

Notes from 10/20/2015 5:00 Public Meeting

- **Judge Pape**
 - Noted that due to residents being allowed to reenter their property earlier in the day, the attendance of citizens at this afternoon's meeting is much smaller than previous meetings.
 - Fire still contained at 80% with 4,582 acres and a total of 64 home-like structures burned.
 - Judge reminded citizens that today and tomorrow should not be used for cleanup but more so to get in and assess their homes and property.
 - So far there are 451 registrants with Bastrop County Long Term Recovery (BCLTR).
 - Announced the news conference for tomorrow 10/21/15 will be held at 3:00pm at the Bastrop Resource Center located at 108 Main Street in Smithville.
 - Investigators have determined that the fire's ignition point was located at the Luecke Ranch. They also offered two possibilities for how the Hidden Pines Fire initially started. The first possibility is that some sort of farming equipment that was in use may have produced a spark that ignited the fire. The second possibility is a burn pile that was intentionally started and became uncontrolled.
 - Judge asks that all citizens honor the burn ban.
- **Greg Murdock (Blue Team Weather)**
 - The storm is moving West to East.
 - There is an increased chance of rain Thursday through Sunday with the greatest chance starting Friday morning through midday Saturday.
 - Everyone should keep an eye on the weather and the changing conditions.
 - There is potential for short bursts of heavy rain, however, it will be over such a period of time that flooding is not currently a concern.
- **Sheriff Pickering**
 - Overall, the reentry plan put into place this morning worked well.
 - Sheriff noted that residents should be cognitive that this is still a dangerous situation and keep in mind there are still firefighters and other agencies working in this area.
 - Still restricting anyone other than approved persons to enter the burn area.
 - Asked that residents hold off on calling in contractors or cleanup crews until Thursday. Use today and tomorrow as time to assess your situation.
- **Commissioner Beckett**
 - Brought team in today to assess trees that may fall.
 - Between 5 and 6,000 trees that could fall into the roadway. Will need to get cost associated with this to help determine FEMA assistance.
 - Commissioner Beckett asks that residents do not put any debris into the roadways.
 - Residents may check with volunteer groups at the Bastrop Resource Center to see what kind of assistance is being offered in regards to tree removal.
 - Working on getting a metal drop off center established. Commissioner Beckett said she will check with homeowners to see if there is a need for this service.

- **Rachel Bauer (AgriLife Extension)**
 - Discussed replanting efforts and the different mixes of seed used.
 - Local feed stores will have smaller quantities of these seeds available.
 - Advised that victims of the fire may contact her if they are in need of livestock equipment/feed.
 - Judge Pape noted that if anyone is having issues with fences or livestock to contact Jr. Tucker at the Sheriff's Office.
- **Mark Rose**
 - Reminded citizens that Bluebonnet is sensitive to the fact that there are a lot of trees that will have to come down.
 - If a tree is tagged, it means it has been assessed by a professional and it MUST come down.
 - It is not going to take much rain for workers to have to pull out as it will pose a danger. Power outages can be expected with the upcoming rainfall.
 - Introduced Tommy Higgins with Bluebonnet who has organized a team to assist victims of the fire.
- **Kate Johnston and Christine Files (Citizens Services)**
 - Smithville Recreation Center will be returning to normal activities tomorrow.
 - Homeowners are urged to register with BCLTR or call 512-521-3001 for more information.
 - Those that wish to help by volunteering should visit the BCLTR team website at Bastropcountylongtermrecovery.org and click on the volunteer button to sign up.
 - There is financial assistance for those that have lost their home.
 - Monetary donations are needed for victims. To donate, go to Bastropcountylongtermrecovery.org and click on the Donate button.