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## Chiefland meeting peppered with good news



**Tri-County Community Resource Center (TCCRC) Manager Beverly Goodman requests permission for a very small-scale community garden.**

### Story and Photos

**By Jeff M. Hardison © Sept. 28, 2017 at 9:17 a.m.**

**CHIEFLAND** -- The recognition of three employees with 25 years of combined service to the residents and visitors of Chiefland, and the announcement of a new city worker it were among a good night of happy news Monday (Sept. 25) in Chiefland.

Police Chief Scott Anderson was recognized by a business owner for the work by the Chiefland Police Department. Chief Anderson and the men and women in the CPD were noted for their professionalism and for handling traffic extremely well, including the formation of a line of motorists for gasoline sales at one outlet for fuel.

The CPD, like the many active law enforcement agencies during that hurricane, protected lives and property before, during and after Hurricane Irma hit Florida. And their tireless, ongoing service was mentioned Monday night.



**The Chiefland City Commission (from left) City Commissioner Teresa Barron, Commissioner Rollin Hudson, Mayor Betty Walker, Commissioner Donald Lawrence and Vice Mayor Chris Jones listen to City Attorney Blake Fugate on Monday night.**

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## **City Attorney Blake Fugate**

City Attorney W. Blake Fugate, substituting for his father attorney Norm D. Fugate, shared an update with the City Commission that a municipal ordinance will be established and signs will be posted to help reduce criminal activity at certain city parks and property at night.

Chief Anderson, too, mentioned that some young suspected armed burglars are going to face prosecution for their choice to violate laws that protect the people of Florida from the criminal element. On another legal matter, City Commissioner Teresa Barron was assured the city plans to revise its curfew limits to minors who are pedestrians, and to exclude young drivers.

Barron still contends, nevertheless, that any city curfew on minors violates their rights under the United States Constitution; however she was not able to cite case law or legal decisions supporting her opinion.

Barron's comments occurred when she asked for some details to be added to the minutes of a previous meeting, where she had mentioned her thoughts about curfews for minors in Chiefland. On the vote to approve the amended minutes, City Commissioner Donald Lawrence voted "No," perhaps making a statement in opposition to Barron's opinion more than in opposition to a better record of what was said at the previous meeting.

The evening opened with Tri-County Community Resource Center (TCCRC) Manager Beverly Goodman requesting and receiving unanimous permission to grow plants near the center.

The UF/IFAS Levy County Extension Office teaches nutrition classes at the TCCRC, Goodman said. The Chiefland Fire Rescue Department has allowed TCCRC to use its kitchen and the Chiefland Police Department has let TCCRC use its conference room for children's classes, Goodman mentioned.

Individuals and families who are on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – or SNAP, Goodman said, are learning how to prepare nutritional meals.

To tie into this concept, the Levy County Extension Office has approached TCCRC about creating a small-scale community garden, Goodman said. This garden will include a couple of raised her garden beds measuring about four-by-six feet, a couple of lemon trees and some guava bushes on the north end of the property between the TCCRC and the road on the north end of that property.

On a motion by Chiefland City Commissioner Teresa Barron, seconded by Vice Mayor Chris Jones, the City Commission unanimously voted to approve the request – with

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Mayor Betty Walker, Commissioner Rollin Hudson and Commissioner Donald Lawrence joining in with their “Yes” votes.

In another unanimous vote, the City Commission chose to continue a moratorium to stop marijuana dispensaries from operating in the city limits. This is a six-month extension on the previous moratorium.



**CFR Deputy Fire Chief Gene Stockman shares his comments about people who helped during the Hurricane Irma event. Standing back from Stockman in this photo is Fire Chief James Harris, who is known to always support his team of first responder firefighters that serve the residents and visitors of Chiefland and other parts of Levy County.**

Another bit of positive news was shared by one of the leaders in the Chiefland Fire Rescue Department. Emergency Management Departments, School Board employees, and first responders in the municipalities and in the counties across the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties are among the many folks who performed their duties during Hurricane Irma.

Private interests and members of the general public stepped up to the plate in thousands, perhaps millions, or untold ways and manners in Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties.

CFR Deputy Fire Chief Gene Stockman took a couple of minutes Monday night to recognize something he saw and experienced during his work in the midst of Hurricane Irma coming, passing through and departing from this region of Florida.

Deputy Chief Stockman said he wanted to publicly recognize a couple of members of the Chiefland community.

Scott and Christina Turner, a couple of truck drivers, donated two palettes of fruit smoothies, which went in part to firefighters, but also to many of the passing motorists who were going through Chiefland during that time of stress.

They brought the load of frozen fruit drinks on Thursday (Sept. 14) just before the Friday evacuation of Levy County was ordered, Stockman said.

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That was 120 cases with each case having six 50-ounce jugs of fruit smoothies. These frozen smoothies were a mix of blackberry, blueberry, banana and apple juice, Stockman said. Hugh Keene donated the use of his refrigerated storage area to keep the drinks fresh for passing motorists to enjoy for free.

The fire department went to Walmart to pick up the load that was donated by the Turners. Hugh Keene used his walk-in refrigerated storage to help in the effort to keep it refrigerated through the storm, Stockman said.

Some of the smoothies went to people at the Levy County Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Center, the Levy County Department of Public Safety's fire department and EMS were able to use some of the cold fruit drinks, Stockman said.

"After the storm passed," Stockman said, "we still had over 80 cases of it. And (Paramedic) Mandy Willis with Levy County Fire Rescue (LCDPS), with the help of Rescue 7 and Rescue 8, sat at Pizza Hut for about an hour giving out cases of it to people passing by on the road.

"And then I met Mandy up at the Marathon (gas station) on the north end, and we gave out another 40 or so cases there," Deputy Chief Stockman said.

This helped many of the evacuees passing through Chiefland as well as the first responders who were active during and after the storm, Stockman said.

As this city is inclined to do, there was recognition for employees who marked milestones in their careers with the city. City Manager Mary Ellzey read the names and years of service for these employees, who were unable to attend the Monday night meeting.

Jackie Bennett was honored for 10 years of service. He works in the Water Department. Cheryl Ortiz was honored for 10 years of service. She works in the General Government Department. Randy McCumber was honored for five years of service. He works in the Wastewater Treatment Department.

Planning Project Coordinator Belinda Wilkerson is a brand new employee who was introduced Monday night. Seth Sache, account specialist, was the most recent new Chiefland city worker who had been introduced at an earlier meeting.