
David Hammond, Commissioner  
Mark W. Owens, Jr., Commissioner  
Mary Perkins-Williams, Commissioner  
Glen Webb, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager  
Mike Taylor, Deputy County Manager/Chief Information Officer  
Janis Gallagher, County Attorney  
Duane Holder, Deputy County Manager/Chief Financial Officer  
Kimberly Hines, Clerk to the Board  
Jordan Smith, Assistant County Attorney  
Jan Elliott, Social Services Director  
Tim Corley, County Engineer  
John Demary, Solid Waste Director  
Allen Everette, Emergency Management Director  
Florida Hardy, Human Resources Director  
James Rhodes, Planning Director  
Neil Elks, Sheriff

Welcome

Chairman Ward welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the employees for all their dedication during Hurricane Matthew.

Presentation

Mr. Everette stated Hurricane Matthew brought devastating flooding and strong winds to eastern North Carolina including Pitt County during the evening on Saturday, October 8th and Sunday, October 9th. He stated the main legacy of Hurricane Matthew for Pitt County was catastrophic flooding. He stated river flooding levels not seen since Hurricane Floyd in 1999 caused millions of dollars of damage and multiple deaths across the region, including one storm-related death in Pitt County. He stated Hurricane Matthew produced 6-9 inches of rainfall across the County with 30 – 40 mph winds with gusts of 59 mph.

He stated the forecast continually changed, making it difficult for the National Weather Service to provide a great detail of confidence with the information they provided to the response
agencies. He stated the hurricane was uncertain as the track shifted west making landfall in South Carolina on Saturday, October 8th. He stated the shift changed the impact that eastern NC would face. He stated even with the uncertainty, Pitt County was preparing early in the week ahead for possible impacts that Hurricane Matthew may expose. He provided the following summary:

He stated the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) was activated on Friday, October 7th and returned to partial activation on October 17th. He stated it was activated for 9 continuous days with 24/7 coverage with a number of different departments assisting with response needs. He stated a State of Emergency was signed by Chairman Ward with the opening of the EOC.

He stated equipment was pre-staged at different Pitt County School locations in anticipation of opening shelters as the storm approached; with assistance from the NC Forest Service. A total of 5 shelters were open during the incident, starting on Friday, October 7th (Ayden Middle School, Wellcome Middle School, Hope Middle School, EB Aycock and North Pitt High School). He stated the highest occupancy count was 294 individuals for the combined shelters and Wellcome Middle maintained the highest occupancy during the incident. He stated when The Town of Ayden lost power, it affected the operation of Ayden Middle. He stated those individuals were re-located to Hope Middle, until the power could be stored several days later. He stated Pitt County DSS, Pitt County School, Pitt County Public Health and the Sheriff’s Department, all played major roles in the shelter operations. He stated they were prepared to open the Special Medical Needs Shelter at the Walter Jones Rehabilitation Center, but it was not needed during the activation. He stated DSS and Public Health did address 12 individuals with Special Medical Needs along with Red Cross. He stated Universal Health and Southern Living assisted with lodging with transportation provided by PATS.

He stated the Pitt County Animal Shelter was opened for individuals wishing to shelter their pets. He stated they have been caring for 200 pets that were dropped off. He stated additional animal shelter equipment had to be brought in from a neighboring County to assist with housing the pets. He stated additional animal shelter staff came in from other Counties to assist our staff and volunteers.

He stated curfews were enacted in the County as well as several of the municipalities during the incident.

He stated there were many outside response agencies that assisted. Some include:

- (3) North Carolina National Guard (NCNG) Teams w/ 10 high wheel clearance vehicles
- (2) NCNG Teams were stationed North of the Tar River
- (1) NCNG Team was stationed in the Ayden-Grifton area
- (3) Swift Water Rescue teams
- (2) Teams were stationed North of the Tar River
- (1) Team was stationed in the Ayden-Grifton area
- North Carolina Wildlife assisted in areas North of the Tar River

He stated in terms of feeding operations, daily meals were delivered to staging points for the North Carolina National Guard and Swift Water Teams assisting throughout the County and municipalities. He stated the Red Cross established mobile meal distribution routes throughout the County.

He stated power outages were experienced throughout the County, with the longest duration being in the Grifton area. He stated there were many road/bridge outages throughout the County and municipalities. He stated at one point, there were 70 roads & bridges impassible. He stated
there were several closings of various facilities including: Pitt County Government, Municipalities throughout the County, East Carolina University, Pitt County Schools, Pitt Community College, Pitt-Greenville Airport and Superior & District Court.

He stated two central collection points for material donations were established. One at Mount Pleasant Christian Church located North of the Tar River on Staton House Road and the other at Taft Family Offices located in the Winterville area.

He stated there were many request from agencies into the EOC asking for various equipment needs. Some included: emergency portable toilets for municipalities, assisting with securing & delivery of jet fuel to ensure emergency air medical transports could continue, assisting with delivery of diesel fuel for sewer pumping stations in the area and sandbags to help protect critical infrastructure.

He stated staff remains in communication with partnering agencies such as Fire, EMS, law enforcement and municipalities through phone calls, e-mails and face-to-face visits. He stated situation reports were provided several times a day as well as National Weather Service briefings.

He stated bridge plans were developed in the event the bridges were impassible, even with the military vehicles in place. He stated equipment was pre-staged on both sides of the river with plans to use helicopters to get from one side of the river to the other. He stated landing zones were identified on both sides of the river for the helicopters to land & take off. He stated the Medical Director and emergency room physicians, along with EMS Services developed a plan for establishing an emergency room style clinic in the Wellcome Middle School area. He stated all 911 Dispatchers and EMS staff were called in, as one of the last weather forecasts prior to Hurricane Matthew making landfall read, “The forecast brings back the potential for a very dangerous and life threatening situation for all of Eastern NC”

He stated Pitt County did not take Hurricane Matthew lightly, preparations were made well ahead of the storm. He stated Pitt County offered assistance to all of our partnering agencies and municipalities with the objective of being prepared to help others.

He stated we are now in the recovery phase with the flood waters receding. He stated Pitt County has been named in the Federal Disaster Declaration for Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA). He stated individuals are encouraged to register with FEMA and have been disseminating that information. He stated Pitt County is waiting to hear when FEMA will be establishing a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) office in Pitt County. He thanked the community, the first responders, the various County departments, and all of the external partners that assisted during Hurricane Matthew. He said it was truly a team effort.

Mr. Elliott stated it was important, as geographically widespread as the County is, that all municipalities were in constant contact with the County. He stated the County held daily conference calls with all municipalities which included managers and mayors. He stated this model will be continued in the future, if needed. He stated residents can contact FEMA for damage assessments at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). He thanked Lone Tree Aviation for carrying him and Deputy County Manager Mike Taylor for a helicopter ride of the County to see the extent of the damage.

Chairman Ward stated she had the opportunity to attend the daily conference calls which included managers and mayors and she felt like it was greatly appreciated by everyone.
James Rhodes, Planning Director, stated the County is moving from the response phase to the recovery phase. He presented the following Power Point presentation.

Board of County Commissioners - Hurricane Matthew Briefing

Monday, October 17, 2016
Presenter:
James Rhodes, AICP, Planning Director

“Leader in the State, Best in the East.”
Planning 252.902.3250 www.pittcountync.gov

Hurricane Matthew

FEMA Contact

• 1-800-621-FEMA(3362)
• www.DisasterAssistance.gov
• Receipts! Keep all receipts!
Hurricane Matthew

Inspections / Damage Assessments

• **252-902-3150** – Permitting/Inspections
• Assessment Preparation: forms, maps, apps, pamphlets, “drying” permits, etc.

Pitt County

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Planning  252.902.3250  www.pittcountync.gov

Road Closings

• [https://tims.ncdot.gov/tims](https://tims.ncdot.gov/tims)
  – Choose Pitt County for location
John Demary, Solid Waste Director, stated the transfer station was open with extended hours this past weekend. He stated they serviced 257 customers on Saturday and 98 on Sunday. He stated two of the fourteen collection sites operated throughout Pitt County were closed (Falkland location at 5661 NC 43 North, near Falkland, and the Port Terminal location at 911 Port Terminal Road in Greenville). He stated the Port Terminal site remains closed. He spoke of the importance of separating debris. He stated 1,400 tons of yard waste has been collected since last Monday. Mr. Elliott stated FEMA will not reimburse the County for co-mingling of materials. He stated vegetation and C&D must be separated. He stated if a citizen brings in a co-mingled load, they will be charged the $40/ton fee.

Jan Elliott, Department of Social Serviced Director, stated there was over 130 staff working the disaster activities over the past week. She stated the teamwork has been tremendous. She stated
her employees helped staff the shelters. She stated one person remains in special needs care through the Department of Social Services. She stated current food stamp recipients can begin applying for replacement food stamps by an affidavit process. She stated 700 affidavits have been received thus far. She stated the last day to submit an affidavit is tomorrow, Tuesday, October 18, 2016. She stated there are certain requirements that must be met in order to qualify. She stated a hot meals waiver was approved by USDA on October 15, 2016. She stated this allows recipients to purchase prepared food from a vendor. She stated disaster/emergency food stamps have not been approved by USDA. She stated this is typically for individuals that do not currently receive food stamps. She stated in order for Pitt County to receive approval, fifty percent of the population/community would have had to be without power. She stated those statistics and data are still being gathered.

Sheriff Neil Elks thanked the new Emergency Operations Director and new Public Information Officer for their help during Hurricane Matthew. He stated they were originally concerned with the Detention Center experiencing flooding and implemented a 48-hour shift. He stated Detention Center employees as well as deputies worked extended hours. He stated they responded to a lot of washed-out road reports and flooding. He stated the curfew helped a lot with looting. He stated they are still running checkpoints for the evacuated areas.

Dr. John Morrow, Public Health Director, stated the team effort was amazing. He stated many staff participated in efforts during Hurricane Floyd and knew what to expect. He stated four nurses traveled from Tennessee to help staff the special medical needs. He stated that service was arranged through the State Public Health partners. He thanked his staff for volunteering. He stated mosquito control/spraying is being monitored. He stated ariel spraying can be done, if needed. He stated most of the mosquitos are not coming from the flood. He stated private wells need to be disinfected if water went over the vent caps. He stated the State has offered free testing once the wells have been disinfected.

Michele Whaley, Animal Services Director, stated prior to the storm they worked to prioritize their intake to keep their numbers as low as possible. She stated the maximum capacity of the Animal Shelter on a good day is 90 animals (56 dogs, 34 cats). She stated as of Friday, October 7, 2016 they had a total of 81 animals. She stated at peak they had 205 animals. She presented the following Power Point presentation.
Pre-Storm Preparation

- Monitored storm via EOC
- Worked with partner agencies to reduce occupancy (Pitt Friends of the Shelter)
- Maximum Capacity = 90 animals
  - 56 dogs
  - 34 cats (adults)
- Friday 10/7 = 81 total animals
  - 35 dogs
  - 46 cats (adults & kittens)
- Staged Pitt County CAMET (Companion Animal Mobile Emergency Trailer) for possible deployment

Storm Response/Recovery

- Exhausted Animal Shelter space by Sunday 10/9
- Transitioned to 24/7 operations for staff
- Coordinated with Cooperative Extension for utilization of Farmers’ Market Building for temporary housing
- After mandatory evacuations, requested deployment of Beaufort County CAMET
- At peak, 205 animals housed
Janis Gallagher, County Attorney, stated on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 it was determined that a resource coordinator was needed. She stated early on the County received a large number of calls from local residents wanting to help. She stated within the first three days they had registered 500 volunteers. She stated the phone was initially staffed 24 hours a day. She stated a link was displayed on the web site so volunteers could register their services. She stated two collection sites have been established for citizens to donate goods. One at Mt. Pleasant Christian Church, 1726 Staton House Road and the other at Taft Family Office Supply in Winterville. She recognized the group and individuals managing the collection site at Mt. Pleasant Christian Church. She stated the Winterville site will begin to donate to entities that are distributing within the community (Grifton Mission Ministry, Red Cross, Salvation Army). She stated they are seeking partners in the southern area of the county to help distribute goods. She recognized the resource coordinator committee. She thanked Super Shred for donating over 500 boxes so items could be packaged for delivery. She stated there has been minimal damage of infrastructure to county owned property. She stated the roof of courthouse received some damage.

Mrs. Hardy stated the personnel ordinance (sections 91 & 121) deals with overtime pay. She stated the policy states nonexempt employees, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act, who work in excess of 40 hours in one workweek, are to take compensatory time off at the rate of one and one-half hours off for each hour worked in excess of 40 hours. She stated Sheriff’s Deputies may work 86 hours within a 14-day period before overtime compensation is due at the one and one-half rates, as permitted by the Fair Labor Standards Act. Deputies will be compensated at the regular hourly rate (1/26 of the annual salary for 80 hours) for all hours up to a total of 80 hours in a 14-day work period. For hours worked from 81 to 86, deputies will be compensated at the employees’ regular hourly rate. For hours worked beyond 86 hours, the employee will be compensated at one and one-half times the hourly rate. She stated section 121 discusses the inclement weather policy. She stated if the County is closed for the day, then employees shall choose either personal leave, or leave without pay. She stated if the County closes due to an emergency or inclement weather for less than eight hours, all employees will be paid for an entire eight-hour shift. Non-exempt employees, who by function must be at their place of work regardless of closure, shall earn compensatory time for hours worked during official closure to be used at the discretion of their supervisor. She stated in the event the County Manager determines an imminent threat exists that could prompt a state of emergency to be declared, all
exempt employees required to work in excess of the standard 40 hour workweek due to the declared state of emergency shall be eligible for compensatory time.

Mr. Elliott thanked other partnering agencies including United Way, Red Cross, NCDOT, Volunteer Fire & EMS departments, municipalities, military partners, swift water rescue, Pitt County Schools and Vidant hospital - Medical Director's Office. He stated with Red Cross being a big partner, there was a new Executive Director that began the day of the Hurricane. Cally Edwards stated she is new to Pitt County but has been a Red Cross Disaster Services representative for many years. She stated she looks forward to continuing to partner with Pitt County.

Commissioner Owens asked that details be brought back in regard to the amount of overtime worked by employees. It was the consensus of the Board for staff to prepare the necessary documents to authorize payment for overtime instead of requiring them to take compensatory time. Commissioner Owens encouraged all department heads to offer waivers and reduced fees and/or omit fees for county services being provided to citizens affected by Hurricane Matthew.

Commissioner Perkins-Williams thanked staff for their kindness with the citizens. She stated numerous residents have been treated with more dignity and respect than during previous emergencies. She urged residents to remain patient. She stated the leadership was superb.

Commissioner Garris encouraged citizens to call the various department heads directly with specific questions. He expressed appreciation to everyone that has worked hard in the aftermath of the hurricane. He stated there have been an untold number of volunteers. He read an email he received from Betty Stansberry, Airport Authority Director, thanking Pitt County for providing support of temporary office space during the hurricane.

Commissioner Webb stated the leadership has been inspiring. He spoke of paying the employees that worked. He stated he would like to see one unified emergency management structure.

Commissioner McLawhorn thanked the Manager for coordinating the special called meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly W. Hines
Clerk to the Board