

MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhood / Community Affairs Committee

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: December 20, 2017

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION REGARDING CONTRACTING EMERGENCY SERVICES TO SAVE MIAMI BEACH TREES AFTER A HURRICANE.**

BACKGROUND

At the City Commission meeting on December 13, 2017, the Mayor and City Commission referred a discussion to the Neighborhood / Community Affairs Committee regarding contracting emergency services to save Miami Beach trees after a hurricane. This item was sponsored by Commissioner Kristen Rosen-Gonzalez.

ANALYSIS

This past September, Hurricane Irma damaged many trees throughout the city. Urban Forestry staff, in coordination with Greenspace Management staff and Parks and Recreation staff, assessed all the trees impacted within the public right-of-way and in public parks to determine which could be saved and which had to be removed. Viable trees have been re-staked, pruned and watered, as appropriate, to improve their chances of survival.

Through interdepartmental efforts, the city has saved many trees. However, several trees were deemed imminent hazards or were severely damaged and are being removed. A pre-storm and post-storm comparison is in progress, the results of which are anticipated in January 2018. Based on initial observations, there has been a substantial loss of trees, which will take several years to fully replace.

One opportunity that was identified in the storm response process is the need to retain a pre-selected vendor or pool of vendors that can assist with re-staking and watering trees once they have been assessed. Following Hurricane Irma, staff was primarily engaged in assessment and debris removal efforts. Therefore, the staff available to conduct these efforts was limited. Staff is updating the departmental hurricane plans for next year in light of this year's experiences to have the ability (via a pool of qualified vendors) to save more trees within the critical re-staking period after future storms.

CONCLUSION

The following is presented to the members of the Neighborhood / Community Affairs Committee for discussion.

SMT/ESW/MKW