

The Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) of West Pasco County met at the Gulf Harbors Civic Center at 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, November 15, 2017.

The guest speaker was from the Storm Water Management Division of the Department of Public Works for Pasco County, Florida. He was aided by 27 frames of Power Point graphics. He had enough copies of a 7-page document which displayed miniature images of four of the graphics per page. The best supplement to this report is to find one of these 7-page documents.

The presentation was typical of the many military briefings I endured while on active duty. Americans now on active duty and veterans who remember briefings refer to them as “Laundry Lists.” The metaphor refers to a subject heading with many titles of subheadings under it. It is not as bad as it seems unless some of the acronyms are not explained. At least two acronyms were not spelled out: CRS and NCRS. I Google-searched them later in context to flood control and I learned that they mean: “Community Rating System” and “National Resources Conservation Service.” The Community Rating System is defined as a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management that exceed the minimum National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements. The CRS acronym was on the fourth Power Point graphic with the title: “Floodplain Management” and with the second subheading stating: “Lower CRS Rating = Lower Insurance Premiums.” The National Resources Conservation Service is a division under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

On the 21st frame, one of the sources for funding storm water management projects is the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). It would have helped any newcomers to Florida to learn that the district also has a nickname: “Swift Mud.” Most of the 12 outdoor, hand-held photographs were self-explanatory. The one exception was graphic number ten (10). The heading was: “Public Works FY17 3rd Quarter.” The photo seemed to show a shallow trench in the ground, but the speaker said it was a buried corrugated steel pipe that was too old and too rusty to hold its cylindrical shape; thus, it collapsed and was flattened completely by the weight of the soil overhead.

After the presentation, many of the comments from the audience were complaints that the speaker spoke of the many reactivate measures used to stop recent flood damage without any mention of proactive projects to prevent floods in the future.