



Hernando County Community Organizations Active in Disaster **COAD Meeting #81 NOTES**

Monday, July 29, 2024 @ 9:30 AM via Zoom

WELCOME & PURPOSE – United Way of Hernando, Angie Walasek

35 participants

Angie from United Way kicked off the meeting with a general introduction on the purpose of COAD, as well as a recap of the activation of Hernando's Family Resource Center (FRC) last September 2023 for those impacted by Hurricane Idalia. Angie emphasized the importance of reading and responding to Emergency Management communications before, during, and after an event, for participation from Members is needed. Sharon from American Red Cross and Christina from CareerSource both spoke up and shared their experience as one of the many wraparound resources at the FRC – Weeki Wachee Community Club. #AccessToCare

SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- **American Red Cross, Sharon:** Participated at the annual Stuff the Bus event. A generous donor gave a container filled with coins, \$60.00 in loose change. Publix employees were so supportive and even converted change into dollars.
- **CareerSource, Christina:** United Way connected Habitat for Humanity with Career Source, with a focus on Workforce services for clients as soon as their Spring Hill office opens. They too will also be hiring. The Summer Youth Project was successful and participants focused on trade skills. They were followed even after graduation, and one individual was assisted in the resume process and was hired on as a front desk clerk at an Internal Medicine office.
- **Community Legal Services, Paul:** Effective September 1st, Paul will be the managing attorney for Disaster services out of the Spring Hill office paulf@clsmf.org (407) 847-7579
- **Endeavors, TaVon:** Newer organization to the community and grateful for the contacts she's made. Has been receiving contact information to Hurricane Idalia victims for Disaster Relief while working closely with the local VOAD's & COAD's. Working hard to get victims the funding. Looking forward to being part of community meetings. Shout out to Hernando County.
- **Vincent House, Kacee:** Attendance has been up this month. Typically have 15 members, now have 25-31 members. 15 new members this month alone, with a strong focus on Mental Health Services and recovery through work.

COUNTY UPDATES

- **Emergency Management** – Dave is out for surgery. HERricane Camp has ended but hosted 13 teenage girls for a week!
- **United Way, Angie:** The [Long-Term Recovery participation survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TGNXJF6) was explained in detail, along with the available sub-committees. She asked for those who have yet to participate, to please do so, so our next planning phase may begin.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TGNXJF6>

MITIGATION & PREPAREDNESS – RESPONSE – RECOVERY

www.UnitedWayHernando.org/COAD - [Emergency Management](#) – [HC Department of Health - 211 Hernando - 988](#)



- **Dept of Health, Jennifer:** Pre-registration for Special Needs Shelter for vulnerable populations in case of a disaster is available. Continuous care for individuals who are oxygen and or medically needy. Share: <https://specialneeds.hernandocounty.us/> Mental Health Day Event is today, 7/29 1pm - 3pm at DOH. No reservation is needed to attend. For any organization attending please bring any information to share.
- **211, Kip:** Budget-friendly hurricane preparedness flyer available. Suggestions on making affordable hurricane kits with supplies you may already have at home. **(flyer attached)**
- **United Way, Angie:** 211 Agency Workshops in the works for health and human services. This will showcase a clearer understanding of how to navigate the new online platform, as well as add your service and maintain them.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

- **Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition, Barbara Venditto, Executive Director**
(Presentation slides attached)

Hernando has 105 homeless households, 182 people as of June, 7 first-time homeless households, and 52 individuals over the age of 65. For July, the tentative count is 66 households, 127 people. A slight drop in numbers. Year to date from January to July 158 1st time homeless families. That is ALICE population. Numbers are rising among the first-time homeless population. Clarity is a simple website used to record homeless individuals. Just 7 simple questions to answer. Please feel free to reach out if you would like to take Clarity training. Shout out to the Sheriff's Office for using the app and collecting information on 14 individuals. execdirector@midflhc.org 352-442-9211. For Clarity/HMIS Training: Paula Holtsclaw datamanager@midflhc.org Asking for volunteers to join the 2025 PIT count efforts in January. Donations are appreciated, will gladly accept socks, bottles, gift cards, and toiletries.

RESOURCES & UPDATES

Supplies–Partner Needs ([Hurricane Supply Drive](#))

- **United Way, Angie:** Adult-size backpacks available for distribution. SVdP expressed interest. Drop off will be made to the pantry.
- **Endeavors, TaVon:** Have clients who could benefit from tarps. Angie reminded her to connect with Erin from EM to gain access.

Mental Health & Substance Abuse

- **Vincent House, Kacee:** Discovery tours take place 2nd Wednesday of every month from 1:30-2:30pm. As of August 21st Board lunches are back. Get a chance to sit and have lunch with a board member to discuss collaboration efforts. Mental Health Event is being held today at DOH from 1-3 pm. kacee@vincenthouse.org james@vincenthouse.org
- **Hernando Community Coalition, Jennifer:** Substance Abuse 12-week Relapse prevention program is being held at People Helping People starting Thursday, August 1st from 7-8 pm. A Relapse Prevention Specialist and Certified Peer Specialist will be facilitating. Significant rise in calls for homeless services. United Way referrals are suggested. Recently reached 20 hotels with Narcan training. Narcan and Medication disposal kits are available. Partnered for



an event "Kicking Addiction" which will be taking place at The Lake House on Saturday, September 14th from 4-7 pm. Music will be provided by Serenading the Moon.

Emergency Assistance

- **United Way, Angie:** A reminder was made to streamline referrals and explore procedures and platforms that work best for your operations (211, Unite Us, Hope Florida, HMIS, direct email, Contact Us, via phone, etc.). Clearly communicate your preferred referral method so other partners know.
- **Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Carrie:** On August 23rd at 10:00 am will be hosting a Cyber Security & Phishing email workshop for free. All are welcome. Cesposito@deafhhsfla.org 727-478-0217.
- **American Red Cross, Kris:** Available on standby for services if needed.

Childcare & Schools

- **United Way, Angie:** Very successful back-to-school bash was hosted last week with HCSB, HSCO, & Family Chiropractic. Terlep will be providing physicals and handing out backpacks on August 3rd. Over 2,000lbs of school supplies was collected & distributed to teachers through UW's annual Stuff the Bus event. [Results can be found HERE*](#)

Food & Distribution

- **People Helping People, Kendra:** Monthly mobile food distributions take place at the HELP Center the last Wednesday of the month at 10:30am. Next is this Wednesday July 31st.
- **St Vincent de Paul, Christie:** Christie is the new Operations Director of the store and food pantry. Also seeing an increase in homeless traffic. For June, 1,800 families have been served, close to 1,900 for this month. \$240,000 had been budgeted for food distribution but unfortunately will be cut this year. Sales are down at the store, which they heavily rely on. Hoping they can provide Christmas help to families this year.

Shelters & Housing – Partner Updates ([Hernando Homeless Initiative](#))

- **YFA, Priscila:** On Wednesday, August 7th the New Beginnings Youth Shelter will be having an open house 10-12pm. **(invitation attached)**
- **Dawn Center, Adriana:** 8 beds are currently available. Human Trafficking Survivors can be referred to the Dawn Center for assistance if needed. Rapid rehousing has launched and going well.
- **Vincent House, Kacee:** The Pasco location is opening up 24 Tiny Homes and a larger group home this coming October.

Employment

- **Career Source, Christina:** Direct referrals are welcomed (via Employ Florida, by email or phone, walk-ins welcomed, online, launching Unite Us, Hope Florida, Cross Walk, etc.) Clients can contact the call center until 7 pm, and on Saturdays. Currently no vacancies within CS. 160 local job postings available. Strong need for drivers to apply for driver positions. You Thrive is looking for a Driver. Please visit the job events page for more information.



- **Urban League, Warren:** Free help available – job placements with seniors 55+. Urban League has received exciting news. Their grants for 2024, 25 & 26 have increased and looking to partner with the school system, libraries, and city/county government.

Volunteerism – Partner Needs

- **United Way, Angie:** If Hernando agencies are experiencing the need for additional volunteers, especially with the holidays coming up, we can always host a volunteer fair in the fall – at a local park or venue, connecting residents to all different types of volunteer opportunities (clerical, for events, to sit on Boards, etc.) If there's any interest, please let Angie know.

MEMBER INPUT, UNMET NEEDS, & OPPORTUNITIES

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am

NEXT MEETING: Monday, August 26th @ 9:30 am via Zoom