**Tuesday, January 10th , 2023 GP-CERT Meeting Minutes:**

**Holtby welcomed everyone and thanked them for adjusting their schedule this month – the craft room was reserved by another group as well. He welcomed all the new residents attending their first GP-CERT meeting and requested that everyone sign in on the attendance sheets at the entrance. He noted that tonight’s meeting would last approximately one hour.**

**First agenda item:**

**Holtby provided a little background and history to those who were new to GP-CERT. What is CERT: The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Volunteers do not have to take any CERT training courses, but Holtby noted that having personally taken some of these FEMA courses he highly recommended it. He noted that GP-CERT is also extremely fortunate that we have several volunteers who have taken advanced courses which certify them to provide the training here at GP. Much of the training can now be done on-line at your own pace. Courses are also held at the State College of Florida, right across the street. The latest basic training course finishes up in late February. GP-CERT will also be holding classes here at GP or in conjunction with IslandWalk in 2023.**

**Some history on GP-CERT - our initial organizational meeting was in January of 2019 – 16 months after Hurricane Irma hit Florida. We received $1,500 from the water aerobics club to help get us up and running. We learned of and then applied for a $9,600 Sarasota County Neighborhood Initiative Grant in late 2019. We had to “match” this grant with volunteer hours at $20/hour or nearly 500 hours. This grant allowed us to purchase much needed equipment, including communication equipment (you may have noticed the solar panels on the tall antenna that is on the garbage enclosure in the clubhouse parking lot). We started with approximately 30 volunteers, and today have around 80. We have an incredible ”core” group of around 25 volunteers who step up for anything that is asked of them. The essence of a CERT volunteer is someone who cares about their community, and is emotionally invested in it.**

**Holtby recommended that anyone who would like to know more take the on-line FEMA course IS-317 “Introduction to CERT”. It is relatively easy to sign up for a FEMA account on-line and then take courses at your leisure. In addition, Holtby advised that you can to reach out to him or any of the Command Team by telephone, text, or email at any time. All of the Command Team contact information is listed on the GP-CERT.org web-site and on the attachment to these minutes. He also reminded everyone that we also have a** **granparadisocert@gmail.com****email address.**

**Second agenda item:**

**Holtby noted that we talked extensively at our November meeting about what we did right during Hurricane Ian and what we could have improved on. We also had a “debriefing” at Holtby’s home in conjunction with a few of the GP BOD to discuss our response and how to improve upon it. In addition, earlier today, four GP-CERT members attended a “Hot Wash” synopsis up at the Sarasota County EOC. A little background by way of explanation, thirteen CERTs submitted “After Action Reports” to Sarasota County Emergency Operation Center post Ian.**

**We were subsequently invited to the Sarasota County EOC by EM Chief Ed McCrane to discuss the CERT response to Hurricane IAN in the days before and after Sept. 28, 2022. There were a number**

**of common issues that came out, including resident preparedness, medically dependent residents, flooded streets and the need for waders, and evacuation protocols. New procedures will be implemented at the Sarasota County EOC based on our feedback on evacuation – which may be something that we face in the future. A word about evacuation centers – a Zone A evacuation order issued on Monday, September 26th was a “required” order and a Zone B evacuation order issued on Tuesday morning was “asked to evacuate”. The Sarasota County EOC no longer uses “mandatory” in its orders. Yahoo News advised the evacuation was “mandatory”. Taylor Ranch Elementary School just across the road is our closest evacuation center. It was noteworthy that Sarasota County evacuation centers had room for up to 20,000 evacuees, but the day before Ian hit there were only 1,800 in the centers.**

**Holtby provided some other Hurricane Ian statistics :**

* **152 US deaths – 146 in Florida**
* **Sustained winds were at 115 mph in South Venice (according to Ed McCrane)**
* **Fifth strongest storm to make landfall in US history**
* **Losses estimated to be over $112B (behind only Katrina @ $160B)**

**Third agenda item kicks off Updates and Plans:**

**The first update item deals with the Operational Plan update. Bob Browne kick-started this process and there was an initial meeting at Holtby’s home last week. The process will move forward with just a few key Command Team members. This group will incorporate the lessons learned during Hurricane Ian, as well as some of the lessons learned during the Hot Wash up in Sarasota County earlier today.**

**The second update item concerns the “The GP Responder”. We just published our tenth issue in December and again it received wonderful community feedback. Again, thank you to those volunteers and contributors who have helped out so far, and a special thanks to Carole and Jeff Myles who continue to do a fabulous job on the newsletter. The next issue of The GP Responder is scheduled to go out in mid-March – so Holtby requested that everyone please consider contributing an article – we are looking for 100-150 words on anything with a safety or weather focus that would be of interest to the GP community.**

**The third update item on the agenda is Training & Education. Holtby mentioned that a request for volunteers to help out at the PADRE at SRQ had been circulated . A PADRE is a Passenger Aircraft Disaster Response Exercise. This PADRE exercise is required by the Federal Aviation Administration and must be conducted every year. Every third year this exercise is required to be “full scale” or “live” in nature. The exercise allows the Airport Fire, Police, and Operations Departments to review and implement the current Airport Emergency Plan through participation with airport tenants and mutual aid agencies and volunteers help the airport and local first responders test their capabilities and sharpen skills needed to respond to a real-world aircraft accident.  Recruits were requested for two separate roles:**

1. **Aircraft Accident Victims**

**You play the role of a crash victim onboard an aircraft. Some volunteers will be dressed up in moulage (moulage is the “art of applying mock or fake injuries”) to simulate the appearance of injuries sustained in the crash. Others will be uninjured, or even deceased. First responders will interact with you and treat you according to your needs as they would in an aircraft accident.**

1. **Friends & Family Members of Accident Victims**

**In this role, volunteers play the role of a friend or family member of an aircraft accident victim. This role is more geared toward those who don’t mind getting a little loud, emotional, and/or grief-stricken with airport and airline staff! You get to add more drama to enhance the real-world experience airport and airline personnel should expect.**

**Ed Litcher wrote about a similar experience in the latest newsletter. It’s a unique experience – and you are helping the airport and local first responders test their capabilities and sharpen skills needed to respond to a real-world aircraft accident. Thanks to those GP-CERT volunteers who have signed up – at least 7 of the 85 crash victims will be from GP.**

**Kristi Loret then provided an update on education and training, touching up the Yellow Box drill, Family Safety Day, and basic/refresher CERT training courses.**

**The fourth Update item was Communications, which had its own challenges during Ian. We had a net communications drill prior to our meeting led by Tom Porada, who could not be at tonight’s meeting. It is one of the areas that we need to work on, as we should have Retevis radios made available to GP Board members and “walkie-talkies” for inter-zone communications.**

**The fifth Update item was Recruitment – (Holtby noted this area and communications remain our biggest challenges) - an area that we need to rethink for 2023. Holtby felt that we need to have 3-4 recruitment “events” in 2023 – in a format still to be determined. Holtby noted that included within this is a plan to order GP-CERT shirts for everyone on the GP-CERT team – so that we increase the “visibility” of our team. Holtby requested that anyone willing to help out on the recruitment front should let him know.**

**Sixth Update item – New Command Team Adds**

**Holtby noted that we need a new Triage Team Lead, so he asked that anyone on that team who is interested to let him know. Holtby also introduced Brian Sheftel, the new lead for GP-CERT operations, and his successor in Zone 5, Sal Baglio, and thanked them both for stepping up.**

**Agenda Item 4 was Q&A and Open Discussion:**

**There were a number of questions covering a number of areas, and Holtby noted that the date for our next meeting is Tuesday, March 14th at 6 pm. Holtby requested that the Command Team do their radio check-in between 5:30 and 6:00 pm that day.**

**Agenda Item 5 was a review of the new Organizational Chart by Brian Sheftel, the new Operational GP-CERT lead.**

**Agenda Item 6: Meeting was adjourned just over one hour after commencement. Holtby again thanked everyone for attending.**