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CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
JOINT MEETING
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SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

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>> Mayor D. Lesser: I would like to call to order the City Council Special Meeting, the Joint City Council, Manhattan Beach Unified School District Board of Trustees Joint Meeting of Tuesday, September 19th, 2017.

We begin with the pledge to the flag.

All rise, please.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands one nation under God indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Energetic crowd.

Great crowd.

Acting City Clerk, may we have a roll call, please, including our school board members for purposes of our minutes.

>> Yes.

Council Member Napolitano.

>> Here.

>> Council Member Hersman.

>> Here.

>> Council Member Montgomery.

>> Here.

>> Mayor Pro Tem Howorth.

>> Here.

>> Mayor Lesser.

>> Here.

>> President Cochran.

>> Here.

>> Board Member Rosenberg.

>> Yes, here.

>> Board Member Fournell.

>> Here.

>> And Vice President Komatinsky.

>> Here.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Great.

Now we will move on to public comment.

Would any member of the public care to address the joint committee and council board before we begin?

Seeing none, we will close public comment and move on to our general business item, which is a report on the Manhattan Beach Unified School District and City of Manhattan Beach's joint aid Cleveland, Texas, disaster relief effort.

I'll make a few comments and then I'm going to turn it over to President Cochran, who is going to begin a PowerPoint presentation.

You know, on a day when there is so much in the news about other natural disasters, to take a moment and reflect on one might seem a little bit small-minded.

But in fact, this is an instance where our community really came together, and we are so grateful to have the school board present with us tonight to really acknowledge our community which came together in our time of need, people to people.

This was a true partnership among the school board and the used for school district and our city, our city staff, our council and our community as a whole.

It is remarkable.

Dr. Matthews, as well as Jennifer, we are trying to think of a way to thank the community.

At least 1,400 members of this community participated in this effort.

So at a minimum we felt we needed to have a meeting to report back on what all that work and what those donations led to as well as a way to say thank you.

Because there is no way to reach everyone.

I want to say our biggest challenge today is time.

We have a hard time we will have to stop today at 5:45 to prepare for our regular city council meeting.

And I know the board has to get on to a meeting of its own.

But with that, again, thank you to the many members of the public that are here today.

I see many of the drivers who drove these items that were donated to Texas wearing their terrific shirts, including one of our drivers that is sitting up here at the dais.

And with that, let me turn it over to to Janet.

>> Thank you.

Well, I have to admit I have a hard time when I look out and see all the "Cleveland Strong" shirts, because I am from Cleveland, Ohio, and

those to me look like I'm supposed to be cheering on the Cleveland Indians.

>> As you are.

>> But that's okay.

It is a fabulous other Cleveland so I'm happy to celebrate another Cleveland.

I'm going to jump right in and -- there we go -- I think that this -- I think this quote kind of sums up exactly what Mayor Lesser just said, and it was from Patty Myers in Cleveland, Texas.

This is what America is all about, neighbor taking care of neighbor.

And we really feel like this community just banded together and took care of another community.

And I'm not going to spend too much time on how the process all worked because most of us in this room all participated in that process.

And we lived it.

But I will say just a few things, because there are just so many amazing things that happen throughout this process.

This is the first meeting that we had, and I keep thinking back to the Abba song "I have a dream," and I feel like that is where it all started with Ben Dale.

Ben dreams big too.

But his dream was really to -- he saw what was happening in his hometown and his dream was to figure out how this community could make things a little bit easier for that community, and what could he possibly do to help them?

And all it took was reaching out to a few amazing people in Manhattan Beach, and look what happened.

I think his first call was to you, gentlemen, and within 24 hours there was a group of people sitting around a table on the phone with two of Ben's friends in Cleveland, Texas, figuring out exactly how we could help and what we could do.

Do I have to point this somewhere?

There we go.

I'm not going to go through and read all of the names on here, because there are a lot of names in this presentation.

But this was the group of people that sat around the table and said, okay, who do we pull in next?

So what we did was we always do.

We called the PTAs.

We called that amazing group of people in our school district to make everything happen.

And we called the city staff.

And unbelievable what happened.

You know, within two days there was another meeting where there was a complete group of people sitting around a table, everybody had a task, and everybody was working.

There we go.

And our principals.

Our principals.

And again, our city staff.

But the principals all decided we are doing this, not a question asked.

They figured out at their specific school site how the logistics would work.

They figured out how they were going to pack everything up.

They figured out how things were going to be moved, who was going to be there, how things would be sorted.

Together with the PTA leadership and the teachers and the staff, it truly was an amazing group effort.

The MBX leadership jumped right in.

They set up the fund so that people could make monetary donations, and they were there all along the way at the school sites helping.

The community organizations that came out, this is what really absolutely amazed me.

I mean, we put out a letter to the community and we put out notification that this was what we were planning to do.

And the phone calls that started happening, how can we help?

How can we rally our troops?

What can we do.

And you see this amazing list of community organizations that participated.

I mean, we had the Hermosa Beach school system that sent it out to their community.

The Redondo fire department showed up one day with a load of goods.

There were boy scout troops and girl scout troops from all over the South Bay who came and helped.

And I want to stress too that you probably will hear me say this several times tonight, but there is no way that we can capture everything that happened on these slides.

And that is one of the things that we struggled with the absolute most in doing this tonight, was the things that happened that weren't recorded are phenomenal.

I mean, the little boy who walked in with a handful of all of his change that he had saved up and walked over -- I think it was to you, robin -- and was so proud to be turning over his life savings.

He was like 4.

To turn over his life savings towards this project.

And the people who came in with things that they had gathered and felt so sure that people needed.

So I can't possibly capture everybody, so I apologize right now for anybody, any group who doesn't show up on these screens, because we tried really hard.

But not everybody signed in.

And so many people just showed up and just decided they wanted to help.

In total in our calculations, again, this is what is recorded, but 1,400 people signed in as to having been there and volunteered their time.

And I don't think we captured all of the teachers that walked through.

I don't think we captured all of the families that came with three, four, five people.

So it is probably more than that.

From the city to the schools, the city employees were working for days straight, the school district employees were working to move everything around.

No questions asked, everybody just pitched in and made it happen.

Students to staff, you see our Robinson principal and some of our Grandview students and teachers.

Parents and neighbors.

This was the sorting site at Mira Costa where we were sorting clothing sizes.

And this is in front of city hall, I believe.

And again, age didn't matter.

We had everybody and anybody that could walk was there helping.

And the organization that happened, without any direction.

This is the kind of thing that if you planned for months to do a fundraiser or a project like this, you would have put out specific directions and we would have really coordinated all of these things.

But we didn't.

We just said make it happen.

Everybody probably did it a little differently, but it happened.

And with so much leadership.

There was team spirit.

This is the Grandview teachers who went right after school and helped.

We had so many of the Costa sports teams and organizations.

This is the baseball team that loaded buckets.

Let's see.

And it took amazing generosity.

There was over \$76,000 collected in such a short period of time.

And I just listed here the donations over \$1,000 or more, but again, it is just so hard to capture because some people who made donations through the website we know exactly who they are.

But there were so many people who walked up and handed over wads of cash.

So everybody just wanted to help.

And we wanted to make sure that we are so clear that everybody from the \$2.45 that was turned over to the thousands of dollars, it doesn't happen without every single person having that heart.

And our partners, our corporate partners who without being asked more than once or offering up on their own just fantastic community partnerships.

Okay.

So after all that was collected, we are getting to the part that we all want to hear about.

That is what happened once it left here?

We all did that part.

Now we would love to hear from you amazing drivers.

If you wouldn't mind, anybody who went on the trip.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Here is my suggestion.

First I wanted to add a little bit more about the collection and thank specifically some of the staff who worked in the background.

I first want to identify, for everyone who doesn't know him, Dr. Mike Matthews the superintendent of the district, Mark Danaj, our city manager, but on our side, extraordinary city staff donated their time, took time out of their day.

Kendra Davis managed the site.

Mary Kirschman with the assistance of the city manager and many others whose names I'll forget helped operate the collection site here at city hall and public works department staff and our police department helped transport and pack up all of these materials.

And I would be remiss not to mention Francie Marcole who helped as a volunteer in the background really coordinating all of our efforts together.

Would it be appropriate for Dr. Dale, sort of the originator of this, to begin to talk about seven U-Haul trucks and bring his partner in crime, our council member colleague Richard Montgomery to talk a little bit about the trucks?

Maybe if you wouldn't mind coming up to the podium, and then there are some images to describe.

>> Yes, that is fine.

Happy to have all of those who went on the trip come up.

Because I think everybody has their great stories.

So I don't know if you all want to come around.

[APPLAUSE.]

Francie was the brave woman.

>> Small but mighty.

>> She is brave for a reason.

>> Can I just ask, is there a box of tissue?

I'm so serious.

So I'm going to give you some prompts.

So we have 16 unbelievable people who made this journey.

>> Okay.

Well, go back to the other slide.

So that is us before we left.

We are all smiling.

We had a 30-hour drive ahead of us.

And we put two in each truck, seven trucks.

Two of the trucks had three.

Francie was riding with Cameron and Richard and my son C.J. was riding with Jeff and I.

And it made those trucks cramped, but it was well worth it, I think, for Francie and C.J. to come out.

We left about 10:30, hit the road, and we drove to Beaumont, California, where we linked up.

There are two drivers not pictured there, Jim Ashworth and Tom. Jim Ashworth and Tom.

They left at about 2:00 and went to Skechers in Moreno Valley.

They aren't there in the photo.

Here are the names.

We linked up with them and we got all the way to about Ely before the sun came up and we stopped and gassed.

And then we had a great second leg where we finally got breakfast, got breakfast in Lawrenceburg, New Mexico.

If you ever convoy -- this is my mistake -- Jesse and Joel missed the exit.

We got off at Lawrenceburg, they got boxed off by a semi, couldn't get off the exit.

Cameron, you made that exit, right?

Cameron made that exit.

They lived through that and made the exit.

But Jesse and Joel didn't make the exit.

They kept going and called me and said -- I said turn around at the next exit and come back.

The next exit was closed.

And that was like two miles up.

Then it was another three miles to the next exit.

If you have never been to that part of the country, literally there are five towns between Tucson and Fredericksburg, Texas.

They went ahead and I said go on to DEMMING and get your breakfast.

Don't ever split up.

You know the line, stay in the boat.

Don't ever split up.

I allowed that, and that was a mistake.

Because later what I didn't know was going to happen is after we left Lawrenceburg, Councilman Montgomery was driving his truck and lost the rubber off two of his rear tires.

And in an amazing piece of driving he did all the right things. He didn't overcorrect, he just let it slow, pulled off slowly. He did all the right things in a top-heavy beast.

He is basically driving a truck with an elephant on top of it. And he totally maneuvered it off to the side.

But then they jumped in a truck and got split and now I have people in four different places and I was too far ahead.

And that killed us on time.

We lost six hours on that on our trip.

And that is just brutal, when you have been up all night and you have to drive all day and drive all the next night.

Six hours is an eternity.

But we gathered ourselves and we got everybody back at Demming. Pat Caskey and Victor Andrade stayed behind with the blown-out tires and U-Haul drove out from Las Cruces and fixed the tires.

By the time we got to El Paso, they were still behind.

That truck didn't have a governors on it.

They caught us, we were all driving with governors, how is that possible?

They caught us and we got to Ozona.

It is an actual place.

We almost got in a fight in the Dairy Queen, but we survived that.

>> You have to talk to your boy.

>> Yeah, I have to talk to your boy.

The cook was not happy that we ordered 16 cheeseburgers at ten minutes before closing.

Then we got all the way into Fredericksburg.

And the thing about Fredericksburg, we had been on a straight highway for almost 24 hours.

And Fredericksburg we got off the highway on a two-lane road.

Even though it is not a bad road it was awful because we were used to driving in a straight line.

The road had twists and turned.

It was really weird.

>> And we hadn't slept.

>> We hadn't slept.

Sleep is for the weak.

We got into Austin and we were picked up by -- when I say picked up, just bear with me -- a Harris county constable who was sent from Cleveland to escort us the last three hours in.

We had a police escort from Austin to Cleveland, which is about three hours.

And that is 3:30 to 6:30 in the morning.

So we got into Cleveland at 6:30, and right outside of Cleveland, six or seven more cars picked us up.

And so we had like this eight-car escort with sirens coming through town.

>> At 4:00 in the morning.

>> At 6:30 in the morning.

It was so surreal and we got there and unloaded.

We parked and that is the picture right after we parked.

We had just parked the trucks there, and we went and we got cleaned up and we had breakfast at the chef house in Cleveland, and then we were right back.

We didn't sleep, nobody wanted to sleep.

We all went straight back and helped them unload the trucks.

And then everybody wanted to work.

So they had loaded up trucks for us with police escorts, and we went out into the communities and we started doing supply runs.

So we would go out in the community with trucks full of supplies.

Not these supplies.

We were actually taking supplies from one of the local relief shelters because they needed manpower to get them out into the communities.

But people didn't have working vehicles because they had all been submerged in the flood.

In a community of 20 houses you might have one working pickup.

Everybody else just depended on the supplies being brought to them, which is a distribution issue that I can answer questions about later when we talk about the funds that are left and what we are doing with them, because there is a distribution issue on their end.

But we did supply runs all day Friday.

And then we got up Saturday and we did the distribution.

So those are the items that we distributed, 1200 cars lined up for support.

It was a five-hour wait for a lot of the people to get their stuff.

It opened at 9:00 and by 9:00 there were already 500 cars in line to get supplies.

We gave supplies to everyone that was there.

They turned away about 150 cars at the end because we had run out of the kits.

And at the end all we had left was adult clothing.

We gave out everything.

Just a side note, late at night on one of the stops Dave Caskey walked up to me.

And Dave, I have to give him credit.

He is that guy in my ear, the advice that I really want to take but it is just crazier than I am.

So that is a bold statement.

But he walked up to me at a late-night stop and he goes, hey, after the distribution whatever is left let's stick it on a truck and drive to Florida.

And I see you like gasp.

And my response was, we are going to do that.

And so on the day of the distribution Dave Caskey walked up to me and said, hey, I think they are giving everything out.

That's awesome.

He goes, yeah, that's awesome, I am totally done.

We are glad it didn't come to fruition.

There is the distribution.

I loved the backpacks lined up.

Whoever took that photo.

Whoever took that photo.

Did you take that photo, Francie?

>> I don't know.

>> That was an amazing shot.

They pulled up and we just delivered all of these things.

I noticed at one point, one of the stories, I will never forget.

One story was there was a lady alone in a pickup truck.

There is Francie in her boots.

She saw a pair of cowboy boots in the pile and put them on.

You still have them, don't you?

>> You said it was personal growth.

>> Personal growth for Francie.

That is all good.

It is all learning.

The truck pulled up and there was a lady alone in the truck.

And when the kids brought the supplies, it was a lot of
supplies.

It was five or six cleaning kits, five or six packs of bedding,
all kinds of children's clothing, diapers, pet supplies, there was a lot
of stuff.

And I was talking to the superintendent and I said, excuse me
for a second.

And I walked over and I said, man, if you don't mind me asking, you are alone and that is a lot of stuff.

Do you mind me asking what is going on?

It is kind of a hard question to ask.

It was curious to me.

She said I have the only working truck on my street.

So I went up and down the street and took orders from the other houses.

And I am filling orders for everyone on my street.

We found out later that that is going on on a lot of streets in a lot of the communities.

But they also have to find someone else on the street who has a weapon because adjacent communities know who has the working truck and when the truck pulls away they come in and they know that house potentially has supplies.

So they would go in and look for supplies.

They would look for food in the house.

So they had to have other people on the street stand guard over the houses out in those rural communities of the person who had a working truck.

So I think that is an indicative story to me of what is really going on there on the ground.

The other story is I just know them as the little blue car.

There was a car at the end of the line.

They were all the way at the end.

They were the second to the last car.

They were car 1,198.

And Richard and my son were giving out water to the cars in the line, and by appreciate you drawing them in on that.

That was a good life lesson for him.

And I just saw that car, and I walked back to the car and it had a couple -- they were an older couple but they had a baby.

And the man driving had on nothing but a pair of genes.

That was all he had on, no shoes, no shirt, just a pair of jeans.

And his wife had an oh nightgown.

And the baby was laying across her chest naked.

And they had obviously slept in their car.

So it was really the first time that I saw something that shocked me.

So I can't believe this is this living condition of, I don't know, people where I grew up.

And so all I could think of to say is what do you need?

That is what came out of my mouth.

He said we are here hoping to get baby supplies.

So I grabbed one of those shopping carts and went over and filled it full of diapers, formula, wipes, and then I went over to where the kids clothes were and there was a box marked infant clothing and I reached inside and started grabbing out boy infant clothing as much as I could grab.

And then I grabbed adult pants for men and women, adult shirts for men and women.

I grabbed a couple.

I sent a kid to find out their shoe size.

Got them shoes.

One of those gas canisters.

They said they were -- the canister is filled with apple juice.

One of the gas cans.

They said they had been waiting a long time and they were almost out of gas.

We got a gas canister.

Right around the same time, Theresa coats, the name you heard a lot, the community organizer, she came up to me and said the barbecue place got pulled pork sandwiches for all the workers, would you like one?

And I said four.

Bring me some of the water out of the ice chest, not the water that has been sitting in the sun.

She and I loaded it all back up and took it to them and they burst into tears.

They just couldn't believe it that this was happening.

Just pulled them up and lifted their spirits.

And I said stick a onesie on that baby and pull over in the shade and here are some pulled pork sandwiches.

I never saw them leave.

But that was what it was all about, that is why we went.

That is why everybody that did everything they did, that is why.

And we have served 1,200 cars in 1,500 and maybe 2,000 families, but for me the little blue car is just indicative of why we did it.

Why we said, Dr. Matthews, this is what is happening.

And he said let's do something.

That is what did it.

That is what started the whole thing.

Dave tried to get it kicked off with I'm going to drive over and pick you up.

Let's go to the airport.

Dave and I should never plan anything.

But Dr. Matthews said let's do something.

He called Mayor Lesser and it exploded.

And Richard called Skechers and now it was a thing.

So why did we do it?

I get asked all the time, why did you do that?

We did it for the little blue car.

We were there for them and they needed something and it made it all worth it to me.

So I just want to thank everybody.

I can't thank enough people.

There are so many people involved.

And I know Francie wants to tell a story of Pedro.

But I would just like to turn it over to these guy and is if they have any stories if they want to share, if that is okay.

We will let them share their stories.

But again, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

>> My name is Jesse Andrade and Dr. Dale called me up.

I'm actually in the band with him, along with Joel.

He had more U-Haul trucks than he needed and he called up the band members from truck stop.

You can find us at truckstopmusic.

I actually live up in Layton, Utah, and he said I need you to drive a U-Haul truck from L.A. to Texas.

Like, what?

Yeah, come on.

All right.

So I buy a one-way ticket, took a cab to the trucks and then started driving.

But I have to say to back up what Ben was saying about that little blue car, when you -- you try to do service and you want to just help everyone.

But service, true service, is so personal and individualized.

It is so -- it is unique.

And you have to be adaptable.

Richard and I had the opportunity to help one kid in particular who we actually didn't need him.

We just heard the story about it.

The shoes were a huge hit.

We heard so many times that these kids have never had new shoes before ever.

And many of them were just walking around, because they got washed away.

Shoes float, I guess.

And they were just walking around without shoes and coming to school without shoes.

And so the shoes were a big deal.

We got to one community, after we felt like we did what we could in Cleveland we started to go out further into other communities.

And in one of the communities, we had brought some shoes and they were like, oh, this is so great.

Thank you so much.

You don't happen to have a size 15 or 16, do you?

We were like, whoa.

We had but we had one, 13 and a half.

Which that is a big shoe.

But 16 is like -- I mean, it is huge.

The police officers and the community member we gave them to, he looked at them and said these are great.

I want these.

And I said you be sure the kid gets the shoes.

And he says who else is going to use them.

So I texted the mayor later and I said, hey, did that kid get the shoes?

She was like, oh, he was so excited.

He hugged me and just was so excited for them.

He never had a pair of shoes that ever fit him or they were new.

So though we had -- Skechers had donated so much and given so much.

It was needing to be adaptable in the moment to help the individual, and to have the power to do that and to know that there was monetary donations behind it was huge.

So thank you to the City of Manhattan Beach and all of the citizens.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE.]

Let me say this.

Unfortunately, I think we will run out of time.

We only have ten minutes left.

We want to hear from each of you.

If you can make your observations in about a minute.

Already realizing --

>> But the stories are great.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: The stories are great, amazing.

Consistent with what Jennifer said at the beginning, there are so many people that we need to thank that invariably we knew we were going to forget.

One name I think we both failed to mention at the outset is Heather Hoffman.

She has been a singular force and made this possible.

Without it we wouldn't be here.

With that said, I also see the principals in the back and many others.

But please, take maybe just a minute and share some observations.

>> My name is Cameron Bose, one of the drivers.

Ben called me up and asked me if I would to this and I told him yeah.

And I went home and asked the wife and she said -- I already told him yeah.

But she has been mad ever since, but it is okay.

So one little quick one.

The little boy, he comes up, he is barefoot.

Give him a pair of shoes, he looks at me and says, are these mine?

I go, yeah, they are yours.

I can take them home?

Yeah, you can take them home.

I'm a shoe guy.

I have at least 100 pairs of tennis shoes at home and I went in my closet and this is the way it has changed my life.

I went in my closet and I looked at all the stuff I had and I promised myself I would never buy anything else that I didn't need for my home.

I would never buy any personal item for at least two years.

That is how it has affected me because I have looked at people's faces and they have absolutely nothing.

I'm not talking about they lost this, I mean, they lost everything.

And it affected my life.

And that is how I look at this.

Just a life thing for me.

And I appreciate all of the people behind me and the people in Cleveland, Texas, who have shown a very strong heart and they haven't given up.

That is all I have to say.

[APPLAUSE.]

>> I'm Jeff Milliken, plant manager at Mira Costa.

And when I knew this was going on, I just happened to ask Ben.

I said, you need another driver?

I'm available, I'll go.

But one thing that I do want to say, that is not entirely true that we didn't want to sleep when we got there.

We were dog tired.

But once we got there, the adrenaline started kicking in.

And we were ready to work.

I think we were all ready to work.

We were ready to go.

The biggest thing, they were waiting for us.

They had received nothing up to that point.

And it felt good to get this escort into town knowing they were waiting for what we were bringing.

And to see the distribution on Saturday and the cars, you are just -- it was real emotional.

Really emotional.

It still is.

It is something that I will never forget.

And I will tell my kids and my grandkids about what giving is all about.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Tom Hansen, a good friend of Dr. Dale's.

He sent an e-mail blast on Tuesday when he first came up with the idea.

And I was reading it.

It was very clear, some of the instructions.

Occupies but at the very end, if you have any questions, make a call.

So I called him up and asked him if there was anything that I can do.

-- -- there are some gentlemen here who are good friends of him who have traveled from Colorado and Utah on a dime to come help and serve.

There are a couple things that I would like to let you know.

Jim Ashworth and I drove to Skechers and picked up the shoes T. Skechers people were so cordial and so kind.

This is interesting.

They loaded that 26-foot truck with two guys in about 20 minutes.

So you saw with many of you serving how long it took all the high school kids and yourselves to help load the trucks.

It took a while.

On the other end when we got to Cleveland, the people were so grateful.

There were 300 or 400 volunteers.

School days, they came over there and helped serve and helped organize the boxes and organize what they were going to do on the following day on Saturday.

And on three or four -- on the following day on Saturday, there were 300 or 400 that showed up there to serve.

Can we go back to the slide that shows Francie with the boots on?

The three people?

If you look over here on the right-hand side, there was a point where there were things that were not organized.

So we had to take all the one pieces and try to organize them with sizes to be able to hand them out.

At the beginning, you had 400 people volunteering.

By 11:00, 12:00, it was down to 50 or 60.

So a lot of people left.

That young man stayed the whole time.

He stayed until the very end, helping them to organize.

He is one example of those who helped to serve on the other end.

There were so many people that were grateful that helped serve and helped put the cause forward.

And we just want you to know that we appreciate that.

[APPLAUSE.]

>> Let's hear the story.

>> I'll never forget the desperation in the eyes of the people we came in contact with.

One of them, my little blue car, is a woman, we had the unfortunate news of telling her we don't have cleaning supplies left or hygiene kits, etc. But we do have some stuff, so it is worth you waiting in line.

She said, well, do you have shoes?

And I said, yes.

And she said my husband has been mucking out our house barefoot.

He lost all his shoes.

And I'm worried he will get a cut or an infection.

And now tears in my eyes, saying, yes, we have shoes.

That was very powerful to me.

This picture is Pedro.

We took a tour to see the devastated areas, and Ben was driving and we came upon his house, car stopped, doors open, and we were out and talking to him.

If you go out on the ACT aid Cleveland, Texas, Facebook page, there is a video of this.

I kind of captured as much as I could in the process.

He has lived there 16 years, 17 years, since he was 16.

And you can see in the video that I took the whole place looks like this.

He escaped with his life.

He found a little pocket to breathe water in.

He called his daughter in California to say, hey, send a boat, and they got there just on the edge of his life.

And what you don't see is shoes float away, but cows don't.

Outside of his property the air kind of was rank from dead cattle who got stuck in the fence line as the water rose so high.

My last thing to say is there was a little flak before we went, like why aren't we just donating money to the Red Cross?

And I'm not going to participate in this because it is a waste.

I can tell you if Amy Howorth donated this cleaning supply kit, it went into the hands of someone in Cleveland, Texas, who needed a cleaning supply kit.

>> I did donate a cleaning supply kit.

>> Very good.

And I didn't know that.

I want you to know that on the main distribution site when we landed, it was a family center connected with a church.

And I said to me former mayor, what has the Red Cross done for the community?

He turned to a water pallet.

He said they brought three pallets just like this.

Then he pointed to a point of cleaning supply kits and he said they brought 150 cleaning supply kits.

Done.

How many cleaning supply kits did we bring?

>> 600 and change.

>> Please nobody ever tell me that a community effort like this is inappropriate or ineffective, because what was given here went directly into the hands of those in need.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

>> My name is Joel K.

I'm also in the band.

I actually think that little blue car is a pretty good song title.

A real tearjerker.

>> You're killing me.

>> I was going to tell the story that Tom was going to tell about the kid Gabriel.

But when you go into an area that has been hit by a disaster like this, the pictures that you have seen don't do justice to what has happened and the stories you hear about the people coming together don't into justice to people witnessing it.

While there was terrible devastation it was also very beautiful to see kids from Cleveland high school who were taking time out of their first period class early in the morning to help unload the trucks and showing up on Saturday to be the runners and the shoppers for the people coming through the lines.

So it was very -- yeah, like somebody else said, I'll remember the trip for the rest of my life.

And I was glad to be a part of it.

>> R. Montgomery: I think the biggest thing that we were talked about, it is important to us, we are Texas natives.

My family was affected by this as well.

Unlike Katrina, Texas had a personal connection.

Your family is connected, it makes it all more personal.

Not just a human touch and handing out gifts.

Face to face it made a difference to us.

We all knew we made a difference.

We borrowed Jim's car to go back and forth.

All the difference happened because of one connection.

The residents of Houston.

The biggest thing that I would tell people, whenever something happens, you can make the difference.

Don't listen to people telling you you can't make a difference, you'll never make a difference there.

We all know, everyone that went and saw it, we made a difference and they know the name Manhattan Beach and I will never forget that either.

Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE.]

>> Mayor D. Lesser: I just wanted to quickly say two things.

One, we want to hear what is coming next and I want to give any colleagues or board member a moment to say any words that they want to, very briefly.

Anyone want to say anything?

>> There is one video.

I don't know who shot the video.

But maybe you tear up like I do at every sort of story that has been told.

There is a video that is beautifully done where it is a drone that took pictures of the trail of cars.

And I watch it a lot because to me -- I also have family ten miles from Cleveland, Texas, that live in Kingwood, Texas.

I know the area very, very well.

I know what 59 looked like when it was ten feet underwater.

But that video to me was to awesome and so striking that I think everybody needs to see that.

Because it is incredibly powerful when you see five hours of cars waiting in line.

>> It is the last slide.

>> It is.

There we go.

>> I don't know if we have time to play it.

>> It is powerful.

>> It is on the Facebook page.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Mayor pro tem Howorth.

>> A. Howorth: I don't want to take time away from the video or not.

But everybody's gobsmacked with emotion and gratitude and everybody participated.

But really, one of the things that strikes me is the amount of organization that happened on this end when the goods were received made it a very noble way to give because you were treating people with dignity when you got there.

It wasn't just you were throwing any old crap into a truck and handing it out.

That is not a very righteous way to give.

It is a much harder way to organize it.

And of course because of all the incredible -- I know it was those PTA moms and all the volunteers that can organize in their sleep.

But that was a really incredible part of this because then it makes people feel like it is human and not, you know, well here is some stuff.

That is amazing.

And you also, a lot of you shared, and Richard and I were texting a lot, I was texting with Ben and I love watching the stuff with you and C.J. on Facebook.

And it allowed us to be a part of it.

And it was a really rough time.

You had Harvey and then you had Irma coming and a lot of us, it was hard to be here and feel like you weren't doing anything but you allowed us to know that we were doing something.

So you have done so much for our community, for their community, and I think it was Jerry Vick who might have had the idea.

We should be able to tell other communities, you can do this and fill a truck and send it where it is needed.

So thank you.

And maybe we will be able to help others even.

So thank you, thank you, thank you.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Thank you.

Any other comments?

>> I think it has all been said.

>> I really want to give a special shout out, just like things kind of rolled downhill and the PTA picks up, our maintenance and operations staff, Jeff Milliken and all the other members across our campuses were great as well.

>> I want to get to the video.

Just want to say thank you.

Just proves that Manhattan Beach can do anything it wants when it puts its mind to it and helping others.

We set the example.

>> Really quickly, Ben, would you mind giving us a quick update on where we are, and we know this is the first step on a very long journey for this community.

>> So of the cash donations that were received for this effort, we spent the majority of it getting out there, the trucks, the gas, the food, air flight to get back.

Because we did not drive the trucks back.

That is a frequently asked question.

I took 14 friends in trucks out.

I brought 0 back.

So we flew back.

And then the six pairs of shoes that we bought because we didn't have the right sizes for people.

We didn't spend money on anything else.

So Dave Caskey and I were kind of talking about it.

For whatever reason we self-appointed ourselves the committee to decide, more are welcome, by the way.

Originally we were going to figure out what they needed that we didn't have.

We were going to make a supply run to Austin in one of the trucks and use the money to fill it up with what we were lacking and bring it back.

Then we saw, we kind of filled their need.

So then we thought it was drywall.

That was our next big idea.

There is no -- all the houses, all the drywall's cut out.

But the problem with the drywall is distribution.

Because we are very concerned that if we got drywall and have it dropped somewhere, say the city hall maintenance yard, who will get the drywall and who decides?

We want to make sure it gets to the people in the most need.

So Dave and I kind of talked and backed off and said well when the right idea comes, it comes.

I have a friend, he has called me three times during this meeting.

His name is Wayne Dickey, the quarterback on our football team.

He graduated together.

A very respected member of the community, a community organizer like Theresa.

And Wayne is really dialed in to an underserved population in a town that really got hit hard that we really didn't see in a lot of the relief effort.

So Wayne is contacting the leaders in that portion of the community and saying what do you need?

And what we are finding is there is a section of houses near the river that were completely destroyed and the people are considered relocation.

But with the \$30,000 or so that we have left over, we can actually give them the materials, the drywall, the carpet, the paint, drywall tape, nails, that they need to rebuild and not leave the houses that their families have had for over a century.

So this isn't like I moved to Manhattan Beach like three months ago.

These are people that lived in their houses for centuries that have been in generations.

And because of Harvey, they were facing relocation.

Getting an apartment in Humboldt or something.

And Wayne said we are not going to have it.

That is what we are waiting to do and see who is in the most need.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: We are out of time.

I think we will refer people to the website to watch the video.

If people are interested in remaining involved and helping, who can they contact?

What phone number?

What website?

Do you have a recommendation?

Come to the microphone, please.

>> Stay tuned.

>> The MBX ACT donor button is still active.

Just like they donated before it is still active and running.

Donations, surprisingly -- not surprisingly -- are still coming in.

Not surprised with anything in Manhattan Beach.

The donations are still coming in.

And we are going to figure out the exact plan with this underserved population in Cleveland and once it is solidified we will put out an announcement on it and how the money is being spent.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: The website address is?

>> MBXfoundation.org.

And there is a button on there that says donate to Harvey.

And you go and it goes directly into the ACT relief effort.

>> Mayor D. Lesser: Finally, we have a small token of appreciation from the city.

There were so many people that were involved but particularly for the truck drivers who have told the extraordinary stories, we have little coins from you.

>> Hang on.

Am I about to get a city pin?

>> Mayor D. Lesser: If you would like one.