




TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH

Office of the Town Manager

To: Honorable Mayor Glenn Singer &
Town Council Members

From: Alexander Diaz, 
Town Manager

Date: September 15, 2022

Subject: **FY 21/22-Significant Accomplishments and Performance Review**

It has been more than two years since the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted the world and the global marketplace. The pandemic did a number of things – halted the world economy, tested our resolve, brought us all together, while keeping us apart, and changed the way the world conducts business. This past year however, as the world re-opened and a “new normal” was established, our small, exclusive oceanfront community embarked on a rebirth. Golden Beach’s real estate market grew in such an unprecedented way, that we even received national notoriety with a feature in the Wallstreet Journal. This year, we solidified our standing as a premier residential community in which to visit, live, and raise a family. We continue to realize our mission of becoming a community that provides more customer-centric services with more beautiful and vibrant open spaces, at the epicenter of South Florida’s high society. We remain **Forward Thinking** in the way business is conducted, and **Future Focused** to meet the demands of the new Golden Beach.

In Fiscal Year 2021-2022 we laid the foundation for what the future of Golden Beach would look like – a future of investments. Investments by the community, as more and more people now call Golden Beach home; investments in infrastructure, with projects ranging from the construction of the highly anticipated Civic Center Complex to the Walls at Massini Avenue and Terracina Avenue; and investments in the growth and financial stability of the individuals who work day in and day out to secure our Town at the forefront of luxury living in South Florida.

This year, the Town’s assessed values grew to a very healthy \$1.438 billion; the Town began the conversation to erect a community wellness center, and the Town signed the most competitive FOP Union Contract with the Police Department in all of Golden Beach’s history.

As we moved forward focused on the future, FY 2021/2022 provided the foundation and framework for the Town to continue to grow and meet the demands of tomorrow. Here is more of what FY 2021/2022 looked like:

- ✓ During the past year the Town Manager graduated from the Miami-Dade School of Justice Police Academy. The Manager spent countless hours after his Administrative shift was completed patrolling the streets of the Town as a Field Training Officer to attain the training hours needed to official become a Certified Law Enforcement Officer. The training and experience gained is invaluable to the Town. As a Certified Law Enforcement Officer, the Manager will now apply the knowledge gained to strengthen our security efforts and developing our Police Staff.
- ✓ The Town has now implemented increased training initiatives within the Police Department to foster growth and development of our officers. There is now a post-academy training initiative where more seasoned officers provide training to newly graduated officers. In addition, our more seasoned team also provide training to officers while they are in the academy as well. The real world situational knowledge imparted is extremely beneficial to new members of the department as they embark on their law enforcement careers.
- ✓ After awarding a contract to Hotwire Communications, Inc. to provide bulk internet managed in-home WiFi with dedicated fiber to each home in Town. In the 2021-2022 fiscal year we completed the installation of dedicated fiber to each home, providing 1-gig of Internet and Cable service to each residence, making Golden Beach the first municipal community in the nation to provide this service.
- ✓ The Town approved a Special Assessment to pay for the Town-Wide bulk internet and managed Wi-Fi services provided by Hotwire Communications to every home in Town. In the first year of the Hotwire contract, after extensive research and analysis, the Town decided that it would shoulder those costs on its own and not pass that burden on to the residents for that first year. The first year of the contract was paid for with General Fund dollars. The assessment will be in place for the next ten years and will include funding for an updated, state-of-the-art CCTV system in Town.
- ✓ Held a topping off ceremony for the new Civic Center on February 24, 2022. The COVID-19 safe ceremony was well attended and met with praise from the community.
- ✓ After a considerable amount of meetings, the Administration launched the General Obligation Bond informational campaign, to inform residents of the various aspects of the G.O. Bond project. The office of the Town Clerk worked in conjunction with the Town Manager and Resident Services department to roll out the General Obligation Bond informational campaign. The campaign included informational door hangers, an in-depth informational brochure, a landing page

on the Town's website, informational videos, website updates, and elections coordination with the Miami-Dade County elections department. The G.O. Bond campaign includes a reimagined Tweddle Park and enhancements to the Town's open spaces/park areas, a state-of-the-art community wellness center, enhanced lighting on A1A, improved security and safety measures, and updates to the Town's historic beach pavilion.

- ✓ After breaking ground, the Administration began the initial construction phase of the Civic Center Complex Masterplan. Due to issues with supply, demand and escalating labor costs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic this fiscal year, Gerrits Construction, Inc. requested the addition of \$1.4-million to the original contract to the Town. Supply shortages also caused some delays in construction, delaying work on the inside of the building. The Administration is confident that we will still meet an early-2023 completion date.
- ✓ The Town approved via resolution a professional services contract between The Town of Golden Beach and Estrada Hinojosa & Company, Inc. To perform professional services that include, but not be limited to advising as to the financing alternatives and its elements for various capital improvement projects, assisting with analyzing the financial impact of the financing mechanisms, advising the Town and its staff of changes, proposed or enacted, in Federal and State laws and regulations which would affect the municipal bondmarket, etc.
- ✓ The Town commissioned renowned design firm Perkins & Will to provide invaluable design options and plans for the interior of the Civic Center Complex Masterplan. Perkins & Will put together a presentation for the Mayor and Council detailing all of the options to outfit the new building with state-of-the-art materials and features to add to the elegance and aesthetics of the building.
- ✓ The Town Manager created the Assistant Town Manager position, promoting Building & Zoning Director Linda Epperson to the position. The creation of this position ties into the Town's Long Range Financial Plans by creating an Attrition Training Program, where employees that are preparing to retire/exit the workforce provide invaluable training and guidance for employees entering it. This provides the necessary overlap to ensure continuity of services and coverage.
- ✓ In Fiscal Year 2021-2022 the Capital Improvement Projects Department in conjunction with the Town Manager, applied for an unprecedented number of grants. Some were struck down by the Governor, despite all of the efforts of staff. The Town was however able to secure a \$500,000 grant for the Pump Station at Tweddle Park, a \$75,000 grant to assist with Town-wide vulnerability assessment focused on stormwater and sea level rise challenges, and a \$112,500 grant for three portable pumps to provide for extra flood relief for the most vulnerable areas of Town. The Town's attempt at securing a grant for the Wellness Center project was struck down as well as the grant for additional funds for the Landfall Team Bunker.

- ✓ Completed a comprehensive beautification project of the The Strand entrance to the Town. The aspects of the project included: curbs and gutters replacement, artificial turf installation, ballards replacement, and the seal coating of the asphalt. This enhancement helps to increase the aesthetic appeal of the Town and adds to the value of the homes.
- ✓ In June 2022, the Administration negotiated the most highly competitive FOP Union contract between the police officers and the Town in the history of Golden Beach.
- ✓ The Golden Beach Police Department went through the re-accreditation process and was recommended for re-accreditation for a fourth term as a Florida Accredited agency by the Commission for Law Enforcement Agency (CFA).
- ✓ The Finance Department completed a successful audit with zero findings and zero management concerns for the eighth year in a row. This fiscal year, the Administration took it a step further by conducting an in-depth audit of all of the Town's equipment, including cell phone's, Wi-Fi devices and all of the Town's vehicle fleet. This was done to ensure that of our fixed assets lists are up to date and complete. This is the first time such an in-depth review is conducted in four years. In addition, as part of this year's audit, the Administration has created new reserves within our Fund Balance to ensure that we are being responsible with future unforeseen demands that may be placed on our pension and health insurance costs, by allocating resources dedicated specifically to fund those two areas.
- ✓ The Town implemented the Paychex platform as the Town's new payroll provider. The new system was met with positive feedback from staff who can easily make online requests for time off, view their electronic paystubs, and make simple changes to their employee profiles as needed. The new platform is more cost effective, less time consuming and is able to integrate with benefits enrollment and time management.
- ✓ The Town completed the temporary repairs to the Tweddle Park outfall, improving drainage at the tennis courts and surrounding areas. Water mitigation has been an important aspect of the Capital Projects in Town, to safeguard the welfare of residents and protect your investments.
- ✓ The Town was also awarded a \$75,000 grant from the State to assist in the Town-wide vulnerability assessment, specifically to prioritize resilience planning for stormwater and sea level rise challenges and changes.
- ✓ The Town approved via resolution the purchase of Mobile Architecture for Communications Handling (MACH) software to assist the town's police department with dispatch operations.

- ✓ The Police Department conducted a full inventory of the Police Property/Evidence Rooms to ensure and confirm accountability and integrity of system. In cooperation with the Sweetwater Police Department, GBPD purged and expunged evidentiary items and/or other personal properties that were either from closed cases or unclaimed items.
- ✓ The Town is continuing to endeavor to rebuild and restructure the Public Works/Police Annex Facility to become the Town's new Auxiliary Services Facility, housing the Town's Emergency Operations Center. As part of the project, the Town submitted a grant application to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Rebuild Florida Critical Facility Hardening Program, which was unfortunately struck down.
- ✓ The Town rolled out the Hotwire Communications, Inc. Town-Wide Fiber Internet Service installation to all of the homes in Town
- ✓ The construction on the Center Island Pump Station Project was completed.
- ✓ The Town approved via resolution a contract with Southeastern Engineering Contractors, Inc. for roadway improvements within North Parkway, including two catch basin adjustments; 102 linear feet of new curbs and gutters; 100 square feet of sidewalks; asphalt removal and installation; drainage improvements; and removal and re-installation of pavers.
- ✓ Installation of two new bus shelters on A1A with enhanced landscaping and security features was completed.
- ✓ The Town broke ground on the highly anticipated privacy walls along Massini Avenue and Terracina Avenue.
- ✓ The Resident Services Department for the first time ever, addressed Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in the Town Magazine as a collaborative effort with Residents.
- ✓ The Resident Services Department launched a Concierge-style in-home COVID-19 testing and vaccination services, also hosted and facilitated COVID-19 testing sessions and vaccine administration events at Town Hall and the Beach Pavilion.
- ✓ The Town Clerk's Department assisted residents with setting up their Vote-By-Mail ballots and provided information and assistance to residents inquiring about the General Obligation Bond and where and when they could cast their vote.

- ✓ The office of the Town Clerk implemented a digital copy of the Town of Golden Beach Election Candidate Qualifying Handbook in preparation for the Town's General Election on February 21, 2023.
- ✓ The Golden Beach Police Department hosted their first bi-annual Drivers license renewal event back since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The Town appointed two new trustees to the Town Of Golden Beach Employees Pension Plan Board Of Trustee.
- ✓ The Golden Beach Police Department hosted their first annual meet and greet event with residents since the COVID-19 pandemic began. This event provides an opportunity for residents to engage and interact with our officers and learn about all of the positive community initiatives the department is working on.
- ✓ Sergeant Julio Soca of the Golden Beach Police Department had the honor of being featured on the Local 10 news for an article on police officers who have been shot in the line of duty and lived to tell their story.
- ✓ The Town approved a second amendment to the professional services agreement with Mainguy Environmental Care, Inc. via resolution to continue to perform landscape services throughout the Town.
- ✓ The Town Clerk's Department continued a town-wide archival records scanning project in an effort to have digital copies of all Town archives ready prior to the completion of the New Civic Center Complex.
- ✓ The Town Clerk's Department continued to make a number of revisions and updates to the Town's website including updating the Town Manager's page, Town Clerk's page, creating a Video Archives section and coordinating with the web designer to make additional section changes as needed.
- ✓ The Mayor and Town manager met with the City of Sunny Isles to discuss recent heavy traffic issues within the Town's limits. The meeting was met positively by the Administrators of Sunny Isles Beach and the Town was able to bring awareness to the increasing population issues and demands for safe and efficient travel amongst our neighboring communities.
- ✓ The Town successfully hosted its annual Bagels on the Beach event for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents were able to meet with the Council and inquire on various aspects of Town including asking questions concerning the GO Bond.
- ✓ The Town continued weekly beach sampling to test the Town's waters for bacteria.

- ✓ The Human Resources Department completed its annual comprehensive insurance review, obtaining renewal figures from different firms to compare the Town's current insurance offerings with other available offerings to make sure that the Town is offering the most responsive and affordable insurance offerings to eligible employees.
- ✓ The Town maintained its Tree City USA designation in recognition of its lush landscaping and ample open spaces
- ✓ The budget as a business plan, outlining goals and measures that govern Town affairs, has attained the esteemed "Distinguished Budget Award" for the thirteenth year in a row.
- ✓ The Town Celebrated its 93rd anniversary with its annual cake cutting ceremony at the May council meeting as well as its annual Potluck Luau event at the beach pavilion.
- ✓ The Town Clerk's Department applied for the John Land Years of Service Award and behalf of Mayor Singer and Councilmember Einstein. Both were awarded the distinguished recognition.
- ✓ The Resident Services Department began hosting in person art classes and different events again since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ In April, the Police Department, Mayor, and Town Manager hosted its annual Police Beat Night. Where they met with residents and discussed important topics such as, water vessels safety concerns and laws, Code Enforcement concerns, crime prevention safety tips, and much more.
- ✓ The Town donated over 150 meals to the homeless community in the Miami Dade area.
- ✓ The Town Clerk's Department applied for the "E. Harris Drew" Municipal Official Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of Councilwoman Lusskin.
- ✓ The Police Department once again held its back to school campaign seeing students off on the morning of the first day of school with lunch boxes filled with nutritious treats and other goodies.

The Town has been able to accomplish a number of goals both personal and Town-wide, with very limited and at times very little resources. We will continue to make good on your investment by providing the high quality of service you have come to expect, while maintaining the highest level of efficiency and professionalism. Following our current path, and continuing to invest in our community, infrastructure and people, we cement Golden Beach's standing as the premier residential community in which to work, live, and raise a family.

I am proud of the work we have accomplished this past year and over the past sixteen years. During this time, our organization has transformed into one where accountability, professionalism and innovation remain an integral part of how we function collectively. This is made possible by the continued guidance and support from the Town Council.

Through our collective efforts, we have made significant strides in building an organization that we can all be proud. We continue to strive for excellence in how we serve the community, and the value we offer all of our stakeholders. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your Town Manager. I look forward to continuing to lead our organization and working with all of you and our Town team on our priorities and goals this upcoming year and beyond.

I will be speaking with each of you one-on-one about what we have collectively achieved this past year and how together, we can continue working together In Building our Town of Excellence!

Thank you for trusting me to serve as your Town Manager and allowing me to be a part of your family. And like many families, we may not always agree on things, but the one thing we all share is our love for the Town of Golden Beach.