

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC MEETING
COMMUNITY FORUM (TOWN HALL MEETING)
March 18, 2014**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

MAYOR HERMAN D. EARWOOD
MAYOR PRO-TEM JOANN GORDON
COUNCIL MEMBER JOANN BUTLER
COUNCIL MEMBER JOE CREWS

STAFF PRESENT:

CS MARVIN GREGORY
EMC JAMES MYRICK
PWD JAMES HATLEY
PC AVIN CARTER
CO-DIRECTOR SHIRLEY WHEAT
CO-DIRECTOR SHIRLEY BLOOMFIED

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m., the Community Forum was opened by EMC James Myrick on Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at the River Oaks Community Center, 5300 Blackstone Dr., River Oaks, Texas.

2. PUBLIC FORUM: OPEN DISCUSSION FOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATING TO WEATHER SYMPOSIUM AS PRESENTED BY JAMES MYRICK, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR FOR THE CITY OF RIVER OAKS.

(The purpose of the meeting is to receive input, and provide information to the community about severe weather; precautions to take in the event of severe weather and where a person can obtain assistance and get information during a disaster.) There may also be a wide range of other topics discussed that relates to severe weather alerts. ***THERE WILL BE NO ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL TAKEN.***

EMC James Myrick provided for the audience film clips on severe weather. EMC Myrick emphasized that the topic of tonight's meeting was there are 3 important steps to be followed in preparing for severe weather; Think, Prepare and Act. It was reported during the presentation that in 2013 there were over 100 billion dollars in damages resulting from the approximately 1250 tornadoes in the United States. Tornadoes can flatten entire neighborhoods, cause multiple injuries and even result in death.

EMC Myrick presented what an emergency plan in preparation for a disaster should include; 3-day supply of non-perishables, batteries, flashlight, and medical kit, head protection such as a helmet and NOAA radio to monitor approaching storms. In addition, keep family members away from the outside walls of the structure especially if emergency shelters are not available for them to go into. Always remember to use text messaging rather than using the phones to make calls. During a disaster, due to the increase of cell phone activity, the system becomes overloaded thereby reducing the ability to make actual cell phone calls, but because text messaging relies on a smaller band width, text messaging then becomes a much more reliable method of communication. You should also designate a family member that is 100-miles away to be your emergency contact.

During the presentation, the question was raised about shelters; where are community emergency shelters located and where can you find information on who actually builds shelters on private property? In answer to those questions Myrick stated there really are no local community emergency shelters and it would be best that families make their own plan for

emergency shelters. Persons should always seek sheltering at the lowest level in the event of a tornado and that he knew of persons that do build shelters, but the best shelters are those that are actually built within the house during its initial construction. Otherwise, he would recommend that when building outside shelters to have the entrance doors to open inward rather than outward. Debris during storms tends to pile up against the outside entrance doors making entrance into them during a catastrophic event more time consuming and in those minutes before a storm that can make a big difference in getting your family to safety in time.

EMC Myrick explained that sirens are especially hard to hear inside of a house and the best way to monitor approaching storms is to invest in having a NOAA Weather radio. Afterwards Myrick took other questions from the audience regarding tornadoes, emergency planning and what to do in the event of a disaster and then afterwards with no further questions he thanked everyone for their attendance and then adjourned the forum.

3. ADJOURN: At 8:17 p.m. the community forum was adjourned. **No Council Action was taken.**

APPROVED:


Herman D. Earwood, Mayor

ATTEST:


Marvin Gregory, City Secretary