



TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH

One Golden Beach Drive
Golden Beach, FL 33160

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 15, 2017

To: Mayor Glenn Singer &
Members of the Town Council

From: Alexander Diaz,
Town Manager

Subject: **Hurricane Irma Report**

It has been a challenging week for South Florida. The devastation left behind by Hurricane Irma has been felt throughout not only our area but throughout the whole state. Prior to the storm making landfall, preparation efforts began in Town. The efforts put forth by the staff to secure the safety of residents and homes, and rebuild after the storm has been overwhelming. And while impossible to convey in totality all of the work that has been done in Town, I will attempt to recap all of the actions taken by all of the staff on your behalf. I know we have made mistakes along the way, and things may have fallen by the wayside. This is also chronicled in this memorandum. I believe although we strive for perfection in everything we do, sometimes things fall short of that. I take every situation as a learning experience and I think this was is no different.

Immediately after the storm, my top priority was to try to bring some sense of calm and normalcy back to our residents. I took every necessary step to ensure that we communicated to our Council and residents the steps that we were taking to try to achieve this. Our immediate clean-up efforts was unlike any other in South Florida. All of our streets were cleared within 8 hours after the storm had passed. We had an overwhelming presence of staff to ensure our residents that they're homes were safe and we immediately checked every home in Town to ensure that there was no damage and that they were all secure. In addition to that, we commenced our daily newsletters to keep our residents informed. Staff was dispatched to go door to door and speak directly to our residents to find out what concerns or needs they have. We immediately contacted all of our vendors to report to Town to conduct their damage assessments so that we could begin our recovery efforts. Within 36 hours post-Irma we placed our initial tree order to help begin the replanting of our tree canopy. Food trucks were immediately ordered as well, so that some of the burden and stress that our residents are coping with can be alleviated and at our first food truck event we have over 375 residents pass through. Our garbage and debris removal efforts will be ongoing until the last leaf is disposed of. I, along with the Police Chief and the Public

Works Director, have worked daily in excess of 12 hours per day to ensure that our momentum is not lost.

Police Department Report

Wednesday, 9/6/17

- Chief Herbello & staff attends Island Chief's meeting for briefing on Hurricane Irma
- Mandatory evacuation issued by Mayor and Town Manager – police officers door-to-door on Ocean Boulevard between 195 Street and County Line Road
- Town secures 2,000 gallons of gasoline

Thursday, 9/7/17

- Continual notification of mandatory evacuation with police officers going door-to-door on South, Center and North Islands
- Town purchases a boat engine and generators for post-hurricane recovery efforts
- Police notified that Town would be mobilizing on Friday, 9/8/17
- Police continue assessing and securing construction sites
- Officers check to make sure residents are bringing patio furniture inside their homes
- At 9 p.m. after mandatory evacuation is declared, Chief orders closure of Ocean Blvd. at 195 Street and County Line Road. The road reopens at 6 a.m. the following morning

Friday, 9/8/17

- Police vehicles fueled up in preparation for the mandatory mobilization
- Non-essential personnel released from duty.
- Police initiate a mandatory emergency mobilization into Alpha/Bravo shifts.
- Police officers continue door-to-door efforts to notify residents about the mandatory evacuation on Golden Beach Drive, North Parkway and South Parkway.
- Police continue assessing and securing construction site and check if resident have followed Town mandate to bring in patio furniture
- Police acquired enough food to last until Sunday, 9/10/17
- One officer assigned to the EOC for the Alpha/Bravo mobilization shifts at the North Miami Beach EOC room – Police Chief and staff also responded periodically
- Town Mobil Command vehicle relocated to the North Miami Beach Police Department, Marine Patrol taken out of the water
- At 9 p.m. Chief orders closure of Ocean Blvd. at 195 Street and County Line Road. The road reopens at 6 a.m. the following morning

Saturday, 9/9/17

- Officers met and briefed on assignments and security details
- Chief responds to the EOC for updates
- GBPD arranges to send food to the EOC at North Miami Beach

- At 3 p.m. police services suspended due to wind gusts above 45-50 miles an hour – patrol units remain in Town for security duties
- At 3:15 p.m. decision is made to establish Command Post inside the Regalia Boulevard at 19575 Collins Avenue – all personnel relocated there
- 3:35 p.m. – water main line breaks at 439 Center Island Drive. North Miami Beach Water and Sewer respond temporarily closing the line.
- 4 p.m. arrangements made to deliver food to the EOC and GBPD staging area
- At 9 p.m. NE-MUNI radio patch goes down and STATION 6 channel was on CC scan. GBPD lose radio capabilities/transmissions
- At 9 p.m. the staging area receives a call via the EOC cellphone regarding a burglary alarm at 547 Ocean Boulevard.
- AT 9:30 p.m. the EOC cellphone receives a call about a burglary alarm at 625 Golden Beach Drive – units unable to respond due to unsafe weather conditions.
- At 10:00 p.m. Sergeant Leila Perez contacts Miami-Dade County Police Communications Division to advise that GBPD has no radio capabilities/transmissions
- At 10:20 p.m. units were dispatched from the staging area to respond to and check both locations where the burglar alarms went off. Both locations were checked, but no report was completed.
- MDPD Communications Division contacts Sgt. Perez to advise that the AT&T T1 line had been lost and that an emergency ticket was being initiated to repair the patch. MDPD did advise that the NE-MUNI talk group was operational.
- Area check completed between 10:20 p.m. and 11:50 p.m., with the following areas of concern noted:
 - 355 Ocean Blvd – Australian pine tree blocking Ocean
 - 387, 415, 555 and 577 Ocean Blvd – tree branches blocking Ocean (Public Works was notified, GBPD escorted them and they were able to open one lane of northbound traffic)
 - Beach Pavilion – Town's yellow picnic tables flipped over
 - 100 to 200 block of Golden Beach Drive – flood waters observed

Sunday, 9/10/17

- Officers stationed at Regalia residence, storm brings in gusty winds exceeding 100 miles per hour
- GBPD continue experiencing radio transmission failure
- Periodically, weather permitting and at the request of the Command Post Supervisor – 2 officers at a time check the Town for trespassers or possible illegal activities, reporting any infrastructure damages seen
- At 4:25 p.m. units respond to a burglary alarm call through the County radio at 625 Ocean Blvd.
- At 8:25 p.m. units respond to an audible alarm at 550 Ocean Blvd.
- At 8:50 p.m. units respond to a possible burglary in progress at 317 Ocean Blvd.
- At 9 p.m. the EOC was contacted regarding a possible water contamination at North and South Parkways

- At 9:25 p.m. units respond to an audible alarm at 625 Ocean Blvd.
- At 10:54 p.m. units respond to an audible alarm at 547 Ocean Blvd.
- At approximately 11 p.m. The Town loses electrical power and FPL was notified via the EOC

Monday, 9/11/17

- Command Post at Regalia dismantled and established inside the Golden Beach CIP Conference Room
- At 10:15 a.m. on-duty units advised to scan the Town for damage and report to the EOC and temporary Command Post
- Shortly after units report that Ocean Blvd. was completely blocked north and southbound due to fallen trees between the 400 and 600 blocks.
- Units also report flooding inside the Islands and at Golden Beach Drive
- All other street blockages (traffic signs, light poles, trees, etc.) reported
- Police units dispatched to multiple calls for service
- Gasoline, propane gas, generators and food were purchased
- Police and Public Works respond to a water main break at 610 North Island Drive
- Ocean Blvd. Sealed and blocked at County Line Road and at 195 Street due to unsafe conditions. Once safe passage was established, residents were allowed in after showing proof of residency at the checkpoints.
- Second checkpoint established at the substation
- Mobil Command Post taken to the substation to power the information table and to serve as a mobile office for administrative duties
- A curfew is established from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Tuesday, 9/12/17

- Ocean Blvd. opened for traffic at 12:00 p.m
- Officers assigned to North and South Gates, as well as the Substation (The Strand)
- Officers at The Strand and South Gate were instructed to keep a log of every person coming into Town.
- Teco Gas comes to Town to check on generators losing power
- Officers respond to calls for service, to include assisting adjacent jurisdictions police departments
- Ocean closed again at 8:30 p.m. after Sunny Isles P.D. close Ocean Boulevard at 195 Street due to ongoing curfew and no electricity

Public Works Department Report

****** Wednesday, 9/6/17 through Sunday 9/10/17 department begins preparation details and clean-up efforts to prepare for the storm. ******

Monday, 9/11/17

- Department, with the assistance of 12 day laborers, cleans all debris from all of Ocean Boulevard
- Public Works mobilized to first clean Ocean Blvd. (in order to reopen it) and then to clean Golden Beach Drive

- Department also focuses on Golden Beach Drive to make the roadways navigable by both residents and clean-up crews.
- Remove all fallen trees from all sidewalks both inside and outside of Town
- All drains were cleaned, to allow for all standing water to freely flow out of Town

Tuesday, 9/12/17

- Department, with the assistance of 16 day laborers, clean all Islands and gather all fallen debris from each home, bringing it out to the curb
- Garbage truck then taken to pick up all debris piles from sidewalks and gutters

Wednesday, 9/13/17

- Crew splits up in two, with two garbage trucks to go home to home to pick up garbage and debris

Thursday, 9/14/17

- Continued garbage and debris pick-ups throughout Town

Friday, 9/15/17

- One garbage truck out to clean up smaller piles of debris from all curbs
- Cleaned up all major debris from the entryway of the South Gate
- North Island and Center Island completely free of debris
- South end of Town from Verona Avenue to Town Hall has been completed cleaned of debris

Building & Zoning Department Report

Prior to Storm Making Landfall

- Blast email sent out to all construction sites notifying them to secure sites
- Hand delivered (and emailed) required hurricane preparedness outline

Wednesday, 9/13/17 through Friday, 9/15/17

- Door to door construction site assessments
- Door to door residential damage assessments
- Individually called all contractors by phone to advise that work would resume today
- Blast email sent out thanking contractors for securing sites prior to storm
- Assisted with the handing out of newsletters door to door

Town Clerk Report

Prior to Storm Making Landfall

- Secure department and all important permanent archival documents
- Send out periodic CodeRed messaging alerts to advise residents of what is happening in Town
- Secure all important personnel paperwork to protect from possible storm damage
- Community Development Specialist sets up master vendor contact list in preparation for communications being down

Wednesday, 9/13/17 through Friday, 9/15/17

- Immediately post the cancellation of the September 12th, 2017 First Budget Hearing and post reschedule date of September 19th, 2017
- Work on agenda for post Hurricane Irma special town council meeting scheduled for Friday, September 15th, 2017
- Assist Finance Director with proper reprocessing of payroll
- Work on Administrative Orders pertaining to Hurricane relief efforts
- Work on memo from Town Manager recapping all Hurricane related efforts

Finance Department Report

Prior to Storm Making Landfall

- Backed up all accounting files
- Printed all vendor lists
- Provide town purchasing cards for supplies needed before and after the storm

Wednesday, 9/13/17 through Friday, 9/15/17

- Town Hall phones transferred to a dedicated cell phone line – backup land lines were also down (AT&T)
- Proper reprocessing of payroll
- Accounts payable processed and caught up
- Re-established the phones at Town Hall and at the Substation
- Cell phone line made permanent to always have method of communications, if land lines go down again
- Continued final updates to budget to present at the rescheduled first budget hearing

Resident Services Department

Prior to Storm Making Landfall

- Sent out a Hurricane preparedness mailer
- Notified it on Channel 89, the marquis and the Town website

Wednesday, 9/13/17 through Friday, 9/15/17

- Sent out daily newsletters updating residents on the state of the Town and the state of relief efforts in Town.
- Continue to update the marquis, Channel 89 and the Town website
- Assisted with the handing out of newsletters door to door
- Spoke directly with residents out on the field and reported their issues back to the Town Manager

Although many things were done right, there were also a lot of areas of improvement that we can all learn from moving forward. In the coming weeks and months the Mayor and I, along with the Director staff will be performing an in-depth analysis of areas where the Town has vulnerabilities and determining what measures need to be taken.

Some of the areas of improvement are:

- Staffing deficiencies in our ability to respond to incidents such as water main breaks, light outages, downed machinery and equipment, maintaining some of our emergency response equipment.
- We also have a critical need to have a field depot.
- Our biggest challenge as it relates to this storm and any other storm is the fact that our city hall does not meet any local, state or federal codes and it is unsafe for our staff to stay here during such an event. If it were not for the hospitality provided to us by the Regalia, our ability to send out crews during when the winds subsided to perform assessments would not have been possible.
- We need to have a better coordination with FPL to determine how they can take the necessary steps to harden the facilities that service Golden Beach so that our restoration process time can be cut in half.
- A built-in generator needs to be installed at both Town Hall and the police gatehouse.
- Ensuring that our pump stations remained energized during the storm.
- Incomplete vendor contact lists – a few names that should have been included were left out
- Explore the option of a cloud bases server solution

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize some key individuals, who worked tirelessly day in and day out prior to, during and after the storm. Your Golden Beach Police Department and Public Works staff collectively have performed nothing short of miracles securing homes, roadways and public areas. In particular, Chief Herbello, Lt. Diaz and Sgt. Perez of the police department did an excellent job leading the department. Public Works Director Kirk McKoy has not only led his team, but also acted as a crew member himself clearing roadways and gutters and structures himself. I have to send out a special thanks to Derek Cardoza, Ray Mundle, Johnny Lucien, and Brian Phillips for riding out the storm in Town at the ready to assist with whatever needs there were. Last, but not least, Destiny Abu Jarour has been incredible, assisting every department with every need necessary prior to, during and after the storm. Without her, the communications between departments would not have been as seamless. She ran every errand imaginable and coordinated food for both the staff and residents.

Your staff has been working since the moment they received the call to come back, some of which still have their own homes and families to get in order. They have taken away time from their own families and homes to make sure that the families and homes in Golden Beach have returned back to normalcy and I am grateful for the time and effort they have all put forth. I feel that our recovery efforts, while still not complete, have been phenomenal. I want to thank the Mayor and Council for your trust in me to take the necessary actions for the Town.

Now let's all hope I get power back soon!