

FLAGLER BOCC HEADLINES



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SACRIFICIAL DUNES PROTECT IMPROVED PROPERTIES

The tides and the onshore winds in mid-December means that the ocean is rough, and its large waves are taking its toll on the recently built 11.4 miles of dunes in northern Flagler County. The good news is that the sacrificial dunes are serving their purpose and protecting homes and infrastructure.

"There are some areas where you can see some erosion, and I expect this will continue when we have things like nor'easters," said Coastal Engineering Administrator Ansley Wren-Key. "Think about what the flooding might be like had we not built this emergency berm as a sacrificial barrier to protect the improved property along the coastline. We are fortunate that we were able to complete the project just a few short weeks ago in its entirety so that everyone has the protection from these weather conditions that we are experiencing right now."

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) refers to Category B projects like the one it funded after Hurricane Nicole. A similar project of the same size built in areas that were ineligible for FEMA funding were funded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) that, combined, make up the 11.4 miles.

"The purpose is to build a continuous barrier to serve as a buffer to protect the homes, properties, and infrastructure from this type of event that we are experiencing," Wren-Key said. "The time and money were well spent. We've had several events of this nature during the construction of these emergency berms since January 2023 and each time we've been protected."



FLAGLER COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS 'COLLABORATION WORKSHOP' WITH COUNTIES, FDEM

Emergency management directors from the majority of Florida counties and the Florida Division of Emergency Management spent the better part of two days at the Flagler County Emergency Operations Center for a County-State Collaboration Workshop to discuss professional hot topics.

"It is exciting to host my peers from across the state for this first-of-its-kind event," said Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord. "I'm also proud to have an opportunity to show off our county to those who are not familiar with Flagler County."

The kick-off began with discussion topics that are critical to Emergency Management and disaster response and recovery. Those topics included: Catastrophic Event Expectations; Mutual Aid; Statewide Technology and Long-Term Funding; the Statewide Shelter Plan; the Florida Qualification System for Emergency Managers; Mitigation & Resiliency; and Grants Management.

The workshop concluded Thursday with discussions on the following topics: Statewide Training and County Emergency Management Director Standards; Healthcare Emergency Plans; and additional Leadership and Legislative Priorities.

"The Polk County Emergency Management Director Paul Womble and my team helped coordinate this event," Lord said. "Topic suggestions came from many other county emergency management directors. The Flagler County Tourism Office (Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches) team helped make connections with local restaurants and hotels for our visitors."

In addition to Flagler County and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (more than a dozen plus FDEM Director Kevin Guthrie), about two-thirds of county emergency management directors across the state of Florida, or their designees, participated in the workshop.

"We have a deep appreciation and gratitude for Director Guthrie and what he has accomplished at the state level that benefits Flagler and all Florida counties," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "That dedication and shared commitment to safeguarding our communities is evident in that he and his staff traveled from Tallahassee to collaborate with the emergency managers who assembled here. Director Guthrie reminded us that together we can weather the storms and emerge stronger."

'TUNE IN' TO MEETINGS

JANUARY 8: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m.
JANUARY 24: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT AT 9 a.m.
FEBRUARY 5: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m..
FEBRUARY 19: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/flaglercounty/live

FLAGLER COUNTY RECEIVES TWO AWARDS FROM NEFRC IN THE AREAS OF HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, TRANSPORTATION

Flagler County is the recipient of two Annual Regional Awards for Excellence from the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC). Honors were awarded in the areas of "Healthcare Emergency Preparedness" for a training led by the county and hosted by AdventHealth at its new Palm Coast Parkway facility before its opening, and "Transportation" for the new Pedestrian Bridge that crosses State Road 100.

"The NEFRC awards these honors each year to recognize the best projects and the brightest leaders in the region," said Chief Executive Officer Beth Payne in a news release issued by NEFRC. "Like previous years, there is engaging and transformational work happening across Northeast Florida. It is an honor to celebrate those projects and initiatives that enhance the community."

The Pedestrian Bridge, situated between Colbert Lane and Old Kings Road, has more than two miles of added trails that will serve as a multimodal connection for the robust trail system that already exists in Flagler County. Benefits to the community are that it provides pedestrians and bicyclists with a safe way to cross a major, high-speed, four-lane thoroughfare. The ramps on and off the bridge are ADA compliant.

"I've been out there and have had the pleasure of meeting people on the trail enjoying the new addition," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "Some expressed their gratitude about the bridge, because they use the amenity a few times a week."

Before the grand opening of its brand-new Palm Coast Parkway Facility, AdventHealth graciously offered up the building for a multiagency full-scale "active shooter" training exercise for Flagler County first responders. Flagler County Emergency Management led a team which included AdventHealth, Flagler County Sheriff's Office, Palm Coast Fire Department, and Flagler County Fire Rescue to develop and carry out the exercise.

"Of course, we sincerely hope for our community that we are never faced with a real-life active shooter situation, but the key is to train and to be prepared as if we will," said Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord, whose department prepared the training scenario. "And it isn't very often that there is an empty facility like this available."

The NEFRC 20th Annual Regional Awards for Excellence and Elected Officials Luncheon will be held to celebrate the winners and to honor local elected officials on January 4, 2024.

'DO DATE' EVENTS

01/17/24

Walk in the Park in the Woods | 9 a.m.
River-to-Sea Preserve -- Marineland

Experience Flagler's scrub/coastal scrub habitat
See and hear wintering migratory birds
Register online at www.FlaglerParks.com

BREAKERS

COMMISSION CHAIR ANDY DANCE, CHIEF OF SPECIAL PROJECTS/LIBRARY DIRECTOR HOLLY ALBANESE TO ATTEND NEFRC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Flagler County Board of County Commissioners Chair Andy Dance along with Chief of Special Projects and Library Director Holly Albanese have been selected to attend the 2024 Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) Leadership Academy. The seven-month program begins in January.

"I would like to congratulate you on being nominated and selected to participate in the 2024 Regional Leadership Academy hosted by the Northeast Florida Regional Council," said Leadership Academy Program Director Tyler Nolen, who is also special projects coordinator and emergency preparedness planner for NEFRC. "(It) is dedicated to promoting the principles of regionalism, encouraging community leaders from various sectors to come together and work towards a shared vision of growth and prosperity. Our program is open to individuals who are deeply committed to serving the regional community and who understand the significance of regional cooperation."

The NEFRC Leadership Academy meets for one day each month – the last Wednesday – in each of the counties that make up the region: Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns.

"There are speakers arranged at each county location where we discuss issues specific to that county," Nolen said. "The focus of this program is to nurture and cultivate a commitment to regionalism. Our program topics change and evolve based on what each of our counties is doing well, and how they can teach each other along the way."

Meeting themes include topics from around the region like economic development, housing, agriculture, resiliency, and emergency preparedness.

"The graduates from the Regional Leadership Academy become members of the Regional Community Institute, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that works with the NEFRC, serving as a policy 'think tank' for the Northeast Florida Regional Council," Nolen said. "This organization routinely works on various policy initiatives that impact our region."