**NEWS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 29, 2022

Contact: Misti Pequignot, Weakley County Long Term Recovery Group Program Coordinator

**WEAKLEY COUNTY LONG TERM RECOVERY GROUP UPDATE**

DRESDEN, Tenn. – The Weakley County Long Term Recovery Group (WCLTRG) has hired a Program Coordinator, Misti Pequignot, to serve in a full-time role overseeing the work of the group. Funding for the position comes from a Red Cross grant totaling $171,850 for use through June 30, 2023, to fund a WCLTRG Program Coordinator, a WCLTRG Construction Manager, lease storage space for donations, and expand the capacity for assistance. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) employs a construction manager who will assist the WCLTRG with construction estimates until the WCLTRG Construction Manager is hired.

 West Tennessee Legal Services has provided a representative, Attorney Mike Creasy, to assist qualifying survivors. West TN Legal Services and Creasy will provide help for disaster-related foreclosures, landlord issues, FEMA recoupment, housing disputes, clearing titles, and contracts. Legal services are funded by a disaster recovery grant provided to West TN Legal Services. Survivors in need of legal assistance should call West Tennessee Legal Services at 1-800-372-8346 or apply online at https://wtls.org

Weakley County Long Term Recovery Group in partnership with the Weakley County and City of Dresden Mayors’ offices, are organizing Recovery Commemoration events for the residents and survivors of the devastating tornado that impacted Dresden, TN on December 10th, 2021. A Recovery Commemoration Ceremony and Tree Lighting Ceremony has been planned for December 10th, 2022, to serve as a remembrance, source of disaster recovery information, and celebration of community unity. The Recovery Commemoration Ceremony will take place at McWherter Civic Center from 2pm-4pm. Dr. Don McCulley and others will be speaking, first responders will be recognized, and recovery assistance representatives and information will be available. The Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on Court Square at 5pm. More details to come.

As of November 18, 2022, WCLTRG Allocations Committee has facilitated the payment of $158,968 to meet the needs of survivors in case management since its inception. Funding has been provided by Dresden Church of Christ, Dresden Elks Lodge, Dresden First Baptist Church, Dresden Rotary Club, Greenfield Church of Christ, Lebanon Church of Christ, and the Weakley County Baptist Association. These organizations provided $200,920 in assistance to survivors prior to the creation of the WCLTRG in addition to food, toiletries, appliances, and clothing.

 The following case management update was provided by UMCOR on November 16, 2022:

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| Homeowners with Repair and/or Rebuild Needs | 13 |
| Renters with Relocation and/or Housing to be Determined | 8 |
| Closed Cases | 71 |
| Awaiting Assignment to Case Manager | 24 |
| Open Cases | 41 |

The Recovery Center is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to support survivors locally. The center is currently staffed by the Program Coordinator and two case managers. Walk-ins are welcome or you can contact the center by calling (731) 699-7913.

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