



Agenda Item # _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Fahey and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Sherilyn Lombos, Deputy City Manager

DATE: December 20, 2005

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Presentation by the We Care: Coast to Coast Team regarding the Adopted City of Pascagoula, Mississippi and Related Hurricane Relief Efforts

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council further discuss this community's Hurricane Katrina relief efforts specifically targeted to the Mississippi community of Pascagoula.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There are no direct fiscal implications to the recommendation. Depending on the activity, staff time and resources may be utilized.

BACKGROUND:

At the October 4, 2005 City Council meeting, the City Council voted (3-1) to adopt the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi with direction to return with additional information regarding what "adoption" means to the City of Manhattan Beach.

DISCUSSION:

Representatives from the We Care: Coast to Coast team will make a presentation at tonight's Council meeting with some suggestions and ideas for what adoptions of a city means practically.

- Attachments:
- A. Minutes from the October 4, 2005 City Council Meeting from Item #13
 - B. Definition of City Adoption for Pascagoula, Mississippi
 - C. WASHINGTON KARES article
 - D. SunHerald.com article: "Mississippi's future hangs on these promises"

05/0920.19-13 Consideration of Adopting the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi

Councilmember Aldinger related his support of adopting the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi as a Hurricane Katrina relief city, similar to a Sister City. He explained his impression of such a

commitment as being long-term to help the citizens of Pascagoula get back on their feet. Councilmember Montgomery pointed out that the United States' Conference of Mayors has

recommended that cities adopt other cities suffering from the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Mayor Fahey explained that her concerns during the Council's previous discussion of this topic

were for the need for additional information about Pascagoula and whether the Manhattan Beach

community would like to have more of a say in which city/cities to assist. She asked for input on

what it means to adopt a city insofar as the City government is concerned (staff time, costs, etc.).

Concurring with Mayor Fahey's comments, Mayor Pro Tem Ward commended the efforts of

Councilmembers Montgomery and Aldinger and others who have already assisted the residents

of Pascagoula. He related his understanding that Hurricane Katrina victims need money and

housing, which has been his personal focus, and that the great majority of those needing assistance live in rural areas. He recommended that the level of need be considered prior to

adopting a city and questioned the fiscal commitments associated with doing so. He voiced his

discomfort with how the City of Pascagoula was selected and favored "partnering up" with local

organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and others in the Hurricane area rather than officially

adopting a city.

Councilmember Aldinger urged the Council to officially adopt Pascagoula. He related his understanding that this would not be a large financial commitment for the City of Manhattan Beach.

Mayor Pro Tem Ward contended that a needs assessment should have been performed prior to selecting Pascagoula.

Having traveled to Pascagoula to deliver items to victims of Hurricane Katrina, Councilmember Montgomery assured Mayor Pro Tem Ward that the need is definitely there. He explained his understanding that, in adopting Pascagoula, the idea was to hopefully be one city of many, and not the only area assisted by Manhattan Beach. Mayor Fahey voiced her opinion that, while there are clearly areas in greater need of assistance, the Pascagoula area is legitimately in need and it has some parallels to Manhattan Beach in terms of the number of people, the families in the community, etc. She said that, even though Pascagoula might not have been the Council's first choice, it appears to be too late to choose another city, particularly since Manhattan Beach residents have already made such a great effort to assist Pascagoula and they now view Manhattan Beach as their partner. It was Mayor Fahey's opinion that, if doing so will maximize the benefits, Manhattan Beach should officially adopt Pascagoula. Mayor Pro Tem Ward said that, while he could support an increased encouragement of groups and organizations to help the City of Pascagoula, he was not prepared to move forward with anything else at this time.

The following individuals spoke on this item:

- **Viet Ngo, No Address Provided**
- **Patrick McBride, No Address Provided**
- **Evelyn Frey, 200 Block of 3rd Street**
- **Paul Gross, No Address Provided**
- **Gary Osterhout, No Address Provided**
- **Barbi Johnson, No Address Provided**

Mayor Fahey referred to a letter from the United States' Conference of Mayors encouraging cities to create long-term relationships with other cities affected by Hurricane Katrina. She stated that, while Pascagoula might not be the neediest city, adopting it might be helpful in sparking a long-term relationship. Councilmember Aldinger entertained the idea of adding wording to include adopting the City of Pascagoula "and surrounding rural areas." Mayor Pro Tem Ward felt that the Council does not have enough information about the surrounding rural areas to add wording to that effect. Mayor Fahey related her preference to contact the Conference of Mayors for additional

information about the specifics of the initiative for Hurricane Katrina and what it says about adopting a city.

Clarifying that he is not advocating walking away from Pascagoula, Mayor Pro Tem Ward

indicated that he would support increasing resident encouragement for Pascagoula; however, the

only way he would be satisfied is if the word “adoption” was removed. Mayor Pro Tem Ward

emphasized the importance of being absolutely clear about the commitment Manhattan Beach

would be making in adopting Pascagoula.

MOTION: Councilmember Aldinger moved to approve adopting the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi, in concept, and to return with additional language from the United States Conference of Mayors defining what adoption of a City entails. The motion was seconded by

Councilmember Montgomery and approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Aldinger, Montgomery and Mayor Fahey.

Noes: Ward.

Absent: Tell.

Abstain: None.

Councilmember Aldinger stated his intent to contact the Conference of Mayors to obtain additional information about the initiative for Hurricane Katrina and the word “adoption.” Mayor Fahey asked that this information be provided within the next two Council meetings.

City Manager Dolan advised that, up to this time, very little staff resources have been expended on this matter.

**Re: Manhattan Beach City Council Consideration – December 20, 2005
Definition of City Adoption for Pascagoula, MS**

Submitted by: Francey Seckinger, MB Resident – *On Behalf of “We Care Coast to Coast”*

Background: It was voted by the Manhattan Beach City Council to adopt the City of Pascagoula, MS – October 4, 2005 – for the purpose of entering into a relationship to help restore the city post Hurricane Katrina. This affiliation came about as a result of Councilmember Jim Aldinger suggesting this city to council for adoption due to city similarity. It was his hope that other California coastal communities would follow.

Definition: For a one to two year period, the exchange between the two cities would be to work towards a positive means to participate in the restoration of Pascagoula, MS in whatever aid we might offer.

Vehicle: Since September 2005, a non-profit organization operating under the name of, “We Care Coast to Coast” (WCCC), has developed programs, lead donation drives and worked in conjunction with the City Staff of Pascagoula, MS to formulate aid in any way to help meet the needs of this community. The exchange has been rewarding and has built a bridge between the two cities and enabled the residents/local business owners and corporations to contribute in a constructive manner which has directly impacted the community of Pascagoula, MS.

Suggested City Support:

- City to recognize WCCC as a non-profit 501C3 entity:
 - Tax ID # 95-4691278
 - Registered as: ISPA – We Care Coast to Coast
 - Mail Box: 1116 - A – 8th St. Box # 45, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
- Corporate donor/sponsor could confirm with the City of Manhattan Beach that WCCC is a verified non-profit entity working toward the goal of hurricane relief on behalf of Pascagoula, MS
- Sandab/Mira Costa students and volunteers could record hours worked with WCCC as “approved” community service hours in their community service log
- WCCC activities/events and programs could be listed on city newsletter, website and flyers could be placed in city hall or community venues
- City Staff would be versed on current programs should residents call with questions – Not to be main contact but “support” these efforts or defer calls to the WCCC phone number.
- Community venues such as the Jocelyn Center, Scout House, etc be utilized with fee waived for donation drives and the Public Works/Police departments available to support these efforts
- WCCC to use the city name in corporate sponsor/School District pitches – “The City of Manhattan Beach has adopted the City of Pascagoula, MS to provide hurricane relief efforts for the next one to two years ...
- WCCC wishes to model their efforts in conjunction with the City of Manhattan Beach to those of WashingtonKares - www.washingtonKares.com
Please review their mission statement, meaning of adoption and objectives attached
- Other

By these suggested city support ideas, they would not discount or negate any other community efforts on the part of other residents/businesses wishing to support hurricane relief outside of the WCCC efforts.

**WASHINGTON KARES
(Katrina Aid Relief EffortS)**

www.washingtonKares.com

Washington KARES is non-profit organization formed by a group of friends, neighbors and business people in Washington State. The goal of KARES is to provide both short and long term aid to the people of the Gulf Coast devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The devastation brought by Katrina requires extraordinary support, due to the extensive and widespread damage. While we cannot help every individual or rebuild the entire Gulf Coast region, we can offer our resources and make a difference. The goal of KARES is to help rebuild lives.

KARES Steering Committee is comprised of community leaders from two cities. Walla Walla and Kirkland Washington, through a sister city relationship with each other, have "adopted" the community of Pascagoula Mississippi. Pascagoula is a community similar to both Walla Walla and Kirkland. The community is home to 27,000 people, and enjoyed a thriving historic downtown with a growing tourism industry. Current estimates indicate 80 percent of the community was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. We can help, and that effort has already begun.

KARES is committed to raising funds and collecting non-cash items that can be put to use on the ground in the community of Pascagoula, Mississippi. KARES is working with city officials, local civic groups and charities to identify the immediate and long-term needs of Pascagoula. The goal has been to respond quickly, with a consistent sustained effort over several years as the communities needs change.

This website was created to facilitate communication with the people who have inquired about participating in KARES, and to encourage Washington State communities and individuals to join us in this adoption. You can help. And we invite your creativity in communicating with us. Join us as we work to rebuild devastated lives and communities.

kyle@washingtonkares.org

Posted on Sun, Dec. 11, 2005

Mississippi's future hangs on these promises

By SEN. TRENT LOTT
WASHINGTON

On Dec. 2, I recalled the promise President Bush made to help Mississippi recover from Hurricane Katrina when he stood at the Mobile, Alabama, airport, just days after the storm with me, Senator Thad Cochran, Representative Chip Pickering, Governor Haley Barbour and other elected representatives.

"Out of this chaos is going to come a fantastic Gulf Coast, like it was before," he said, adding that if there are problems and the recovery is not going exactly right, his administration would "make it go exactly right."

Well, as all Mississippians know who are dealing with this disaster's aftermath, the recovery is not going exactly right. Almost half the travel trailers required to house Katrina's homeless and displaced have not been delivered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Last week Mississippi experienced some of the coldest weather this year, with lows dipping into the 20s. I need not mention how that impacts people living in tents and carpools.

Three months after Katrina, only about a quarter of the debris has been removed. And what's more telling, unemployment in Harrison, Hancock and Jackson counties - areas with almost no unemployment before Katrina - now hovers around 25 percent, statistics not seen here since the Great Depression.

Additionally, of the more than 7,000 small business loans applied for statewide since Katrina, only about 400 have been approved by the Small Business Administration. This is preventing small business from coming back and hiring.

Finally - and perhaps this is the biggest factor discouraging folks from returning and rebuilding - some in the insurance industry have done an absolutely abysmal job in responding to their South Mississippi policyholders. Thousands remain without claim checks, with no way to even begin rebuilding their homes and lives.

Mississippi's congressional delegation and governor have clearly articulated our state's needs to the Bush administration and the Congress. We've introduced legislation and proposals to deal with all these problems. Regardless of political party, we are singing from the same hymnal, telling Washington just how bad Hurricane Katrina was, is, and will be without sustained federal help. Yet, to date, we've seen procrastination in Washington.

I'm challenging my congressional colleagues and the president to approve several key pieces of Katrina legislation before Christmas, including:

- A package of tax credits designed to help individuals recover and businesses rehire in the disaster area.
- A \$17 billion Katrina supplemental funding measure that includes \$13 billion to help people who were outside the flood zone and without flood insurance.
- A bill that will increase the amount of direct individual disaster assistance beyond the current \$26,000 federal cap.
- A measure that will compel FEMA to cover more of the cost of debris removal.

These remedies, of course, aren't the only things needed to facilitate our recovery from Katrina. We still have to rebuild our highways, airports and local neighborhood infrastructures. But Congress, with

President Bush's leadership, should complete these initiatives, which will immediately impact individual lives, before the New Year.

As I said in my Dec. 2 remarks, Mississippians aren't whiners. We've met Katrina's formidable challenges with dignity and skill, and much of America outside the Washington beltway has taken notice. We've accepted that we're going to have to work hard to return our neighborhoods and economy to what they once where.

But at the same time, we deserve and expect the full commitment of the federal government to help all Mississippians get back on their feet and keep our recovery from Katrina on track. We need the president's leadership to ensure that Congress and the federal government fulfill its commitment to Mississippi.

I hope all Americans will remember their neighbors in the Gulf region this holiday season as they have done since Hurricane Katrina devastated Mississippi. I urge Congress to pass the pending Katrina relief before Christmas so that President Bush can sign it immediately and give weary Mississippians hope that in the New Year, they will not be left behind.

Readers may respond to: U.S. Senator Trent Lott, 487 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (Attn: Press Office) by Sen. Trent Lott