

TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH

One Golden Beach Drive
Golden Beach, FL 33160

**Official Minutes for the September 15, 2017
Special Town Council Meeting called for 3:00 P.M.**

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Singer called the meeting to order at 3:21 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Councilmember's Present: Mayor Glenn Singer, Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin, Councilmember Jaime Mendal, Councilmember Amy Isackson-Rojas, Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein

Staff Present: Town Manager Alexander Diaz, Town Clerk Lissette Perez, Town Attorney Steve Helfman (via cell phone), Police Chief Rudy Herbello, Finance Director Maria Camacho

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Herbello led the Pledge of Allegiance

D. DISCUSSION ON HURRICANE IRMA

Mayor Glenn Singer spoke briefly on the hurricane. Commended the staff on the great job that was done. Chief Herbello, Lt. Diaz and Sgt. Perez did a phenomenal job in their leadership and throughout the entire police department. Town is probably one of the safest that weathered the storm. Police Department made sure that the homes and residents that stayed were safe and secure. Police did a great job throughout the storm and after the storm. Commended Kirk McKoy and Ken Jones and the public works department. Not one city in Dade-County is as clean and organized as Golden Beach. No city compares. Town looks great, and it's going to get better. Recognized Destiny and Dylan for the great job done. Great job all the way through. We are lucky to have the Town Manager. He has done a phenomenal job. The leadership he has shown to coordinate the staff, words cannot express the amount of time and effort he has put in for the Town. Forfeited a lot leaving family behind and been here nonstop. Thank you from the residents and himself. This was a great lesson for himself, the Town Manager and the residents of Golden Beach because the Town has never really faced a storm of

this magnitude and it could've been worse. Next 30 to 60 days made a commitment to meet with all of the utility companies to see what can be done better and make an inventory of what the town has and make a report of what we did right, what we could've done better and how to get it right for next time. Town Manager and he were in constant communication with FPL to get the power connected as soon as possible. Majority of the Town is up and running with Atlantic Broadband. Issue with them was that they couldn't get their lines up until FPL cleared the wires. Those lines are fed into Golden Beach and there's nothing we can do until they are safe. There is still 6 homes in Golden Beach without power. FPL promised that by the end of today those houses would be up and have power. Flooding was an issue. If power is out and the generators are not on, flooding will be an issue. Town Manager was in four feet of water turning on the generator to get the pumps up and running again. When a surge is in that high, you are also going to have sewer issues. Promise's to get the Town back as quickly and as nicely as possible. Need's to look into building a new town hall and a new emergency operations center for the town. On the financial side, this was a costly storm to the Town of Golden Beach, but it could've cost a lot more. Last storm we were able to get reimbursed for about 65% in different areas and were hoping for the same for this storm. We have been through a lot and there's a lot of stress, but be grateful for what we have. If you see a staff member you should thank them, if you see a police officer you should hug them. If you have a question or comment, please ask the staff before rumors are spread.

On another note, mentioned that the 5K scheduled for this Sunday has been cancelled and that there will be spraying at 6:00 a.m.

Town Manager Diaz began the conversation recapping all of the Town's efforts before the storm made landfall. In preparation for the storm, the town realized that we did not have a facility to weather the storm in. Also reached out to residents and helped in whatever way possible. During the storm, 9 police officers and 5 public works staff and I were here. Chief Herbello and Sgt. Perez secured the second floor of the Regalia building, which was very beneficial to the town. It allowed us to be vigilant and keep the homes secured. Our Town Hall and Public Works Building is below the minimum flood plain of our own code so we could not have stayed here. After 42 mile per hour winds, staff pulled off the roads. Once we lost power our pumps stopped working. Most pumps are energy dependent. Generators did work, but they need to be turned on by someone. Within an hour of the pumps being turned on the town was drained as it was supposed to. As soon as the winds died down a mandatory curfew was instated from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. No one was allowed in for

the first 36 hours without a resident ID. Within 8 hours of the storm passing, we had every major road cleared of debris. On the first day of recovery we had in excess of 60 crew members and most of our subs. Will be providing to each resident a damage assessment of each of their properties. Rumors don't really help the situation when we are trying to get back to normalcy. Did have some issues as it relates to the restoration of power. We are 100% dependent of the communities that serve us my numbers are 30% of our community gets fed from the south and 70% from the north. FPL's entire feeder system came down we will meet with FPL to see what we can do to harden these facilities. Our system that we invested millions on was completely in tacked not one tree ripped out any of our poles or transformers. Some transforms tripped once water came in them they were all reset. On Tuesday 48 hours after the storm we had every single vendor that provides us services in Town. First city to place initial tree replacement order. All vendors have come in and done an assessment of all areas. We cannot control sewage backups. Need to wait for the portable generators to be manually turned on. There was no boil water issue ordered throughout the entire storm. Council and community need to recognize that our Town facilities are not made to meet these type of storm's requirements. Immediately started a daily newsletter to inform residents of what was going on. We did 10 reverse 9-1-1 calls. Providing food trucks for residents to make our residents lives easier. Our residents are responsible for debris removal of their property. The town has focused on getting all of our roadways and right-of-ways cleared. It is your obligation to help us with that process. Residents it is important that you do not mix garbage, trash and debris together. If you need help, call Town Hall. Garbage schedule is going back to normal next week. Trash will be ongoing until the last tree limb is picked up. Parks need to be disinfected and sanitized. If a sign says that a park is closed it is for your safety. Town hall will be open on Monday for normal business. Construction sites have been allowed to come into to town to start prepping. Building begins normal operations on Monday. No home prior to a TCO will be inspected until the engineer of record certifies that there was no damage. Electrical, plumbing, structural require permits. Waiving all permit fees as it relates to Irma-related damage and will issue expedited permits within 24 hours. You must pull a permit for anything dealing with electrical, plumbing, mechanical and structural. Will continue to have an increased presence of police in the afternoons and at night. Still have our boat in the water. We are stopping everyone. Please bear with us. We lost a lot of cameras and every camera is down. We're doing the best we can and thinks we've done a great job considering the circumstances.

Vice Mayor Lusskin thanked the Town for the great job done. Decided not to leave Town and weathered it here. Signed up for the code red service on the Town's website and the system gave her email alerts and alerted her that there was a tornado that touched down in Town, highly suggests that everyone goes on the Town's website and signs up. There was price gouging in Town. Teco gas didn't supply the Town appropriately and that needs to be dealt with. Agrees with the Mayor that the Town needs a Town Hall. If it has to be done through a referendum vote, then she feels that it should be done. Residents, although appreciative of the coded calls, they were scared that there wasn't an emergency number they could call. Feels that the last call that goes after right before the Town signs off should provide an emergency number for residents to reach should they need to. Town Manager says that during the event the phone calls coming in to Town Hall and the guardhouse were rerouted to his cell phone and he answered and logged over 320 calls.

Vice Mayor Lusskin stated that traffic pattern updates would be great to add to the coded calls so that when residents are returning they are aware of any closures because a lot of people went through the William Lehman Causeway and were turned around at the end of it. She also really wants essential staff to be in Town during the storms and the only way to make that possible is with a new Town Hall.

Councilmember Mendal asked about the situation at The Strand and when the lights and power will be back up and running.

Town manager Diaz stated that it is a four-way stop like everywhere else in the county. Do not know when they will be back up and functional. The majority of residents are not back. This is the time that neighbors keeping an eye on each other helps us. Gate arm motherboard was fried it suffered water surge. It's been shipped in, but won't have the gate arms or cameras back until that is received.

Councilmember Mendal asked about the website and whether it wasn't being updated with the daily newsletter.

Town Manager stated that our website was down until yesterday due to servers begin down.

Councilmember Bernstein thanked all Town staff, also felt the police presence was great. Town did an excellent job of keeping people informed. Believes that having essential personnel can be very useful to Town residents but that can only happen if we have a safe place for them to be. Mentioned that

a lot of people were without power in Town and were only able to access information through their cell phones, asked the manager to look into another type of way to get information to the residents such as Social Media. Also mentioned that there may be a different type of generator the Town could get that has some kind of remote powering on method.

Town Manager mentioned that he is not for a Social Media account when it comes to government establishments because of rumor control.

Councilmember Rojas agrees with the comments about a facility in town for essential staff to stay at. Feels that the police and Public Works have done a great job. Also, has a lot of new residents in town and they were upset that the power went down that did not now before the underground project it didn't take much for the power to go out so we did wonderfully. Issues she has a problem with one of them is the flooding, she thinks that the generators should not be manual generators and if they are they should have automatic switch that will turn them off once the water gets to a certain level. Town's gas pressure is low. Teco needs to come in town wide and do an evaluation and get the town's system up to speed with the homes that will be using gas.

Tony Rojas, 600 Golden Beach Drive stated that the Town Manager and the staff has worked like dogs. There's not enough praise that he can give them, including the Town Manager. The gas pressure is an issue. Started flooding within 15 hours and when we lost power those generators were turned off. There is something called a flow switch that will kill the generator when the water gets to a certain point and it'll start it back up when the waters recede. But instead of being flooded for 15 hours, the town could have been flooded for 2. Assurance power systems can provide this service. He has seen managers come and go and none have done the job like this Town Manager has. Also mention we need a Town Hall that can hold essential staff.

Councilmember Lusskin Mentioned that the flooded water was moving fast and was scared at how long it took to recede.

Madison Burndt, 274 South Island thanked the Town for its response during and after Hurricane Irma. Also mentioned that Sunny Isles and Hallandale had twitter accounts that were live and updated constantly that the Town of Golden Beach should look into it. Golden Beach should continue its research into sustainability and looking at sustainable ways to power the Town.

Town Manager mentioned that it is not because he doesn't like social media but also we do not have enough staff members to be able to keep up with updating the account.

Terry Sonn, had a generator and couldn't use it because TECO didn't provide enough gas. People should be able to build up so that water flows underneath. People should be able to build higher seawalls so that their homes are not underwater. Thanked the police for the great job and effort. Stated that her generators motherboard blew.

Mayor Singer stated that he and the Manager will be meeting with the utilities companies to address all of these issues.

Mrs. Sonn asked what the Town can do to allow the residents to increase the height of their seawall. And her other point is that residents should be allowed to build on stilts and have two stories over.

Mayor Singer appreciates everyone's input. Mentioned that you have his commitment and that he will ok into everything and that we will become stronger and better.

Town Manager stated that there were a number of administrative orders that were sent out during the storm. They will forward them to the council shortly. Reminded the council that the first budget hearing has been rescheduled to Tuesday, September 19th at 7 p.m. The second budget hearing is the following Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Vice Mayor Lusskin commended Mr. Rojas for all of the help he provided, as well as many residents in Town.

Town Manager thanked the council for all their support. He doesn't think there is another city where the council is as involved and trusting as they are. Today is the last daily newsletter.

E. DISCUSSION & DIRECTION TO TOWN MANAGER

Mayor Glenn Singer:
None Requested

Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin:
None Requested

Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein:
None Requested

Councilmember Amy Isackson-Rojas
None Requested

Councilmember Jaime Mendal
None Requested

Town Manager Alexander Diaz:
None Requested

F. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn the Council Meeting was made by Vice Mayor Luskin, seconded by Councilmember Rojas.

Consensus vote 5 Ayes 0 Nays. Motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lissette Perez
Lissette Perez
Town Clerk