



Meeting Minutes
City Council

Thursday, August 31, 2017

6:00 PM

Council Chambers
200 West Walker Street

Emergency Meeting

To discuss response to and recovery from the impacts of Hurricane Harvey

The City Council of the City of League City, Texas, met in an emergency meeting in the Council Chambers at 200 West Walker Street on the above date at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor:

Pat Hallisey

City Council Members:

**Dan Becker
Hank Dugie
Larry Millican
Todd Kinsey
Greg Gripon
Keith Gross
Nick Long**

City Manager:

John Baumgartner

Assistant City Manager/Director of Finance:

Rebecca Underhill

Assistant City Manager:

Bo Bass

City Attorney:

Nghiem Doan

City Secretary:

Diana M. Stapp

Chief of Police:

Michael Kramm

Director of Human Resources/Civil Service:

Janet Shirley

Director of Parks & Cultural Services:

Chien Wei

Director of Planning/Development:

Paul Menzies

Interim Director of Public Works:

Jody Hooks

Interim City Engineer:

Christopher Sims

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mayor Hallisey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and called the roll. All members of Council were present, with Dan Becker arriving at 6:09 p.m.

Present 8 - Mayor Pat Hallisey, Mr. Dan Becker, Mr. Hank Dugie, Mr. Larry Millican, Mr. Todd Kinsey, Mr. Greg Gripon, Mr. Keith Gross and Mr. Nick Long

2. **CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL CONTINUING THE DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER FOR LEAGUE CITY, TEXAS**

- 2A. 17-0545 Consider and take action on a resolution continuing declaration of local state of disaster for the City of League City, Texas (City Manager)

A motion was made by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Kinsey, to approve Resolution No. 2017-135 continuing a declaration of local state of disaster for the City of League City, Texas.

Ryan Edghill, Emergency Management Coordinator, said Hurricane Harvey made landfall Friday night as a Category 4 storm roughly in the Corpus Christi area and then unexpected to a lot of us hung around. As the winds devastated Rockport and then moved up the coast, what we saw as it stalled out over a few days' time period was almost 50 inches of rain. Clear Creek rose to 17 feet, 10 feet out of banks and just shy of the record in Claudette in 1979. As many of you saw the flooding was widespread and impacted a lot of us. We finished up most of our search and rescue efforts and are starting the recovery process now but there is a lot of work to do. We still have people in shelters and displaced and we want to maintain the emergency declaration to see us through some of that work. The work that we are doing under the declaration makes us eligible for category A and B funding. Debris removal and emergency protective measures, the cost that we spend to remove debris from peoples' homes and the time, equipment and labor used for emergency work so far. The declaration also keeps our curfew orders as deemed necessary. The original declaration covered us for seven days and expires.

The motion passed by the following vote:

For: 8 - Mayor Hallisey, Mr. Becker, Mr. Dugie, Mr. Millican, Mr. Kinsey, Mr. Gripon, Mr. Gross and Mr. Long

3. **REPORTS FROM STAFF MEMBERS**

Announcements concerning items of community interest. No action will be taken or discussed.

- 3A. Staff report on Hurricane Harvey response and recovery

John Baumgartner, City Manager thanked all the members of the staff. I am proud working with this group of individuals. Beginning Friday night working through Wednesday, I call it Camp League City, they were at the Public Safety Building, at the Dickinson Avenue Facility, or at the wastewater treatment plant. We had resources available to address whatever came about. Obviously, the record rainfall was devastating to the community and there are thousands of homes affected.

Thanks to the community who have shown overwhelming support both from helping their neighbors and managing the shelter, donations that we have received throughout the community. We are on day two of recovery and it will be a number of weeks before we get everything back to normal. I am proud to say we opened city services fully with the exception of Hometown Heroes which is still being used as a shelter and distribution for some of the donations that we have. The Library will open tomorrow and be open Friday and Saturday, closing on Sunday and Monday for the Labor Day holiday. The Civic Center was a collection point we used for some of the donations and will likely be closed through next week.

Additional staff reports were given by Michael Kramm, Chief of Police; Gary Warren, Fire Chief; Jody Hooks, Interim Director of Public Works; Paul Menzies, Director of Planning & Development; Rebecca Underhill, Assistant City Manager, Finance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

5. COMMENTS/REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Announcements concerning items of community interest. No action will be taken or discussed.

Mayor Hallisey said this community got hit with an epic event. We knew there was a hurricane, we heard all the discussions on the front end that it was going to be a rain event. But it wasn't just a rain event, it was an epic rain event. Most of the storms over the last 45 years I've been here, I remember Claudette, 42 inches dumped in Alvin. I saw the devastation it did through this community. I didn't think it was even possible to have a storm with more water than that. While sitting in the EEOC yesterday someone reported that officially we saw 49 inches of rain and yet in certain parts of town we saw 55 inches of rain. So that is more than I have ever seen, more than probably any of the old timers that I talked to have ever seen. A lot of accolades go out to the people of this community for not panicking, for staying the course and to listening to directives to not go out and take any chances. Ryan Edghill is our Director of Emergency Management. I never saw a guy sit in a room at EEOC with more A personality of how things should go, and yet the young man held his own and led this community through this. His team was exceptional. Ryan, for today you stand up and take a bow. There are old stalwarts in the community that every time there is an emergency of one type or another that are always there. We always hear about the Police Department, and they do an exceptional job and did an exceptional job in the last week. We know about the Fire Department, I keep in mind that these are volunteers for the most part, who along with the Police Department and Public Works are credited with about 13-14 swift water rescues. That is exceptional.

People in my neighborhood all got taken out in dump trucks. City employees in general, I tried to tell them yesterday as I got choked up I just couldn't be prouder for the people who work for this community and the effort they put out for the citizens of this community. They don't get a lot of thanks for the things they do but let me tell you when they go out and save people's lives they don't complain. Some say that is what they get paid to do, but I said no it's really not. We pay you to do a job but when the call comes to do over and above the call of duty and you arise to the occasion, taking care of the people of this city there is no amount of money we could pay you that would honor you for the time other than the words 'thank you'. So for all of them, Fire Department, Fire Marshal, Police, Public Works, Planning & Development, Finance, Communications did a yeoman's job. Was it all perfect, probably not. But let me tell you something, it is a time to learn and we will learn from what we didn't do as good as we would have liked to have done it. Sunday night I am sitting around and get this call from Michelle Hatmaker who says I have a problem. I can't get them to turn the lights on in the gym for the shelter and I can't get the showers turned on. She asked me if I could call anyone. I am sure I called John and John called somebody and there was some story about the showers but the lights got turned on. So I asked Michelle if she was in any official capacity out there and she said no, I am just out here and there are all these folks from the neighborhood. I called her later in the weekend and got reports. And when someone said we are shifting them to George R Brown I was calling John and the State Legislators. The Governor had a good idea of sending C130's to move people. Unfortunately, I think what we missed in that is those people in those shelters were just like us. We didn't want to go anywhere. We wanted to get back to our house and rebuild our lives as quickly as we could. For all the good intentions we missed the switch on the people business just a little, but people like Jewels, Michelle and Leah took charge. If you want to get something done you just get a group of women together because they have the hearts and they are moms. Public Works, Fire Department, Fire Marshal, Police, EMS, Planning, Parks & Recreation and then on top of all that you got the whole Gripon family who took on a shelter all by themselves with the help of some city staff. Greg, your dad would be so proud of you to see the leadership role you took. The apple does not fall far from the tree and Greg's dad was exactly the way Greg is. Greg followed him around as a little kid, and now you see Justin and Ashley right behind him. The family is just the epitome of public service and I am really proud of you. And Mr. Dugie took on a shelter as well. To have that sense of public service at your age Hank, you should be very proud because we are very proud of you. You care about a lot more than just you. Mr. Long had a shelter he was holding down for a while and we are proud of him. All of the council was out there doing what they could. I went to 6 out of 7 shelters the other day. I went there because there was a lot of fear about what was about to happen to people that were there. I tried to comfort them and tried to up lift them, but I saw several things those days that I want to share with you that I think speaks so well about this community. I saw the fear and the uncertainty in the eyes of the people in the shelter, where would they be in an hour, where would they be in the next couple of days. We tried to dispel a lot of the rumors. I imparted the message with them that we are not going to abandon you, that is not going to happen.

We may have to move you from shelter to shelter to make things work but we are not going to abandon you. But like at Victory Lakes, when I go in there I get a tour of the kitchen and I see the mass amounts of food and fluids that are available for people in that shelter. This is the community opening up with food, drinks and resources for people in those communities. Let me tell you, the measure of a great community is what you do when times are down and this community came together in every shelter and they provided for those who were more in need than they were. To all of you watching tonight, we up here could not be prouder of the way you handled yourself during this crisis. God bless all of you. Shelters are starting to close down, people may be having opportunity to go home. The City Manager reported we had 40,000 MRE's (meals ready to eat) and 116,000 cases of water that showed up at the Civic Center miraculously the next morning so we want to thank him for his quick and decisive actions. Representative Greg Bonnen, Senator Larry Taylor and Representative Wayne Faircloth also worked on our behalf. The County had their own operations going on but I give kudos to Commissioner Clark, Commissioner Apffel and the County Judge who came in and kept up with us almost every day. Anytime we asked for something they tried to make it happen and we appreciate their efforts. A third of the population of Galveston County is up here and we got hit hard and they paid attention and provided resources to us. We are trying to put together a depot because we have 10 semi-tractor trailers bringing in storm supplies. The generosity of this community can only be rivaled by the generosity of people in this country. I got a call from Pascagoula, Mississippi who wanted to help and was sending some trucks here. A graduate of Clear Creek High School who lives in northern Oklahoma and has done well in life got on tv and solicited help for his hometown. Every day I heard from Congressman Randy Weber, who heard our house was flooded offered his home to us. Bill Heins sent me a note today about the 60-75 homes in The Landing which are flooded. Today was not a good day to make it there but I will be there tomorrow. We help one another and this is how we get through this. Where you have a need, you ask your neighbor. When you think you can't just go another minute, grab your neighbor and hug them and tell them you know it is going to be ok because we know it is going to be ok. God Bless everyone in this community and I couldn't be prouder to be part of this City than I am today just by the actions of the people that I have had the opportunity to run across in the last week.

Nick Long said I would like to say thank you to all the volunteers and the city staff, it has been pretty amazing. The City in general seemed to fare pretty well. You hear 25 deaths only. however, it kind of hits you more when you knew some of these people. One in particular, Coach Ruben Jordan, who was my football coach and driver's education instructor, recently retired from Clear Creek High School. He got out of his car to go save someone as the water came rushing and unfortunately lost his life doing that. I know he will be missed in this community and it is certainly a big loss for all of us. Our prayers go out to the Jordan family. It definitely puts it into perspective when you think of all the things that happened during this storm.

On a different note, I hear a lot of things from the volunteers on how we learn these lessons and I am confident that in the coming weeks as we do a postmortem over what we could and do better. I think one of those things is how to work with the school district better. In slight defense of Clear Creek, I was at the high school and Principal Jamey Majewski was nothing but fantastic to work with. He got those showers fired up and got all that stuff done. I think everybody was just on different pages and there was no play book, literally it was being made up as it went along. We need to take that opportunity and create a system here in League City so when it happens again we will know what to do. Lastly, we just took the first step inside passing a budget last week. And I think in light of what we have now and some of the budget constraints that we have seen or are going to experience it might be worthwhile to put another workshop on the schedule to readjust and maybe shift some of our priorities from eliminating some of those nice-to-haves that are in the budget and allocating that money to the must-haves. It would be a shame not to learn some lesson from this and to pour some money into the heart infrastructure to prevent some of this flooding and devastation that we have seen this week.

Keith Gross said it really goes without saying that Hurricane Harvey was devastating. But it didn't take long from being at a shelter, and I went to three different shelters and spent a few hours at each, to take my focus off the devastation caused by a hurricane and look at the entire League City community that came together. I didn't venture out of League City but what I saw was League City proud. We have seen League City Proud posed on their Facebooks and it is almost our slogan now but it was talk and I saw it. I was so overwhelmed with people pouring in to donate food and clothing and to provide shelter that my focus shifted from the hurricane to 'wow, we are a tremendous community'. Week after week we see on the news someone getting robbed, someone dying in a car crash or some event that is not the best in humanity. But for the last four days we saw people at their very best and that made me League City Proud. I was happy to see our community come together like this. League City has a sense of community that is stronger than I have ever seen in any other community. I want to move on and talk about another quick topic and it shifts gears and talks more about my lawyer capacity. We are going to move on to repairs of your houses and there are many of you that are going to hire contractors to remodel and rebuild your houses. That is where I am going to give you a little bit of information that amounts to an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. When you go to look in hiring your contractors try to get a reference, try to find a contractor that is local or someone that has done work for a friend or has a good reputation in the community. Second thing to look for is have a contract that describes in detail the scope of work that is to be done, that outlines their obligations and your obligations. Be wary of contracts, and I would deter you from entering a contract where you pay the General Contractor any sums of money before he begins the work. In my 17 years as a lawyer I have received numerous phone calls from some elderly person that gave a contractor money up front and they're gone. When you got a contractor that does business under an LLC or Inc or just takes the money and runs, and that is judgement proof, the money is just about gone.

The State Prosecutors don't prosecute and I can get you a piece of paper that that person says they owe you some money but that doesn't replace the money you just lost. Another thing to be wary of is cost plus contracts, where they say this is how the General Contractor gets paid. Whatever it costs to remodel your house, if it is \$30,000 in materials I get cost plus and my fee is 25%. Be wary of that because the cost-plus contract is an incentive for a contractor to run up the cost of materials and labor to increase his fees. Those are things to be wary of when you are choosing your contractor. And unfortunately, this is a time where you are going to get contractors flowing into this area from all over the United States saying I can do this, I can do that. You need to be careful before you write that check and before he has done some work. It is standard in the industry to pay 1/3, 1/3, and 1/3. The contractor does 1/3 of the work, you pay him 1/3 of the fees. He does the second 1/3, you pay the second 1/3 of the fees. Then when he says he is done you do an inspection, you make sure he has done everything and then you pay him the final amount. Doing that will save you from coming into my office or some other lawyer office later only to tell you if he doesn't have any money I am only going to get you a piece of paper.

Greg Gripon said so this have been an emotional 5 days for all of us. So the call came out to LaTonnia with the CPA that they needed help at Hometown Heroes. Finally, somewhere I could go to help, because that is what I do. When I got there, I was glad to be there because that is where I cook senior breakfast once a month and I know that kitchen. So Justin and I jumped in, saw the food that had already been donated, got on Facebook and here came the food pouring in. We never bought a single item. Everything was given by the community. There was hot foods non-stop. I can tell you I call my residence there because we had a home there, they ate very well. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, pizza, popcorn. Last night we showed a movie, we made it a home for them and it was my home. We were all in it together. The outpouring of love from this community, I kept putting #communitylove. It was just amazing for the size of this community to pour that kind of love out when before it just seemed like so much negativity around. All of a sudden that negativity was gone. In this last 5 days have you seen any negativity? No, it has been washed away. It has been so positive and how nice and refreshing that is. There is plenty of negative where people have lost their homes. The outpouring of love is such a huge positive, it is felt so good. I created a PayPal because I thought we were going to need some money to pay for all of this food. The generosity just for the PayPal has been close to \$14,000. We had a board meeting with our Lions Club and so they are going to decide how we are going to put it back into our community and help our citizens. Again, the community love, amazing.

Todd Kinsey said this was truly epic. I want to thank staff. Heather and I were one of those families that were flooded into our neighborhood. We didn't have power and we kept wondering every time there was a break in the rain why everyone congregated in front our house. We were speculating maybe it was because we were midway on the block but it turns out that is where cell signal for certain carriers is highest.

Since we were without power no one had internet or tv so every time I got an update from staff I would go out and spread the word on what was going on. On Tuesday we went to Hometown Heroes since it is close to where we live and find out there is 4 feet of water at both intersections closes to us. We just continue to help out. I have met neighbors that I hadn't even seen before. We had some damage to our home, not from flooding but from blowing rain. My son and his wife came yesterday and helped us get all the carpet removed. I want to thank staff and all the first responders. It made me proud that I have been able to sit up here the last 5 years and proud of the work that we have done to improve the infrastructure and we did a good job of taking care of the city.

Larry Millican said well I was one of those folks that couldn't get out. I had to stay in my shelter but I did have power, tv and internet so I was not affected that way. But I have to say is that the one thing I want to impress upon is my thanks to John, staff and the first responders. I can't be any more proud. I can tell you with the communication that the city did with the outpouring of the shelters and the coordination and the effort that happened, it has taken me back. I can't even describe in words what it is but I just wanted to do one thing and that was to stand up and give a round of applause to all the city staff and first responders.

Hank Dugie said I say this all the time, we live in the greatest city in the world. Typically, in the back of my mind at least I think most people see that as an opinion but I can state without a doubt that is fact, that League City is the greatest city in the world. This event is just one more data point to prove it. We have the greatest staff, we have the greatest people. The community came together like I have never seen before and I shouldn't have expected anything else. We saw and we experienced great devastation. In all things being said we had it better than our neighbors Dickinson, Friendswood, Kemah, Clear Lake Shores, and all the way down the coast to Corpus Christi and Rockport. League City fared pretty well and I think a lot of it has to do with location, a little bit of luck, but I also think we were prepared. And I think the people that came before us made the decisions that were needed to put us where we were in terms of drainage, infrastructure and supporting first responders. You never want to see it in action but when you need it in action you hope it works. For all the faults and ways we can improve, I definitely chalked this event in our first responders and their response by this team as a success. I was stationed over at Bay Harbour United Methodist Church, where we had a shelter, for over 100 hours throughout the week. I made and received over 1,000 phone calls during that time. I was in communication with the shelters at Victory Lakes, Watershed, Clear Creek High School, Hometown Heroes Park, Bay Area Church and we also had some staging areas that popped up here and there just where the community needed them. I can truly say that we had more than enough volunteers, and as you can see today we have had more than enough donations which is fantastic. In the heat of the event we had volunteers and donations pouring in, now we just have to figure out what to do with them. We have been sharing them with Dickinson, Santa Fe, Hitchcock, Friendswood.

I think I speak for all of us when I say we are going to continue to do what we can to take care of the people in our city but also our neighbors. I would like to thank specifically a bunch of people, Judge Mark Henry, Tyler Drummond and Brittany from the County. All three were very responsive from the beginning. If they couldn't receive my phone call the minute I made it they would call me back almost immediately and they were always working to get us what we needed at our shelter and the rest of the shelters. Ryan Edgehill and the rest of the staff from the City of League City, fantastic job. Working around the clock. A couple of officers in particular, Officer Perez, I hear his nickname in the force is 'Smiley', helped us one of the last days to remove some furniture, damaged products and debris and threw into a trash can. It was a good thing he was tall and strong because I don't know that anyone at the facility could have done what he did. Detective Yount helped us acquire a transport for our residents. Bay Harbour received over 850 people throughout the week. We cooked thousands of meals for those people and we did our best to get them back to their homes or homes of family and friends once it was safe. We also did our best to push the County and the City to open up shelters here locally so that people could stay here and in their town and not be shipped off somewhere else. I think overall very successful. Victory Lakes, largely ran by Michelle Hatmaker, I wanted to say thank you to her along with Pastor Lance at Watershed, Mike Hembree, Nick Long at Clear Creek High School, the Gripon family, Heather McKnight, Paul Menzies, John Lothrop at that facility. We had several other facilities throughout the town that stepped up and volunteered to hold people if needed. They ended up not being needed but to those people thank you to all of you. Life Point Church was one of them as well as the local YMCA. Several businesses that were big time supporters throughout the event included HEB, Red River, Mario's Pizza, every pizza restaurant in town was out there giving food to volunteers and people in need, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club. Our president Jason Long was at the County EOC giving his time and helping coordinate efforts. Prestige Oyster, Raz Halili donated a cold storage truck at our facility which allowed us to keep a lot of supplies and distribute them to the rest of the shelters. And while he was away from us he was down in Rockport and Corpus Christi in a boat trying to rescue. So when we needed him to move the truck or bring supplies he would bring them and then go right back. Today Burger House in League City provided lunches for first responders and I think they are going to do it again tomorrow. For a comical story, a group called me and said I am with the Bay Area Relief Network asking how they could help. I said if you have strong people and trucks we are moving supplies. I had four pickup trucks with guys show up, not very official looking. I asked what exactly is Bay Area Relief Network and they said they started that morning because they saw a need. He said once he got cards made he would give me one. I told him thank you for being here and please take the supplies and get them to their destination. Also, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Quidditch League. Mayor League Quidditch was aware of what was occurring and has already raised over \$1,000 for League City from the poor college kids that play. I think they plan on sending that over to the Lions Club. There are people all the way from Canada that are donating to League City to help us get back up and running.

Volunteers in Policing, Citizen Police Academy Alumni, CERT, National Guard, all different types of organizations came out in force to help. Rudy Salcido, John Bowen, Stacey Tegen, three of those volunteers that were everywhere all the time doing whatever it took to get people back up and running. There was a time at our facility, because we had a lot of people with intensive medical needs, where we ran out of prescriptions and there was no direct or smooth way to pay for them. So a group of volunteers at the shelter that said if we can't find out funding for them before we go pick them up we will just pay for them out of our pocket. Come to find out a man by the name of Dr. Cass, before anyone could donate money took care of it by himself. Paid for over \$1,000 of prescriptions and got the patients what they needed. Really just a group effort everywhere. I am missing so many people but I wanted to have a chance to thank those I could put down on this piece of paper. Wrapping this all up, my challenge to the entire community and everyone watching tonight is just keep up the hard work. There are so many people still in need, there are 1,000 homes in our back door that have work to be done. Even today we had people walking the streets in Bay Ridge going door-to-door asking how they could help, people with shopping carts full of food going up and down the street passing out to the volunteers. We are going to need that same level of commitment for the next couple of weeks and let's get people back in their homes as fast as possible and with the least of headaches as possible. I also challenge you to find ways to support the first responders and the supporters. So the people who opened shelter, the people who gave their time who spent countless hours and money out of their pocket to get the job done, support them. Pay it back. You might have been trapped in your home, you might have been away not able to help at the moment but you can support the people that were there in the moment. Last thing we are going to be here until the job is done, you have my word on that and I think the entire council has the same feeling. We are with you, whatever you need call us, email us, reach out to us. We are going to find a way to get it done because we don't leave anyone behind. So if you need help reach out. Either we will come out personally or we know someone that is eager to give their time.

Dan Becker said to our city staff, which includes all our first responders and the volunteers that are associated with those folks, and all the folks that have been volunteering to help their neighbors, and Commissioner Darrell Apffel who has come here tonight to demonstrate his commitment to this City and his constituents, thank you all for serving. It is a little after 8:00 pm right now, anything else I would have to say would be superfluous. Thank you again, thank you for serving.

Mayor Hallisey said there was one I forgot. I really want to tell you I think we made a great decision a number of months back to make John Baumgartner our City Manager. His steady and precise leadership and the team that he has assembled, his command staff, just being able to be in that EEOC and hearing what they talked about. If everybody in this town could have been there you would feel the same pride in him that I do. It was quite an operation. John, we are proud of you. You have risen to all the challenges anyone might have ever had a thought about, you have surpassed them. Thank you and keep up the good work and with your staff as well.

6. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:12 p.m. Mayor Hallisey said, there being no further business this meeting is adjourned.

PAT HALLISEY
MAYOR

JEANNE HAMMACK
DEPUTY CITY SECRETARY

(SEAL)

MINUTES APPROVED: