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Lee Commissioners approve State of Local Emergency related to Tropical Storm Helene

Fort Myers, FL, Sept. 24, 2024 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners voted this afternoon to declare a State of Local Emergency (SOLE), and commissioners announced that county offices will be closed Thursday.

The vote came at an emergency meeting called to consider the SOLE and to receive an update on Tropical Storm Helene.

A SOLE is enacted ahead of storms to enable emergency protective measures and to allow for more flexibility for emergency spending.

Lee County will continue normal governmental operations on Wednesday but will close for normal operations on Thursday. Employees serving in emergency roles will continue in their duties. The county anticipates – given the forecasted track – that the county will reopen Friday. Check www.leegov.com or Lee County’s social media channels for further operational updates.

Also at the emergency meeting, Public Safety Director Ben Abes provided commissioners with an update on preparations for possible storm impacts. Lee County officials are expected to announce Wednesday morning whether the county will open Safe Havens, locations where people can go if they don’t feel safe in their home during the height of storm impacts.

Lee County continues to work with state and local partners to prepare for potential storm impacts. Residents are asked to take steps now to secure their homes and enact the safety plans they have developed for their families.

To view the presentation to the Board at Tuesday’s emergency meeting, go here: <https://youtu.be/4Q17u-nwOWw>

To view the media briefing held at noon Tuesday, go here: <https://youtu.be/SwKj6L12ICc>

In other Tropical Storm Helene-related operational adjustments, the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau this afternoon announced that Island Hopper Songwriter Fest events scheduled for Thursday and Friday, Sept. 26 – 27, have been canceled due to the anticipated storm impacts. The Thursday performance at the Florida Repertory Theater featuring Jeffery Steele and the Gulf Coast Symphony will be rescheduled, and ticket holders will be notified.

Island Hopper Songwriter Fest events scheduled for Wednesday and for the weekend will proceed as planned.

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