

**North Carolina State Disaster Recovery Task Force
Nonprofit and Volunteerism Recovery Support Function (RSF 3) Meeting**

WebEx Teleconference

March 16, 2021

2:00pm – 2:45pm

Meeting Minutes

In attendance (by teleconference)

Lead: Daniel Altenau, Catholic Charities

Staff: Amanda Martin and Ruseena Johnson, North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR)

Heather Black, NC 2-1-1 and United Way

Alfred Foote, DSS Cumberland County

Beth Hardison, Governor's Office

Briles Johnson, NC Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Gretchen Mason, Rural Forward NC

Andy Shoenig, Rural Forward NC

Jeanne Tedrow, NC Center for Nonprofits

Phil Triplett, NCEM

Additional NCORR Staff

Lossie McLean

Bridget Mungor

Haley Pfeiffer Haynes

Debrief on Guest Speakers on African American Experiences of Disaster Recovery and Resilience

The RSF held an open discussion to debrief the Nonprofit/Volunteerism RSF meeting on March 11, 2021 which featured guest speakers discussing the experiences of African American communities with disaster recovery and resilience. Speakers at that meeting included Courtney Patterson of Frontline Resilience Eastern NC and Pastor Jermaine Armour of St. Luke's AME Zion Church.

Participants discussed the following reflections from that meeting:

- Concern and surprise that even though advocates like C. Patterson had been able to meet with agency leadership and other prominent leaders, change has not come and there has not been follow-up. This is different from what we heard from Latinx leaders, who had not been able to access government leadership at all.
- Communication efforts from the state could be focused on sharing resources and communication with leaders like Pastor Armour and Mr. Patterson, who are more effective means to share the message with their communities

- When government leaders communicate that a large sum of money has been spent in a particular county, but people in that county are still struggling to repair homes or meet basic needs, it sounds to those survivors like that money has been spent *on other people* in their county, while in reality those funds were probably spent on infrastructure rather than on individual survivors
- A lot of grassroots organizations operate out of a church and are not formal nonprofits, which makes them ineligible for certain funding resources
- Grassroots organizations turn out tremendous capacity in disaster, and larger nonprofits are often able to leverage those organizations to support them. However, the reverse is not necessarily true – the grassroots organizations are not always able to leverage large nonprofits
- The State Emergency Operations Center and State Emergency Response Team have major gaps in their networks – could there be a SERT “Field Team” that could help transmit information? It isn’t practical that everyone would be in the same building, but there could still be ways to add those perspectives.
- Some counties have much better connection with grassroots organizations than others. Counties receive some emergency response funding and with that funding comes reporting requirements. Could those reporting requirements incentivize counties to make community connections, e.g. know who major points of contact could be for donations management?
- Could there be funding to engage new people in Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)? If problems are generated at the county level, having better representation on CERTs would help.
- Tech interface is a major problem for programs that require online registration. What are the options for paying navigators or making them available?

Participants discussed the following potential next steps for the RSF:

- Communicate with state leadership that there is a significant disconnect between state government and grassroots organizations, even when those grassroots organizations are able to meet with highest levels of government officials. This message could be combined with the messages heard from Latinx leaders.
- Help prepare grassroots organizations or faith-based efforts to receive funding to do the “last mile” work of sharing resources within their communities. For example, could those grassroots orgs partner with fiduciary agents – or train to be their own fiduciary agents.
- Recommend a way to pay organizations or leaders for their work in helping disaster recovery resources reach their intended audiences
- With respect to building networks in more diverse ways, the RSF could focus on this in May, which is Hurricane Preparedness Month. It’s important to make connections during non-disaster times. There are a lot of African American organizations to target that might not be disaster-specific, e.g. NACCP, SCLC, Black professional groups like engineers and MBAs.
- Preparing county emergency management to include disrupting voices who are advocating on behalf of their communities
- Attention to online interfaces and the ways that less tech-oriented people can access resources.