

Captiva Community Panel
MINUTES
Oct. 11, 2022

Attending: David Mintz, Ken Gill, Jay Brown, Michael Lanigan, Ann Brady, John Jensen, Linda Laird, Bob Walter, Sandy Stilwell Youngquist, Tony Lapi, Bruce McDonald

Audience: ???

Meeting convened at 9 a.m. Introductions and welcome to those who have not attended a Community Panel meeting before.

Lee County Commissioner Kevin Ruane: Working on compiling a list of Captiva's needs after the storm, David has sent me a list which I've been adding to as other calls come in. Pamela Smith will be the point person for my office, will be at the EOC as long as necessary. Things include access to the island for property owners and insurance adjusters, setting up a ferry service with a secure place on the mainland from leave from and a place on the island to land, getting Starlink service set up for cell reception and establishing a command center, setting up bathrooms at South Seas. Now that we've had time to survey the damages, we're finding a lot of water damage in homes, a lot of vegetation down, a lot of debris to be removed. Looking at burn sites as well as how soon the bridge is sufficiently repaired to allow trucks to drive out to the islands... if we have any weight restrictions to deal with, or need to limit traffic to certain hours to allow debris trucks more opportunities to cross. Next concern is security, we have the National Guard helping now but they will be leaving soon and we'll be stretched pretty thin. Updates on electric and water restoration will be given later in the meeting. Discussion of getting the package plants up and running, as well as any repairs necessary to individual septic systems. Package plants will need chlorine to treat effluent before it's released to the drainfields. Discussion of shared supplies to be brought to the island for property owners to access – chainsaws, generators, ladders, etc. Tween Waters and FGUA plants running on generators, FGUA operators looking at damage to lift stations to see how fast they can be brought online. Funnel the island's requests to Walter and Mintz, they can forward them to Smith to be distributed to the appropriate county staff. Met with Bay County commissioners who went through Hurricane Michael, gotten a sense of what we'll be dealing with regarding FEMA, setting up lines of credit, etc. Mintz noted that the panel and CCA websites are posting information and updates, efforts to organize volunteers, etc. Question on possible restrictions on Causeway. Ruane responded that would need to be worked out with Sanibel and Florida DOT once repairs are in place. Question about getting supplies to the other package plants – Captiav Shores and Sunset Captiva. Jensen noted someone was coming out to inspect the Sunset Captiva plant, he may be able to help with chlorine.

Captiva Fire District: *Chief Jeff Pawul:* Starlink installed, so wi-fi is working better than cell phones. Big thank-you to resorts, the equipment they provided helped with our initial search and rescue. Deputies have done a tremendous job assisting us, we're all working together as one big team. Have been able to let some of our crews go home to check on their families and homes, get a little reprieve. Have gotten support from crews that have come down from Bay County and Panama City, places we went to help out when they were hit. Water resources not completely restored yet, but we have resources to fight fires; still having to deal with a lot of downed vegetation. Not able to bring in resources to remove vegetation on private property, but we'll work through that. If we move to burning vegetation, it won't be open fires but burn boxes or air curtain incinerators. Asking property owners not to burn their debris, not to block roads or fire hydrants with debris. Keep it on your property and keep it separated, and it will get picked up eventually. May be able to accommodate a comfort station at the fire station parking lot, since our guys can't drive out here right now. Can't open up the station restroom to too many people since we're on septic. Fire district is also working on FEMA reimbursements, so while we're working to accommodate

requests like the county is, we need things to be submitted and documented so we have the ability to get reimbursed. If you have an emergency, call 911; if you have a request, you can try contacting me... but reception is still spotty out here. The district appreciates the support residents have been offering. Send requests to info@captivafire.com or hurricane_request@captivafire.com. Station had minimal damage from storm – some damage to AC units on roof, water intrusion, some water in the bay.

LCEC: *Tricia Dorn:* Working very hard to restore power. We lost our entire fleet due to storm surge at substation, damage from the salt-water surge. Equipment and materials have been barged to the island with the help of the National Guard, start our preparations for restoration of power. Sanibel took a big hit, Captiva wasn't as bad as we expected, the circuit didn't sustain a lot of damage. But we have to get the transmission line energized to the Sanibel substation and to bring the substation back online. Still don't have a timetable for restoration, but we're bringing in materials and have several hundred linesmen setting up a tent city near the Sanibel School and a command center being set up next to the state EOC. Question about how power is restored, in simple terms. Dorn said the transmission line comes from the mainland across Pine Island Sound to our substation on Sanibel. Power is split into circuits, with one going up SanCap Road to Captiva. We have to inspect the lines and transformers to be sure they are safe to energize once we can get power to the substation... then power can be sent to the end user once it's determined each individual property can be energized safely. Question whether timetable for restoring power to Captiva is different from resorting it to Sanibel? Dorn responded that they are fed on different circuits, damage was different on the two islands, crews are inspecting those circuits now to see what's needed to make them able to receive power. Things are happening in real time, so I am hoping for more updates from the crews in the field to be able to set realistic expectation for restoring power. Question about providing charging capacity at comfort station. Walter encouraged anyone coming out to the island to bring a backup battery to keep their phones charged. Question about what property owners should do to make their properties ready to be powered up. Dorn said she'd develop a list to be distributed, recommended breakers at structures be turned off until the systems could be inspected to ensure they can be powered up without incident. Youngquist suggested that people should also turn off their water lines so they aren't flooded when water pressure returns. Discussion of steps taken to ensure homes are able to accept electricity.

Island Water Association: *Diana Wilson:* RO plant has full capacity, but we're limited in the amount of water we can produce right now because the majority of our wells took storm surge so all of the electrical components were damaged. About two-thirds capacity (1,800-2,100 gallons per minute vs. 3,200 gpm normally), our storage tanks are filling up. Operating during daytime hours when staff is here, but storage and pumps in operation 24/7. Distributing water to both islands at about 45 psi, have not opened the side streets but have water to Captiva from the marina to Blind Pass at a lower pressure than normal. Have shut off all meters and side streets off the main trunk line, would prefer people not turn on their own meters as we want to check for leaks as we open the side streets before we go into individual service mode. Will be putting out information soon to allow members to communicate with online requests to turn on meters, so we know who is using water and how much is being used as we monitor all our flows right now. IWA will deal with individual service requests, but ask that people not turn on their own water right now. We are working to get all the side streets opened and pressure-tested in the next seven days, then we can re-establish individual service. We will have on our website a request for re-establishment of property service form that individual members can submit once we have water pressure and service back to the side streets, so we can control our service is re-established. And we will want someone in that house when we turn on the service, to ensure there are no leaks or flooding inside the structure. We're turning all the service lines off now, and the timeline to turn them back on will be less demanding than the process of turning them off. Discussion about how Sunset Captiva will deal with re-establishing service. Question about accessing service for properties along Captiva Drive. Wilson said the focus now is pressurizing the entire distribution system on Sanibel and Captiva, and we will not be turning on individual meter connections until that is done. Discussion about restoring service to Tween Waters with

guests starting to stay there again. Wilson said when the water is back on, it will still be under a boil-water notice until full treatment can be restored, IWA will communicate that and when it's safe to drink. Question on how soon the pressure will be restored to pre-storm levels. Wilson said they have to get equipment online to bring up more wells, then they will slowly bring the pressure back up so as not to shock the system. Reiterated not to use water for the next week unless it's for an emergency vehicle response purpose... and don't drink it. Also, as contractors and homeowners are removing debris, do not cover the water meter box since we have to access those meters to turn the water service on.

LCSO: *Lt. Mike Sawicki:* Captiva Fire Department absolutely kicked ass to get this road open, the amount of work they did was just heroic. For those of you not on the island, it's now and probably will be for the next few weeks a giant job site. If you're moving things off properties, do not put anything on the paved surface of the roadway. Between the line trucks and debris haulers we need the roadway clear to be able to move around... so if there is stuff on the roadway we're going to move it and you may not be happy where we put it. A reminder that a curfew is still in effect on Captiva from 9 pm to 6 am. There are additional deputies on the island, and we have FWC boats offshore as well... we're trying to monitor as much as possible to prevent theft from becoming a problem. If you're going out to the island, make sure you have permission to use the dock you're landing at... and don't get caught with anything you're not supposed to have or don't have permission to have. Convey that to your contractors and workers as well. As more people come out here, it's harder for our guys to know who is or is not supposed to be there... so letting us know when people are working on your property is helpful, as is having a way to identify them. If you are working out here, be extra careful – since there is no ambulance service off the island, any injury could become a very expensive helicopter ride. Walter also encouraged people to wear boots and masks when working on properties, with all the debris and with properties having been closed up for days and weeks. Email him to request access through the resort marina, and getting around on the island can still be difficult as well. Sawicki said to be careful working with downed vegetation and generators, it's smart not to be working alone in case something goes wrong. Question whether people can stay in their homes overnight. Sawicki said there's nothing forbidding that, but if they do so they have to stay on the property at night due to the curfew. Those staying out here should let the deputies and the fire dept. know, so we're aware who's on what properties. Question about identification necessary to access the island once the causeway reopens or when ferry service is established. Sawicki said that will need to be coordinated with the city and county, but hoped some parameters would be set up to make it easier to identify who was out here and why. Mintz said both the deputies and the firefighters deserve to be recognized for their efforts to get the island up and running, they've been working and living together through days off and for weeks striving to get us back. Discussion of notification process for people coming out to the island, how they can access the resort marina, and how to get around the island once here. Walter said they are putting people into the main marina since the bayside marina still needs to be cleared of some debris. Discussion of staffing for deputies on Captiva and Sanibel, how patrols are being set to utilize those with local knowledge most effectively.

CEPD: *Executive Director Daniel Munt and Nicole Sharp, Aptim:* Munt outlined the district's emergency response plan and actions taken to assess damage and start the process of getting funding to rebuild the beaches. Visual assessment showed severe erosion, with revetments installed in the 1980s visible for the first time in decades. Showed the benefits of building the beach up over the years and establishing a solid dune system – provided a lot of protection to the island. Sharp walked the audience through a presentation of Aptim's findings post storm, with most of the survey being done by boat since access to the island was difficult. Noticed the beach was several feet lower than before the storm, significant transfer of dry sand to the offshore bars. Dunes saw substantial damage, a lot of overwash that pushed a lot of sand landward from the beach. As mentioned, the revetment installed to protect the road was exposed, but it did the protection job expected of it. The visual assessment was the first part of the emergency response, which will be followed by a beach profile survey to see where sand went and how the profile changed from the post-project profile in November 2021. That gives us a sense of how much sand was lost, so we can start

coordinating with FEMA and the Corps of Engineers on how to restore it. That can include funding to help rebuild the beach, both from the federal government and the state and county governments as well. Discussion of funding options due to the declared emergency and the process for pursuing that. Question about differences in storm surge around the island, does the analysis help identify weak spots or areas in need of more protection. Sharp said that would be part of the continuing analysis, that they will be ground-truthing their models to identify problems and weaknesses. Question about the timetable for restoration. Sharp said the request to FEMA needs to be done ideally within 90 days, that FEMA needs to determine if it has the authority to pursue restoration and if it needs to be expedited due to vulnerability. Historic timeframes for this have run 6-8 months, but we can push it to be expedited if the damages warrant. Question about pushing sand that's under houses back on the beach. Sharp said Florida DEP has a lot of restrictions on putting sand back on the beach such as it has to be free of debris. We also need to document where the sand is now before we move it around. So it may need to stay where it is for now until the surveying is done and a method of cleaning the sand of debris can be determined. Discussion of methods to keep sand on the island. Question about whether the sand is safe, it was suggested to monitor the Dept. of Health advisories on the beach for water quality at least. Question of monitoring the bayside for vulnerabilities as well as the Gulf beaches, with a problem being that bayside flooding was storm-driven and no monitoring during the storm was possible.

Nominating Committee: *Laird:* Explanation of process, bylaws require this be addressed at this meeting. The CCA has nominated Ann Brady for a second term, the CPOA has nominated Sandy Stilwell Youngquist to continue and Margarethe Thye-Miville to a new term. The Nominating Committee has voted to nominate John Jensen and Tony Lapi to second terms, but there were very qualified applicants who will remain in consideration should any openings on the panel occur. In addition, we encourage anyone interested in becoming a panel member to send in their nominations before the November meeting for review by the panel, who will vote on the nominees at the December meeting.

Other business: Information is being sent to the email list regularly and is being posted to the website with the help of Emily Ankerson at the CCA. Discussion about timing for panel meetings, whether to schedule them more often in the next weeks to keep people informed. Decision was to hold a special meeting if conditions warranted, but not to disrupt those people working to restore service to the island just because we want to have a meeting every week. Important information can be communicated to the list quickly along with any service updates. General discussion of recovery concerns and questions.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

-- *Ken Gooderham*

Meeting video link is <https://youtu.be/UvLg5L8wSLk>.