

City Council Special Called Meeting Transcript – 05/17/2021

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[1:07:04 PM]

>> Is staff ready for me to start? >> Yes, we're ready when you are. >> Mayor Adler: Today is Monday, May 17th, 2021. I'm going to convene the Austin city council special called meeting being held via video conference. It is 1:07. This is a special called meeting to discuss city operation's response and future actions related to the February 2021 winter storm event as requested by city council in resolution 2021-0325-67. We'll go ahead and proceed, consistent with the agenda that councilmember Tovo laid out and posted, thank you for that, on the message board, as she's pointed out. There's some questions that

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she had, and then I think we're following basically the agenda on the appendix, the exhibit that was presented as part of the resolution. So Kathy, I don't know if you want to say anything before we turn it over to the manager. This is the second of two meetings. The purpose of this meeting is not necessarily to get answers to questions, because there wasn't a lot of notice to our staff as to what questions or subjects we wanted to be able to talk about, but at the very least, if we can get answers to identify issues, then we want to make sure that the staff addresses in their after-action report manager that you'll be preparing. We're going to start with sheltering, roughly from 1:00 to 2:30. Austin energy from 2:30 to 3:30. Austin water from 3:30 to 4:00, and then council identification next steps, understanding the staff on the

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after-action analysis. And then that's affirmative action. So, Kathy, do you want to say anything before we turn it over to the manager? >> Tovo: Sure. You described really well the relationship between exhibit a and kind of what we're doing here today. There are some topics, and I tried to point this out in my message board posts there were some topics on Austin energy and water that we've had an opportunity to talk about in one form or other, either the committees or others. In terms of formulating my own questions, I didn't have a lot of remaining questions on either of those issues, so in consultation with the mayor and Jason Alexander, we tried to carve out the time for today, recognizing that we'd already had those conversations, not because there aren't probably 1,000 more issues to talk about in Austin water and Austin energy, but just because we had that time allocated, the bulk of time is going towards sheltering. Initially our exhibit a, and I think I addressed this last time, but our exhibit a has also a community sheltering

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piece, and for the reasons I explained last time, we had to cut that portion. But I did want to just update my colleagues that as I mentioned last week, my staff have done outreach to some of those who were involved, and I can post this list on the message board but aye eljust run through it quickly, united professional organizers, United Way, St. Martin's let rin, Austin firefighters, Austin needs water, survive to thrive, Austin area urban league, the Austin hotel lodging association, community resilience trust, 10,000 fearless versus funders foundation communities. Austin disaster relief network, maybe one or two others, the American red cross, just to make sure that all of those folks know about the community task force conversations going on and encouraging them to participate in that forum. I've had conversations with some of these individuals in well just to help inform my own thinking and it may be, and I'm looking forward to

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talking with chair Fuentes, it may be we can talk about community discussions in that forum. We were just trying to carve out a feasible plan for conversation. I found last week's conversation really useful, so thanks, everyone. It's so helpful to hear other people's questions and really be able to build on them. So thanks for making space. Staff, again, thank you for all your support. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Yes, commissioner Fuentes? >> >> Fuentes: Thank you. I just had a quick question for councilmember tovo? Do we know when the future dates of the task force will be? I certainly want to include -- and thank you for reaching out to those organizations to ensure they're aware of the task force meetings. I do want to reach out to the del valle community coalition and the Austin Latino coalition who did a lot of

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work during the storm so we want to invite them to those next task force meetings. >> Tovo: Yes. And there are likely lots of other organizations that each of us are aware of that were not included in my list. Yes, we do have a list of all the task force dates and I will ask -- I will ask my staff to post those on the message board. I do know there was another session on Friday, all of those conversations are being archived online and I think our staff -- my staff I know has been working with the city manager's office and with Pio and with some of the community engagement folks to really get the word out but I'll make sure those dates get on. And again I think the manager may have mentioned this last time, councilmembers are invited to say a few words of welcome. We realized pretty quickly my office couldn't coordinate that but I believe the cmo's office is working with

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council's office to see who's interested in doing that. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Manager? >> Thank you, mayor and council. Again, really appreciate the opportunity to have this discussion today. It's a continuation from last week. As councilmember tovo said, it was very helpful to hear from each of you and make sure that as we're working on the after-action reports, so that we're incorporating any additional feedback that you provide. So without further ad do, O, we'll kick it off with this first topic on sheltering. Director Ortiz is going to kick us off. Director Ortiz. >> Thank you, sir. Once again, my name is Juan Ortiz, I'm the director for the homeless security and emergency office for the city of Austin, Texas. And I'm one of the two main agencies that's responsible for coordinating and running the emergency operations here. Again, we work in a joint emergency operation center with Travis county and,

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therefore, we work very closely between the city and the county to ensure that we're working together and meeting the community needs and any disaster that we face and make sure that we kind of come with solutions in a joint fashion. As it pertains to sheltering, let me tell you this. We'll say it was a task that was very challenging for many reasons. We have different types of shelter strategies that we use, depending on the situation, and we start throughout the year making sure that we have, when we go into the winter weather season, that we are able to support what we call cold weather shelters. These are shelters that we preidentify in advance and have a way of meeting the needs of those that are persons experiencing homelessness or anybody else in the community that doesn't have a warm place to stay. And because of covid, this was greatly impacted, but the team

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worked very hard last year to ensure that we look at what changes we needed to make in our plan to ensure that we're able to continue to provide this service to the community. With that, we quickly realized that there was a limitation by the organizations that normally provide services to the persons experiencing homelessness, and we looked at providing additional shelter capacity in our community. We worked with Austin public health and the medical director to ensure that we were doing that, meeting social distancing requirements, so therefore, it required us to have shelters -- additional shelters preidentified and at a much reduced capacity if we were not in covid. Leading up to this winter weather situation, prior to that we had already activated the cold weather shelter plans for seven other instances, which basically when we meet specific criteria, we open up a place for those that need to register to go to a

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shelter. And those are transported to the shelter location and we keep them there overnight and then the next morning, they're discharged and they're able to go back home or wherever they can get additional community services within their normal routine. As we got closer to the start of the extreme weather, this would be on that Friday, we had -- we realized that temperatures were not going to go above freezing for several different days, and so we had our emergency meeting and thanks to the support from Austin public health, we were able to, then, be able to change the plan and be able to open up those shelters 24 hours a day until the need was not necessary anymore. This required folks to go to the central library, get registered and then be transported over to the

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shelter locations. We very quickly had to move and be able to provide additional resources, additional staff. One of the things that we had done in advance was the preidentification of additional shelter locations if we needed that, and we had been working with the Austin convention center and we preidentified the palmer event center as a potential location. And on that Friday and Saturday, we moved to start moving some resources out there, looking at the space requirements for social distancing and we determined a capacity of a little bit over 100 spaces at the palmer event center. And as we -- as the event rolled on, we realized very quickly that we needed to also open up what we called warming centers. The most logical thing to do at that point in time was to go ahead and open up the palmer event center and use it as a warming center, and then that very quickly we realized that one, it would need to

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stay open 24 hours a day, and really it kind of transitioned from a warming center into what we would normally call a shelter. The weather conditions made it real difficult for additional staff to go to the site to support. We also needed to identify additional resources, additional cots, pillows and blankets, and because of the road conditions, it took a long time to get additional resources. And I would have to say that very thankful for the support that we got from fleet services, public works and park personnel that came in and worked extra hours during hazardous conditions to ensure that we were getting resources out to those locations and all of that being coordinated from the emergency operation center. We moved a lot of the personnel that we were normally using to support ongoing pandemic responses and vaccinations. As the vaccinations stopped, we started moving the personnel that we had in

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finance section, I would say at this point, we're going to need to start tracking calls, I need you to go over to the shelters and support those different shelter operations. And I would have to say that what we found out is we have a lot of great staff, both in our -- in temporary labor, reassigned employees, employees that we brought in out of retirement, as well as our contractors and other agencies that kind of rallied to ensure that we were doing the best that we could to provide a shelter and a warm place for folks to stay throughout the event. On that initial night of operations, we also conducted an effort to go out there into the community, and we had fire, police and ems conducting checks on the most commonly known places where persons experiencing homelessness would allocate and we tried to encourage them to come to the shelters that

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night. We were able to move some folks that took up -- took us up on the offer and -- with the help of staff by fire personnel we were able to move those people into those shelters. As the event continued, we experienced loss of power, loss of utilities, lot of water. That was something that was challenging, as well as the additional demand for additional shelter spaces. We're thankful that other agencies were able to open up their doors to function as shelters, but each shelter that was open faced those same limitations and we had to move people around as best as we could. We have to open and close shelters depending on the availability of resources and our availability of being able to support them throughout the event. It's something that is -- was very stressful, very challenging, but I think -- I'm very thankful for all the different agencies that really got in there and did

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everything they could to provide services to our community. In total, we sheltered close to 1,000 individuals during that period of time, which was a monumental task. We had over 934 persons and 10

pets that came through the doors at the different shelters that were operated from the city of Austin and from its county, Austin independent school district, adrn and other facilities out there in the community. And with that, I'll pause to see if there's any additional questions. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, any questions at this point? Kathy? >> Tovo: Yeah, I have several questions, so I'll just ask a few and then I think I see another councilman has some. Thank you for that overview,

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director Ortiz. I'm not sure how many of the details we'll be able to get into in the course of this conversation, so I'll just flag that I am fully interested in some of the details, like how many shelters did you plan on going into the storm, what departments were involved in outreach and on which days? How many shelters did you bring online during the course of the storm and then how many of those really were city-run versus partner organizations. But thanks for setting the context by talking about how challenging it is -- how challenging it was because of covid. I know I had an opportunity to talk with the American red cross and with some others who were not -- you know, whose operations have changed because of the pandemic and their volunteer base. How many shelters did you have going into... I think the details for me are very fuzzy at this point, but what I think I understood is that you had planned to -- in whatever number you had, you had a

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couple places identified as warming centers on Friday. We were getting lots of e-mails from the community saying these really should be 24 hours place based on the predictions of really cold weather, and then they shifted to 24 hours, but if you could give us some sense of really how many you had organized, had you been in touch with some of our partner organizations in the bad, which, I've forgotten what it stands for, in the central Texas -- some of those central Texas groups that participate in sheltering? At what point were you in conversations with them? And then hopefully we can talk about the outreach. And I just want to say, in case I forget to later, our community partners really did fabulous work on all of these fronts, so though we're not addressing that here today, I just want to make sure it gets acknowledged. >> Mayor Adler: Before we answer the questions, are we on atxn? >> Yes, we are, mayor. >> Okay. Thank you. >> Tovo: So I am getting -- I

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am getting texts from people saying that they're having trouble seeing it on atxn. But we're sure that it can be viewed? >> Yes. So there was just a buffering issue. Things are working fine now. Yes, we are, mayor. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you. >> We're ready. Councilwoman tovo, good question. So, again, from a cold weather shelter capacity, we had preidentified two locations,

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and then a third, which was a smaller facility that were there to support overnight cold weather strategy. And because of covid, like I explained, the capacity in those locations had been reduced. We'd been doing this throughout the winter weather season for 2020 and 2021 and had already activated those cold weather locations on several other instances where temperatures dipped down low. Those are preidentified in the beginning of the season, and we look at, what the capacity is and with the social services agencies, and this is really intended to be more of an overflow need. So the agencies that predominantly provide services

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to the persons experiencing homelessness, if they get to a point where they're going to exceed their capacity, that's where this plan comes in. We open up these overflow shelters location that register at our location that we identified. For this season, we identified the central library, we coordinated with the capital metro to provide transportation and then we transport the individuals, anybody that registers at that location to those locations. So they have a warm place to stay overnight. That -- that is - that's our strategy that we follow every year. Obviously, that -- that was modified because of the ongoing pandemic, and so those were the initial shelters that we had. In addition to that, we also contacted the convention center earlier in that week and we had -- we looked at the availability of their facilities, the palmer event

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center was available and we were recentering that facility, just to remind everybody the convention center at this point in time was being utilized as an alternate care site, and so we were trying not to go into the convention center unless we ultimately -- unless it was necessary for us to do so. And at some point in time during the peak conditions of the winter weather, we had to go into the convention center 1 and 2 to set up a functional need shelter because of the ongoing outages and utility disruptions and the needs in the community and deal with the support of the medical facilities that were potentially looking at having to evacuate their facilities at some point in time. Luckily, we did not have to do

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that, but we were ready in the event that the -- that that was necessary. The capacity at each one of these sites was around 65. That may vary plus or minus a few at each one of these locations, and, again, that was to meet the ongoing social distancing requirements that was required for us at that point in time. Now, in addition to that, at the palmer event center as we open it up as a warming center/shelter, we expanded the capacity up to 300, but the need was even higher than that, and I would have to say that the staff -- everybody that worked at the palmer event center, if I could give you a gold medal, I would give you a gold medal, because they went above and beyond. The maximum capacity that we

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had at the palmer event center was 459 and we had people everywhere we possibly could. And even the director had -- was involved directly providing services, Trisha tricho I owe you a lot for the work that you and your team and all the security personnel that were out there working hard to meet the needs. In addition to that, we also looked at opening up other facilities from the -- from the parks and recreation department and also looked at -- we got word that aid was going to be offering a couple of facilities, and we worked with them and crt to see how the city can support those operations as well as working with Austin disaster

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relief network to do the same. Del valle, working with Travis county, also opened up one of their facilities and we looked at trying to see how we can support them throughout those events. I can give you more detail in some of the -- del valle high school had a capacity of 200, but their highest census count was only reached up to 10 individuals. So it -- it varies. And disaster work is pretty hard to preidentify how many shelter spaces you are going to need. I guess it depends on the impacts of the storm and the impacts of the community. The best that we can do is just preidentify potential locations and then open those shelters as the need arises and we're able to provide those -- the services in a safer environment as best as

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we can. >> Mayor Adler: Alison? >> Alter: Can you talk about in this case we not only had our population that we normally are trying to meet their needs of during cold weather, but we also had people who were housed who were not having electricity and power, so that they could stay warm within their own homes. As you know, this storm and the lack of power in my district started on the Thursday before, and we had some people who were out from that Thursday before, you know, through -- you know, through when we started with the ercod emergency, some of

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them did get back online, but, you know, when we made requests for shelter opportunities up north, we met with stone cold, you know, silence in response. And I'd like to understand better how that processing went, people couldn't get to the palmer center if they were up north, and, you know, again, this -- the emergency for the other population that we aren't normally serving through this didn't just happen Monday early morning. It happens, you know, several days before in some parts of the city. So can you speak to that thought process and what steps were taken to try and meet that need? >> Yes. And like I was saying, we were monitoring the conditions of all that week. We had several meetings that week before, that Sunday when the winter weather impacted

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coordinating with the different agencies. We monitored the storms impact on that Thursday night and on Friday, the number of power outages, whether it was higher than normal, it looked like they were coming back down. We do -- we do offer the cold weather shelter for anybody that needed a place to go, and at that point in time, it was decided that the ongoing shelter that we were providing to the cold weather shelters would be suffice. Road conditions at that point in time were not hampered. Road conditions did not become a problem until Sunday around noontime. That's where the situation changes. So prior to that Sunday, our approach was to provide the services -- provide the shelter space through what was already planned to be provided. Obviously, on that Sunday we did not have this ability on

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the need for ercod to have an emergency like they did, and the resulting impacts on the second wave. So -- and that's something that once we realized that was going to happen, we made those necessary changes to our strategy and tried to open up additional facilities. But at that point in time, it was rather difficult to -- and we understand the problems that some of our residents and those far away locations in the far north and far south may have to travel to -- to the palmer event center. We would also have difficulty, even if I -- even if we might have wanted to open up additional shelter locations, one, we did not have the additional staff, we did not have the additional resources to get there in a timely manner. It really -- we were hampered at that point in time by the impact of the storm.

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>> Mayor Adler: Okay. >> And mayor, if I can say -- if I can add one more thing, mayor, real quick, I think that that's probably something that's a lesson that we're learning, and I think that's why the resiliency hub initiative that we've been working on for several years is going to become very critical because it will allow us to preidentify and Prestage and presupport potential shelter locations that are closer to the neighborhoods. That way they may not have to travel long distance, and that's something that we're going to be working through to figure out how to make that happen. >> Mayor Adler: So one of the issues that I think -- well, actually, commissioner Fuentes, why don't you go ahead. >> Fuentes: I was going to make a brief comment, director Ortiz, you kind of shared that I was going to share that the locations being all throughout the communities are so important, because even though

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the del valle shelter that we stood up may perhaps only had 10 people who stayed the night, the number seemed higher for those who used it as a warming center, to charge up their phones and to get warm. And at one time during the storm we considered the del valle shelter as overflow when the palmer event center reached capacity. So it's so helpful for us to stand up those shelters all throughout the community and to truly meet the community where we are, so just wanted to vocalize that point. >> And councilmember, Fuentes, you bring up a really good point. You're right, we at -- at one point we were trying to figure out how do we take the excess demand for shelter from palmer and move it around to other locations, and we ran into several obstacles. One, the road conditions made it less viable for capital metro to be able to support that type of transportation, and so, again, it goes back

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to, you know, it was kind of hard to predict what this -- what these impacts were going to be. But I think now that we know what these impacts are, the more we're able to support shelter operations closer to the neighborhoods, then the better that our communities are going to be without them having to travel long distances, you know, yes. I agree. >> Mayor Adler: So one thing they'll be interested in the after-action report that you all do and staff does, is really look at the interplay between the shelters that we did and the sheltering that surfaced from the community. Again, as we saw, we did this conversation the -- the first part of this conversation, there were lots of people in the community that were volunteering and stepping

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forward. And every time that happens, that doesn't necessarily mean it's a failure of the system, just because the challenge was so great that in these instances you would expect the community to pitch in and to help. But it could point out a weakness in our system, and even if it's not, it appears as if there

needs to be better coordination, better anticipation that so many in the community are going to be stepping forward to -- to help. Sheltering is a really good example of that, because we had so many people that were out doing sheltering and reportedly weren't able to reach to really high numbers. So it would be good to look at that effort and understand where that noncity effort was achieving to see if we can ascertain what the numbers were, if we can ascertain two those people were, or those people experiencing

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homelessness, was it other people, but part of the question, I think, is, you know, our system was set up so that we were trying to provide sheltering commensurate with the need we thought would come from the community, but yet the community was sourcing a lot itself. And I don't know if that's because we didn't have enough sheltering, if the standard for each was different. You know, I was hearing a lot of reports from people that were contacting me saying we've identified a group of people experiencing homelessness, it's getting cold, they don't know where to go or they haven't left, they haven't gone to the sheltering and we're sending out volunteer crew to meet them and talk to them and in essence, bring them in. But I also know -- I also know

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from the conversations we were having, Juan, that you were personally out in cars going to those same places trying to bring in people that were in tents or otherwise in community, and you weren't alone. There were a lot of people on our staff that were doing that, but in all the activity, I couldn't really tell what was happening. So just as adding -- really talking to those other groups, some of which councilmember tovo listed in her list that were actively involved in this area, really downloading with them, what it was that they did, I think, would be really helpful and presenting that, both to ascertain what, does that impact what we do? Does that impact how we help coordinate those efforts? I know there was a lot of information or data that would have been helpful for us to get that was not readily available concerning some of the community sourced

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sheltering, but for whatever it is we could get, just getting a better picture of what was happening outside of the city and what lessons we learned from that, both appreciative of that action, which we are, of volunteers stepping in, but how do we best assist that or redirect that or facilitate, whatever it is. >> Mayor, you know, I would just add that we welcome anybody that could open their doors and open up a shelter, and we would reach out to them and see what they needed, right? Do they have cots, pillows, blankets? Do they need water, do they need us to try and get them food? Do they need us to try

and get them security, right? And if -- and as they open up the doors, if they had it all covered, great. We just kind of kept in contact with them, we tried to include them as best as we could in our press release

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statements and in the overall effort. If they -- if they had security covered but for some reason they needed support [indiscernible] We had a joint task force, fire -- excuse me, police and Travis county so working to meet those needs, whether it was from aid or the constable office or whatever way that we possibly could. And in this situation, it was not that the city and the county needed to provide every shelter space, we needed to coordinate and make sure that we -- well, as shelters became available, as agencies were willing to open up their doors and function as shelters, how do we as a community move together in the right direction and support each other. That's what we were trying to do at that point in time. >> Mayor Adler: And I think that's important. A lot of that was happening not with agencies, it was happening with individuals or ad hoc groups that R with coming together, and I'm not sure there was the same coordination between them

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because they were ad hoc and in that cause didn't exist in that way some of them, until we were in that moment. And I also recognize with respect to sheltering, obviously it was all developing as it was happening. I know that I was surprised to go down to palmer, initially when the palmer opened, not to see any red cross volunteers assisting at that first moment as that was opening. Only to learn that red cross wasn't assisting because the interpretation of red cross was initially that this was homelessness relief as opposed to disaster relief. And that issue was soon rectified and red cross proved to be an incredibly valuable and additional partner, but, you know, I chalk that up to the many different kinds of things that had to be worked out in realtime as we were in that situation. Councilmember Ellis?

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>> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. And that is a really great point. You know, when people are in need, they don't -- they don't necessarily care if it's a city facility, a church, a school, they just know they need something accessible. I know there were portions of my district, especially south of the greenbelt, you know, if that mopac bridge over the greenbelt is very long and it was very icy and there were abandoned cars on it. And so I hope as we talk about the resilience hubs moving forward, we look at those kinds of things and know there may be portions of certain districts that are kind of cut off from others, don't always have good east/west connectivity, in case there was something in district 5 they could get there, there weren't a whole lot of street options since they were so iced up. But also on the funding aspects, I would like to understand a little more, you know, what is appropriate out of general fund, what could be

arp money or other pandemic dollars or just FEMA disaster relief? I'm really curious about how we approach this conversation

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because in a year like this, we've had so many on top of each other, it's hard to figure out what response was -- because of the storm or because of the srm overlapped with the pandemic. And trying to navigate those situations, I'm curious to know a little more just about funding options and how we can help our city be more resilient in the future, given that there could be different pots of money to pull from to make it work. Do you have a clear idea of that yet or should that just be information that we hope to see in the future when we talk about resilience hubs? >> I think that's something -- I'm going to give you a short answer, and then -- but I think the longer answer is really that's additional work that is still ongoing and it gets a little bit more complicated. From the FEMA side, FEMA provides us a reimbursement program if we meet specific thresholds. And for this disaster, we met that, and that was emergency protective actions, which we

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can fund those actions to actively respond and take care of our community, but that's really more engaged not in a proactive matter, but more realtime, this is what we're doing to save lives kind of situation. There are some hazard mitigation grant opportunities that we would like to explore. There will be some hazard mitigation grant funding available through the application process for those through -- as a result of the -- this disaster. It's -- it does require a local match, and right now I think it's 75/25 percent, so it is an opportunity there. And one of the prerequisites that we've got to have is mitigation action plan, and that's something that we do have. In fact, we just updated that mitigation action plan and it should be coming to you here in the month of June or July

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for acceptance. Additionally, there is probably partnerships that we can explore, especially when we're looking at -- as an agency is building a new facility or even as the city and the county builds facility to incorporate that -- some of that in mitigation strategies to allow us to use those facilities as shelters without extreme concerns about loss of power or loss of water. What I mean by that is, can we either look at funding backup power or redundant water or temporary water solutions as well as even something as simple as having hookups to a building so that even if we don't have a generator, we can bring in a generator and hook it up to the facility so there's ongoing power. And that was one of the challenges that we had. We lost one of the -- one of

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the recreation centers, we had a generator that we could move out there, but it would have taken us two or three days to hook it up because there was no connections to the building. So I think also, council, things we're kind of looking at now, what would it cost to retrofit some of these infrastructure and this is probably something that's going to be coming to you as part of the resiliency hub process, so I don't want to talk more about it, because I'm afraid that I may get something wrong or steal their thunder. >> Ellis: Thank you. Councilmember R tovo? >> Tovo: Thanks. This is -- I think this is a -- there are so many layers of this conversation, and I just want to -- I just want to circle back to the sheltering and the warming centers and the difference between the city -- the city-run facilities and the ones we had community partnerships, and I think this became -- I'll just speak for myself, at various

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points it was unclear sort of how to communicate about those. And so I would just highlight this as an area where we need improved communication in the future. For example, St. Martin's stood up a shelter and commissioner Howard was really running that with some of the facility from St. Martin's. I'm not sure how much capacity they had, but they did need blankets and cots, and one of my staff helped secure those from the firefighters association and at one point they needed volunteers so some of my neighbors and, again, my staff helped. I think we need to share these stories so we can understand how to better streamline it in the future. I wouldn't have known who to ask at the end for cots, blankets. Ashley Richardson happened to know that the association had some and Bob Nicks got a firefighter who was off duty that day to bring

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them over. The same happened with the warming centers. I know we talked about this, but some of those happened because several of the council councilmembers and I identified that as a need, and we knew there were warming centers that the city had stood up and we worked to find them. It was all hands on deck. When I -- when I say that, it wasn't just my staff who was helping. At one point my 13-year-old was pulling maps from the internet overlaying areas of outage with areas where school facilities were so we could try to figure out where there was a need. So, you know, it's clear we probably will never find ourselves in a situation like that again, but one reason that I think it is absolutely critical that we share and identify those situations so that it doesn't happen again. I mean, I -- still when I think about it feel terrible about some of the neighborhoods in my area where I was getting calls all week long from people who were

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watching the temperatures drop in their house and afraid for their families. And we could not -- you know, my staff and I could not find a facility that could be opened as a warming center. And so I just don't -- I don't want to ever be in a situation like that again where we don't even have a list of, you know, what some of the possibilities are. So, you know, having said that, I absolutely acknowledge that this was a tremendously unforeseen circumstances on so many levels and the fact that volunteers were scarce and others... You know, it just added -- had to have added -- did add to the complication. But, again, as we move forward in the resilience planning, I hope we can figure out, like, how some of those were successful. You know, not just in the centers I'm familiar with, but some of the others where -- where it was largely a volunteer effort. You know, we identified a couple neighbors who identified some zero couple volunteers, aid came and opened it up and provided some

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security and those warming centers were a go. Some of those might be good resilience models where the city can't provide that support. But setting up that network where those community organizations and those ad hoc ones can communicate back to the eec is really critical. I want to ask a question about the hotel/motel piece. Mayor, you added -- there were two really good points that I wanted to highlight of what you said. One is the fact that in some cases it was a communication issue where our city staff was going out and community volunteers were going out, and so that's -- hopefully we can sort of sort through some of those and really get a picture of how that all worked out to create -- to create a situation where, I believe, a lot of folks were informed in enough time to take shelter or get shelter through other means, which is fabulous. Manager, I know mayor pro tem

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harper-madison and mayor Adler and I had a conversation with you on that Sunday about some of the community work. And one of the requests from the community members -- some of the community organizations, were for the city to secure some motel/hotel rooms and house individuals that way. And I guess I wanted to ask you to just reflect on -- on that and why the better strategy was the one you pursued and are there opportunities -- you know, do you see it as an opportunity in the future to maybe work with hotel/motels at the outset. And I understand that there -- and I look forward to hearing from community members some of the challenges, because you can't provide services if people are distributed into rooms. So I think we need to understand how well that worked for the people they were serving. I just want to ask you to reflect a bit on that and what some of your reasonings were for pursuing the path that you did. >> Thank you, councilmember. And as you mentioned, we did explore many different options and had discussions with both you as council and then community members about

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different sheltering alternatives that we were going to be putting forward. So as Juan has already mentioned, you know, we pursued a specific path, but we wanted to hear other suggestions that were coming from different parts of our community. You know, this is -- this was a historic event and we are always open to seeing what things worked well and didn't work well, and so hopefully as you pointed out, we'll be hearing from some of these groups that were pursuing other alternatives so we can learn how successful those were and how we might incorporate that type of feedback into future planning efforts. I know that we had our deputy city manager at the time and our homeless strategy officer involved in some of the more specifics around those discussions. I don't think Diana's on the call this afternoon, so we'll -- I don't have the specifics of what feedback we were given, but I do know that we chose to really focus on

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the shelters that we were standing up within our city facilities, and that was really the prudent path at the time. We'll see if assistant city manager Hayden Howard has anything to add, but otherwise, this will certainly be incorporated into our after-action reporting. >> Thank you, Spencer. We did meet with community as they -- and it was after they started housing individuals. And had the conversation about, you know, how we would be able to partner with them. The things that have been shared really when we looked at, you know, having folks in multiple venues, there were -- there were several limitations as Dr. Ortiz has shared -- Mr. Ortiz has shared with you, we were very limited with staff, but we were also wanting to make sure to

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maximize the locations to be able to provide -- make sure we had enough food, make sure we had enough emergency services where we had EMS staff that were there from the community outreach program, but then also making sure our partners that provide behavioral health services are available. And so in those conversations with the community, I was a part of a few of those, and one of the things that was really, really clear is that you definitely -- if you're going to have all of those multiple locations, you've got to have a process where you can have everything that you're having -- that I just mentioned at all of those locations. And, of course, you know, we're open to planning and kind of looking at this on the other side of it, and really starting to think about, you know, how could we even have,

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you know, a few of those services at some of those locations. The other thing I will share that was shared a little bit with -- with Juan when he was speaking, you know, for outreach purposes, we had -- you know, we sent information out on ctosh, the homeless folks that we have contact with that have cell phones, we text all of them, the public safety task force went out to several locations on volunteers that are currently doing eat encampments, they all went out, and were all, you know, starting to bring people back in. And being able to put them at the various locations that we had open. And so definitely knowing definitely -- how would we be able to either train more community folks that will be able to assist us but then

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also looking at, you know, how we can be in multiple places, even if it's not as comprehensive as a larger facility that you have because you definitely want to have all the full array of services when you have a larger captive audience. >> Thanks for that really helpful response. >> Colleagues, anything further on shelter? Councilmember alter. >> This relates to shelter, but I'm not sure where it fits into the scheme of these discussions. It also relates to some amendments, I think, that councilmember kitchen included at various points. We had a lot of experience with

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nursing homes that really exposed some gaps in our planning. You know, we had -- it was very difficult to know when the nursing homes needed help and whether they were getting help, whether they were out of power, whether they were out of water. There was no one centrally in the city who had appropriate contact information, and then there was, you know, all sorts of not always verified sources of information that led to wild-goose chases. Yet, there were nursing homes that were lacking running water or lacking energy. While that's not exactly the shelter, this is where all of those elderly people are finding their shelter, and if they are absent these resources, it created a lot of challenges for folks who

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were already feeling particularly concerned from the pandemic. So I would like to understand better what we had in place for reaching out to these nursing homes or long-term care centers. That's the more appropriate term. And kind of what's coming down the pipeline to address that gap in our planning. >> Do you mind starting out, Juan? >> Let me start by saying, I think the city and county, we're here to support anybody, whether it's a nursing home or hospital. We're here to support as best we possibly can given what the situation is. A lot of these agencies,

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these facilities have specific mandates that they are required to meet in order to operate, and one of them is to have a disaster plan that is coordinated with the office and addresses how they would -- they're going to act and how -- what access they're -- actions they're going to take in a disaster. Regardless of what the situation is, if we're contacted and everybody that contacts us to coordinate their plans, we make sure they know how to reach us. I would say during the winter storm, we had several facilities that contacted us because they lost power, their generator fails, in which case we worked to try to provide some support in any way we could, whether it was making some of our personnel available to help them troubleshoot their generator issue or

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in some situations, we contact -- we were reached and they contacted us and asked us for fuel because their contractor could not deliver fuel for whatever reason and fleet services was tasked to go out there and we provided diesel or gasoline to ensure that they are able to keep their generators running as best as we could. I would agree there were some facilities out there that had difficulty, and that's something that we hope to work with to see what we can do so that we have more clear visibility on what those needs are and see what we can do to help them be better prepared. But if -- we got all kinds of requests for assistance, and we were

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prioritizing those. It doesn't mean there wasn't some suffering there and that's something that we need to follow up and see what we can do. >> I would like to ask to make sure this is a critical part of our after-action report in terms of things we can do better. I know, Mr. Ortiz, if they were in touch with us and whatnot, but for many, the logical person to be in touch with was Austin energy. There were a lot of them where team didn't know how to get in touch -- people didn't know how to get in touch or there was not -- >> And councilmember, you're right. They may not have known, but because they are required to have a disaster plan coordinated with the city and county, if they shared their plan and contacted us, we responded back, and we told them here is how you can get ahold of us.

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I'm not saying that everybody has filed their plan or the plans are currently -- has been coordinated, but that is a requirement from the state -- department of state health services. So I -- what we can do is make sure that we communicate to all of those nursing homes, facilities, make sure they know how to get ahold of us. >> I think it's not just them getting ahold of us. It's us reaching out because there were a lot of people who were paralyzed about not knowing where to go and not having the right person to connect up with. Yet, these were critical entities within our community, and no one at ae had a list of the nursing homes that they had to be making sure to figure out if they had, you know, generation. Austin water didn't have that

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either. I don't think it's my job as a councilmember to have that list in my office, but it does seem like somebody in the city ought to have it, and I just any there's think -- there's there's a lot better coordination. These things happen when one person is not there who might know this on their end. So I think that's an opportunity for growth and improvement. Looks like director Hayden Howard -- >> One thing I was going to just share is that we have noticed that we did have a challenge with long-term care facilities. But the thing that -- we talked about this at public health is that during this response, during the covid response, we had a long-term care kind of group -- I didn't command team set up. Moving forward, that's something that we

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are definitely going to incorporate, which would typically be part of that social services branch that we kind of talked about. We're going to be sharing that information with Mr. Ortiz because that is -- has really worked we will for us through covid. We can also think and overlay that to this existing problem as well. That's something we'll get with Mr. Ortiz not 0 -- on. We have a list of long-term providers, large ones, small ones. And we have contacts at Texas department of health and human services health and human services commission as well. We want to be able to marry that. So we will definitely share that with you on the other side once we are able to

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incorporate that. >> Councilmember kitchen. >> Thank you. I think that will help. That builds off all the work you've done around covid to reach out to the nursing homes and the dashboard you put in place around the nursing homes. I think that -- can you hear me? I'm getting -- >> Yes. >> I also wanted to just make -- ask to make sure that in your after-action report, that you include the -- that you include the results of the analysis that the senior commission is doing in conjunction with our age-friendly city

coordinator. That was part of the amendment that I put O on one of our first items after the winter storm to ask them to work together. The

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point there was that as y'all may recall, we had a volunteer effort to phone bank and text seniors that were living in the community, not in long-term care facilities, but living in the community, and so learned a lot from that process. So we asked the senior commission to work with our age-friendly coordinator to look at that process and make recommendations about going forward, what our efforts should be for reaching out to individual seniors living in the community. So I would like to request that the results of their work be included in the after-action report or at least a status report. I'm not sure of the timing for them to finish their work vis-a-vis the time you're proceeding with, but I think that at least status update on their report should be included. I would like to see the results of

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their report included. We have to have a way to reach out to seniors living in the community. Those are folks with some of the folks don't have any safety net. So they were trapped at home with no water, no electricity, and cold and freezing, some of them were. So we were able to identify thousands of them that we could get help to, all volunteer effort. It was a volunteer effort. Follow-up was done with city staff who did a great job helping to follow up with people, but I would like to see that system more formalized in the future so that we don't have to kind of scramble to make that happen. >> And associated with that, that was a good effort. I appreciate councilmember kitchen being the first to raise

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that question. I don't know what the mechanics would be to handle that in the future. We felt like this was an immediate need that there were people in their homes right then this needed to be found immediately. When councilmember kitchen proposed that, it wasn't in the budget. The approval didn't come rapidly. I paid for it. >> Yeah. Thank you, mayor. >> That's okay. I don't think I'm entitled to get reimbursed because it happened outside of the FEMA process. Every time I did that, I knew that was a possibility, but felt like it needed to happen. As it turns out, we went ahead and made the calls and we found some people that needed immediate attention. So both the

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questions that Ann asked as well as the broader question, when something like that surfaces, what is the best way when it's happening outside of our system to fund something like that so that an emergency, immediate effort doesn't not happen. >> Yeah. May her -- mayor, I think you were concerned about something we didn't get the best solution for. That was what do you do if you can't reach someone? I know you were really worried about that. I'm not sure -- that really needed exploration, you know. >> That's right. There were two, the people we got ahold of that needed immediate help and then the people that didn't respond to two phone calls and four texts. >> Uh-huh. >> The question is, should we be going to that person's home to see why it is that person is not responding? I know that we raised that question. I know staff took over

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that issue, but I don't know how that issue -- I don't know how that issue was resolved. I would like to know that, too. Colleagues, anything else on shelter? Yes. >> I can probably go on all day. >> That's okay. >> First of all, thank you. Thank you for those questions about the long-term care facilities and others. I think that's a really important thing. Two, I think -- you know, I heard stories and I'm sure all of us have, of how communities organized themselves as well and many of our neighborhoods did something similar like that of really checking on those neighbors who they knew were maybe

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older and without family for and things: -- support and things. I would like to build that in as well because those will likely be the first on the scene, the first responders. So I'm very supportive of the efforts that you just described from the city's perspective as well as encouraging that level of thinking & identification of members in the community at that local level as well. I wanted to talk about staff training and recruitment. I wonder if you could provide us information about how staff across the city are identified for shelter operations at normal times and how you had to adapt that practice during this process because of all of the multiple things, roads and whatnot. And if it makes sense, to fold in there, too -- there were

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recommendations about training and broadening the training across our city staff. I would be interested in knowing how that's happened in the last several years and whether that was of help her where -- here and volunteers who were not ordinarily involved in sheltering activities. >> Yes. Good question, councilmember tovo. Because we have a reactive or -- excuse me. We play a big part in the hurricane shelter hub plan, one of the things that we do every summer around this time of the year, we start the

process of reidentifying personnel in the city, in different city departments, that available to go through the shelter management

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training. That is something that we do on an annual basis. We'll do several different sessions, and we try to identify a large enough personnel, coordinate with the city departments to make sure that we are training those personnel that would be available in support of shelter operation. That same shelter management training as the foundation of what we utilize and support with shelters that are open throughout the year. >> Is that self-selected, or do individuals say -- do you send out an e-mail and say who is interested in this? Is it self-selective, or are you at homeland security notifying different departments you think have the most relevant set of skills and saying can you identify that? How does

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that process go? >> We work with our human resources department to craft that e-mail, that invitation to the different city departments. You may have personnel that volunteer, but they also -- there needs to be a concurrence from their supervisor, their department director to ensure they are going to be available. We can train more people, but we want to know who is available to support shelter operations. Again, that's what our normal process would be. We work very closely with other agencies, volunteer organizations active in disaster. So these agencies, to include Austin disaster relief to look at what shelter managers they have, what shelter management training they may be conducting. So

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that way if we have a need for sheltering throughout the year, whether it's because of a flood or winter weather, we have personnel available. Like the mayor indicated, depending on the type of shelter will determine whether certain agencies are able to support it or not. Traditionally, red cross does not support those shelters if there's something that is centered or supporting homelessness, but they may be able to provide some several -- level of support in a different manner. Those are challenges that we have. Again, probably the challenge here was not just the fact that we were dealing with the pandemic but then also the fact that a lot of our personnel that we have could not get out of their home and could not get to the shelter locations. So one of

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the things that we came out of Harvey is just make sure that we have the ability to conduct O judge. T training, on-the-job training, for shelter management and in this situation, we did a very crude, very crash course with personnel that were volunteering and also recreated there on site to support operations. We were very fortunate that we had a lot -- some very key individuals in place. One of them is retired fire chief Evans that came in to support us with the vaccination program, but when thattest -- effort stopped, we moved him over to manage the event center. We gave him additional personnel. They had to train people on the spot on what they needed to do, and we

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tried to simplify the training and learn as you go. At that point in I am too, that's really the only thing you can do. In essence, that's basically what we do. We try to identify shelter managers, but if they're not available or not able -- we need more, we'll take personnel that we have there and we'll train them as best we can and just get through it. >> Director Ortiz, just as a follow-up question, when you're you're assembling the staff who will going to serve as shelter managers, I'm not sure there's ever been a situation in the past where you've needed to pay attention to where people are from -- where staff members are coming from geographically: Is that something you intend to embed in your planning in the future to make sure that you have staff who are north, south, central, east, west,

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spread in case you encounter a situation like that where weather conditions are such that people have to get to a location close by? >> That as well as work with the venue owners, whether they are city facilities, county, or public facilities to see how we can train some of the existing staff that work there normally day to day in shelter management, at least have some level of orientation of what it is. Being a manager is not an easy task. Really, I think that's a front line personnel that really go above and beyond because you're dealing with the public in a very stressful environment, very demanding environment and requires a lot of compassion and not anybody can do that job. So my hat goes off to everybody that volunteered and stuck through it because those were the heros of this

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event during this past experience. >> I'll just note, councilmember and the director may want to speak to this, but all the rec centers, they all get trained on shelter management. That is another asset resource that we have. It doesn't get to your point of where they are located and whether they are able to get from their homes to these rec centers. I did -- while I have this opportunity, I just wanted to highlight what director Ortiz said. There were incredible heroes that were managing these shelters and she's on this call, but from our convention center, really was up day and night at the event center and

just could not appreciate her efforts more. I know that Diana gray spent many sleepless nights there as well. There were people across the enterprise and across our community that really helped to manage and operate these shelters in this very

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challenging time. >> Anything else on sheltering? Manager, if your staff is here, we can move ahead to Austin energy. We may get to Austin water sooner than 3:30. >> I'll let them know, and they are on the line. They just need to be moved over. We can start as soon as that happens. I do see our general manager. I know she wanted to say a few words in the beginning of this segment. Jackie, do you want to start out? >> Sure. Thank you, Spencer. Good afternoon, mayor and councilmembers. I'm Jackie, and I am other the general manager of Austin energy. You have all heard the storm described as a historic event. You know the devastation because you lived through it and helped our community through it. I also want to let you know that

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winter storm was bigger than any scenarios. Our state's power grid and generators statewide never managed this weather scenario of multiple days of single digit temperatures combined with ice and crystalline snow, a type that is problem the a I can for power plants. Austin energy was required within minutes to shut off an unprecedented and unacceptable number of customers. This happened faster and lasted longer than anyone anticipated. At last week's meeting, we heard that it seemed like Austin energy didn't know what it was doing. To the contrary, we didn't know what ERCOT's requirements were going to be and neither did they. We communicated what they told us regarding outages and we did it the best we could. ERCOT was managing an unprecedented and impossible situation, but I do share the

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frustration of not knowing what the requirements were going to be until the instructions were issued and what the next day would look like. I'm proud of our teams. We're well prepared for this event. As a result, our utility did not sustain 00 hundreds of millions of dollars of losses. Because of the nature of this event and the design, the outages were outside of our control. Again, we share the frustration of you and our customers. We met the requirements as best we could keeping power on to critical facilities. Losing power to hospitals or communications towers or emergency responders would have turned an already tragic situation into something even worse. Lack of rotations was not because of a fault of our system, but because of the math. The load check mandate was just too high to protect

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critical infrastructure and rotate circuits at the same time. Ercot is referring to those situations as controlled outages rather than rotating outages because they recognize that utilities with a lot of critical infrastructure in dense service territories cannot rotate in this situation. As a public servant, it's heartbreaking when the service you provide can't be delivered to the people who need it. We did everything we could. We had already been in incident command mode for several days for the ice storm that began on February 11th. Our energy control center staff was sleeping at our facility working 20-hour days, exhibiting leadership and consistent poise under pressure. Our engineers worked day and night from home. Some charging devices in their cars to help us manage through the event. Our field operations team had 300 employees working 14 to 16-hour days for 10 days, sleeping in nearby hotel due to the

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workload needs. They suffered in the conditions working out in the cold for many long hours and navigating the roads. Some eventually came home to find homes in ruins from water leaks that had been lasting for days. Our energy market real time supervisor came to town the day before the storm to get ahead of the weather and slept within walking distance to support operations through day and night shifts. Another employee slept on an air mattress. Our power plant staff feels like first responders for the first time. Our customer assistant program staff made contact with customers that are vulnerable or emergency contact. Our customer service representatives handled unbelievable call volumes and escalated

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concerns to the proper teams with empathy and professionalism. They handled some of the most difficult and challenging calls of their careers. Our logistics teams, communications team, IT staff, and 311 were also heroes. They were all problem solving technical challenges in real time. It was all hands on deck and our teams worked harder than I've ever seen. They prevented a catastrophic grid failure that would have caused blackout conditions. Our team takes our duty to our community seriously, promptly providing -- providing we are working to identify how we can better meet the needs of our customers during extreme weather scenarios and within the requirements of Ercot. We are in the process of developing our after-action report.

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This is a very thorough process. The goal is for every problem and every solution to be looked at. At next week's utility oversight committee meeting, we have provide more information on the after-ac process. -- after-action process. Prior to so I've asked the vice presidents to provide brief presentations on those topics. After that, we can answer any questions you may have. With that, I'll turn it over to pat Sweeney. >> If I may, I think there may be just a point of confusion. Exhibit a had different bulleted points, and those were on the bulleted points. But I think as our -- I'm not sure whether there are existing questions on

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those topics or not. I just want to make sure not to direct -- I went ahead and put my questions up on the message board. A lot of which corresponded to items we had passed in exhibit a. Some of them were additional, but virtual addresses -- we've had an opportunity to talk about them. I'm not sure those are the highest priority of those gathered here today. >> I think that would be okay. The priority for today's session is the ability to be able to bring new issues to you, not so much necessarily to get answers to questions. So any presentation should request as quickly as possible so the council can identify issues and questions. >> We can forego those presentations if that's your preference. >> Does anyone want to see them? One is on weatherization issue.

[2:31:58 PM]

>> Yes. One is on the power plant weatherization and the other is on our line clearance and vegetation. >> I would like to have the line clearance, but maybe it's not the full presentation. I have questions on that. >> They are brief. >> Okay. Move through them quickly, please. >> Okay. Pat, why don't you go ahead with the power plant weatherization. >> All right. Good afternoon, mayor and council. We'll make sure you can hear me. Can everybody hear me okay? >> We can. Go you can go through it quickly. We're taking the approach much pictures may be helpful here. Winterization, we've touched on this before, really begins in the fall and affirmed by December 21st of each year. It consists of two things, permanent and temporary measures. Permanent measures are things like insulation on piping and cabinets installed with the

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facility was built or improvements was made. Metal structures. You heard heat trace. That's electrical heating systems that have he resistant -- resistance areas. There are measures that are temporary. These are wind breaks, thermal blankets, temporary heat sources like propane or electrical heaters or lighting. The tempory measures are installed while the permanent measures are checked for support function per the plant checklist. So we can to the next slide. By the way, I want want to make sure we

understand context here. Our plants are really designed for the summer. They are intended for heat. So a lot of things we're doing for winterization, we undo for the summer. From an

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overall perspective, we work on them in the fall and do the checks then, but then as an event comes up on on the radar, we do additional walk-arounds and checks of the systems and statuses. The operators use remote monitoring and check satellite phones. Then we take personnel measures. We ensure staffing levels and also increased during major forecast events and we provide food and on-site lodging for the staff if they need to stay over. Next slide. Most of these are pictures. These are brief. Quick references to -- these are wind breaks around the plant at the bottom of the facility on the west side. We'll go to the next slide. This is a permanent enclosure we refer to it as a dog us ho. You can -- house.

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You can see the resemblance. This was added after 2011. It provides that on a permanent basis. Next slide. So some other versions of this as well. Again, up on the structure, elevated as well as at the bottom, you see permanent structure on the left and a temporary one with covers on the bottom right. Next slide. This is a screen that refers to some of the monitoring that is done. So -- sensors that check them so we know they're functioning. It avoids the individual having to walk around. Next slide. Here are some examples of the additional temporary applications. So we

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have -- you can see covers. You can also see small heaters around various systems around the plant. This is our decker power plant. The next slide. So here again, these are some examples. I mentioned temporary heating. You can see these are heaters in both cases that provide sort heat to a local spot where we have concerns. So there are two examples of these. They run off propane or electricity. Go to another slide. Here again, some examples of protection. You can see insulation. There is heat tracing there. You can't really see T again, covers that are installed as you move across to the right. Go to the next slide. This may seem unusual, but lighting is actually a good source

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of heat. You put a cover over something and put a light bulb -- not an led. It's shedding heat while it's on. It produces heat on that component for the period of time needed. This is at the decker plant. The next slide. These are covers installed temporarily as well as you can get a little glimpse of a heater there not 0 the far right at the at the decker plant. Next slide. On the left here, another example of a slight source but a cover that's trapping it and keeping critical instrumentation in service throughout. Again, to the right, individual heaters that are applied to areas of concern. These are at the decker power plant as well. Next slide.

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You can see here some of the conditions at the site. A good reference for what our folks were dealing with. Right? Is it these structures are almost all metal. A lot of them are up in the air by several stories. They are very much exposed. So when they have to be out there -- they were out there. You can see in the middle picture some of our staff up on one of the structures at the sand hill plant. They are really out in the middle of it. It's a dangerous time and condition to be out there with icing, poor visibility, and so not 0. You can see the folks really -- our team did a great job working the operation during the event. Go to the next slide. Here again, a couple photos of the conditions at the plant. You can see the large icicles and the snow cover on the left, some of the snow in the middle and right. You can see that at the hand

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hill plant. Next slide. When we look ahead, our reviews are still underway. Jackie mentioned this. We've identified opportunities for improvement. One example, for example, we did make many improvements after the 2011 event, but one of these did not work very well this time around. A protective controls cabinet, a cabinet put on an enclosure proved to be inadequate. We've already added a heat source. We're not looking to be told to do things. We're moving forward with these as we see that they can be implemented quickly and easily. Some other examples, mostly in the logistical side of things, but very important as we found out, increased stocks for longer duration events. Most of these events are only going to be a day or two in duration, generally speaking. So this event obviously went on for nearly a week in total. So that's prompted us to look more closely at the

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food for staff, things like MREs that don't have to be stored in a refrigerator that don't expire readily, that avoids logistical deliveries that might be hard or risky for folks to do during those times. Additional costovertebral -- cots and bedding. -- Bedding. This is a regular process we did every year. We do reviews of the process and updates to address them. One last thing I pointed -- I didn't catch this, but an

important element in the on going process is we do checklists every year as we've talked about, but we're going to be adding an event in scenario training that wraps beyond that. What if the duration is a certain length? What if this happens and so on?

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Next slide. So that's the overall conclusion of my slides. If you have questions, I'll try to answer them. >> If we could move to the next presentation, we'll come back to questions. >> Great. Elton Richards. >> Good afternoon. First of all, thanks for the time to present on a very important subject. Thank you for the support you've given over the last year, getting a new contract in and implementation of a plan to get ahead of the vegetation management. I'll talk about the storm it itself and then I'll get in the programs. We saw this as three storms where I know the customers saw it as one and then you added the load check. The outages and the damage to the current was due to the vegetation and the ice and the snow as it built upon the vegetation and

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even the ones that were outside of the established plants at that time, some of it came into the facilities with some outages. Next slide, please. So this shows vegetation management. Nothing with the generation. Nothing on the transmission which we have a robust 25-foot program, but the distribution because the primary. We did have automobile accidents and then we did have equipment failure, but the vegetation was the leader. Next slide, please. So I wanted to show this just as a time line. When we got the forecast that the storms were coming in, we had 38 crews that were on system. With local crews, we bumped up to 42 to have them for the first ice storm when it came in. When we got the notification that the second storm was coming in, we reached out for mutual aid -- mutual aid and brought in more crews. After the customers were back

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on, we kept them for an additional five days trying to get vegetation out there and trimming, which some councilmembers were brought up with some issues, just helping them. So when we look at the vegetation management, we were looking at it from pillars of excellence, reliability, sustainability, five to seven year cycle, and then fire mitigation. Next slide, please. So this just kind of is the size and scope of the vegetation management. This goes from March until the end of the year. It's broken down by the columns. Capital improvement projects, circuit work, and then underis performing leaders. Next slide. This shows the condition. This is 2019 when we had a large

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amount of outages out there. This is prior to us getting in there and doing the trimming. This shows what a large portion of our feeders do, date and time. This just shows the environmental limitations, which we've spoken about before. Even when we're in open season, we still continue to preunion that line. We have to come back. Some of the councilmembers working with us on educating the customers in the neighborhoods because we can't trim oak. We have to clean the tools and treat the trees as we cut. So some of that we are getting in front of. Next slide, please. This just shows a ramp up. The contract was pruned last year. It came to fruition in January of this year. That was 38 crews we started with on the vegetation management. By the end of may, we're up to 58 total crews in

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the vegetation. This is strictly distribution. Just getting back, when we talk about -- these aren't just smaller companies. They have been around since 1928 and 1880. They range on employees. So these are ones that train the tree trimmers. So the Austin fire department has done a great job on identifying wildfire risk and they were the ones that provided this by district. We've been in collaboration and meeting with them to give them the support they can do to protect the the citizens. These are some improvements that we've done. I've spoken about continuing to prune in the equity and doing pruning as long as we get the

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customers approval and prioritizing it outside of the window which was August to January. We've got the industry standard now for pruning with 15 slow growing at 10 feet and then the possibility of pruning during oak wilt as long as we do the proper method of cleaning the tools and protecting the cuts. Next slide, please. All we really need on this one is just the same thing that we had, just the collaboration that we got with city council, educating the councilmembers, the homeowner associations, property owners. The infrastructure, establishing what the standards are on the clearances so they know it, and then just so they know the likelihood of fire and getting close to the trees on the fire lines when they are too close and then talking about Texas wildfire mitigation.

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Austin fire department, 60% of our structures are in fire prone areas. Just another reason it's so important for us to get the vegetation management. That concludes my presentation. Any questions??
>> Councilmember alter. >> Thank you, Mr. Richards and sergeant. So I have been working with you for

a while on the vegetation management, which has been a challenge in my district. Can you speak to -- since we're here talking about the storm piece. Can you speak to differences you saw on the circuits that were cleared ahead of the storm and ones that were identified as high risk but not yet cleared and what kind of difference we saw in the power outages that were not from ERCOT. >> I'm going to have to buy you lunch on that one. I've made a note if we had more time. 13

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is one that's up in councilmember Alter's area in the northwest woods that had over 6 vegetation outages in 2019 and early 2020. We finished that pruning right before the storm. There were zero vegetation outages on the storm. We can increase the liability. Thank you for asking that question. >> By the time you're done with the pruning for the summer, what percentage of the high high risk wildfire or circuits will be finished? >> We've got four we're targeting to be finished by mid-July right now. The other six are on work plan. The intent is to have crews actively on those. They will not finish until approximately the fall just because of the length of the lines on

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some of those. By the end of the fiscal year, we're expecting off the 10 wildfire circuits identified back to the industry standard. >> So by the end of the fiscal year, you expect to have the 10 10 -- yeah. >> Calendar year? I'm not sure. >> Calendar. >> You're expecting that the 10 highest risk wildfire circuits will have had their pruning done? >> Yeah. >> Thank you. For the pruning that was covered during the storm, I appreciate you guys working with us to pick up any trimmings that were still remaining. Can you tell us a little bit more about how Austin Energy is helping with some of that vegetation management for the limbs, et cetera, which create a different kind of wildfire hazard than the limbs on the wires? >> The industry standard

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is the utilities don't pick up the tree trimmings, but due to the extent of the nature of this storm, which was not something that I think any of us want to see again, there was concern about the trimmings left behind. We actually developed a great relationship on both of us assisting on getting the tree limbs out to the front. I've got my line crews actually identified some helpers that were unable to get those tree trimmings to the front from the storm and we'll go to the front of the roadway for the Austin recovery. If it's outside of the city limits, then my crew will continue to assist that based upon feedback we had from individuals out in councilmember Alter's area doing hiking in the greenbelts. We sent helpers out to walk those and send them out to the road to get them

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into the chipper. What we have been thinking about doing is coming up with a plan in the future because this could be a large thunderstorm. We could be in the same position again. We're looking at different ways to potentially have a storm contract that we can use, contracts from the city since we don't require an outage to go get it and maybe use that contract to have people assist on that so our tree trimmers, I've got any civil engineer contractor, manager looking into procurement to see how we could set that up. So that's some of the stuff we're doing and try to assist. >> Thank you. And then for my colleagues who are facing the issue of the aftermath of the vegetation management on those lines, we're working closely with Austin energy and neighborhood meetings

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and other things. Part of the success of this program is folks understanding how Austin energy's proposing to approach vegetation management and bringing the community on-board to facilitate that process. One of the reasons it takes so long is the neighbors to understand what's going on so that it can be done in an efficient way. When you don't have that buy-in, it's harder to get it done in a timely basis. We're, would go with Austin energy to speed that up. Thank you. >> We appreciate it. >> Okay. >> Thank you, mayor, councilmembers. >> Thank you. Jackie, can you answer the question? I know you've talked about this before, about the question of -- let me

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first say that you and your staff are working incredibly hard. I just want to emphasize and reiterate what you said in your opening. Everybody in your group seemed to be out all of the time. I know that for all the frustration people have because they didn't have power, that frustration was most keenly felt by your folks working really fast, working in the dark, and of 010 times -- oftentimes working in risky situations, I think. So thank you to you and your staff for that. As we go forward, is there an opportunity to be able to a a gist -- adjust the circuits in our city so we have less non-critical load on our critical circuits such that we can keep those

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critical circuits on and have more of the city not on critical, that we have the ability to turn off if it makes sense to do that? >> Mayor, thank you for that question. As we are doing our after-action report, this is

one of the things that we're looking at, and we will be evaluating how we manage that and better -- or better able to serve our customers. One of the challenges that we have and we're not alone in this. Other communities were in the same situation. We do have a very dense service area for the most part and we have critical loads spread throughout. So, you know, managing that without having duplication of power lines serving territories, being able to do that efficiently is something that we have to manage around. And so we are also working to look at, is there some way with our

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larger customers and our commercial customers to allow them to back down their consumption and their use of electricity during an event that we can count that for load shed, things that have to be worked on on that. We don't have all the solutions and answers, but we will be looking at that and including that in our after-action reporting. >> Okay. There are a lot of people eager to see that. That seems to be something that we need to find a solution for. So I'm anxious to see what that answer is because that seems to be a challenge that we can't turn off, non-critical load, when we're stressed like that. >> This was an event of such high proportion that it was not something that was included in any of the

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planning scenarios. So we had plans for circuits that we could rotate, and we had extra circuits. We call them spare circuits. But because of the way this event played out across the entire state of Texas and into neighboring states and from up in Canada down to the coast, and it happens so quickly that all of a sudden, we were out of those circuits. That's something we are looking at and will be interesting. >> Thank you. Councilmember pool. >> I was going to talk about the high-rises still lit up like Monday and Tuesday when we knew it was happening. I think I talked about general manager sergeant about that at the time. Jackie, can you remember that conversation and maybe share some of the

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reasons for -- I think it had to do with generally the facilities' managers themselves being able to get to those Ohio rise \$ & -- high-rises and shut off the lights. There were complicating factors including maybe tech hubs in those buildings that had to stay. But do you remember that conversation? >> Yes. It was challenging for us. The downtown system is on a 35,000 volt network, and it's operated -- the components of that are underground. The conditions are such that you would have to send people into vaults to be able to shut off any of those circuits, and under the conditions with the severe weather and the ice, the wet, the cold, it was not something we could do safely. We reached out to the chamber of commerce. We reached

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out to boma. We reached out to the building owners management association and others trying to get them to shut off their lights. It was very challenging and very frustrating, and something that we couldn't just operate that network and shut down down and centralize and operate that system safely under the condition. It's not designed -- it's intentionally not designed to be reliable and operated in the way that it is. But the perception and optics on that was extremely frustrating and challenging. >> Thanks. >> I'll just note on that topic, we had really important and productive discussions

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with those partners that Jackie was mentioning. So really acknowledging their willingness to engage us quickly and really make sure that they were reaching out to their members to be part of the solution because that's what we all wanted to do at this point was be part of the solution. We did have that support from those partners that she mentioned. >> Councilmember tovo. >> Can we ask questions about other things? >> Yes. >> Does anyone have questions about winterization? I wanted to touch base on -- thank you. Those photos really, I think, helped illustrate just how challenging it was for all of your staff. So thank you. I really look forward to reading the after-action report and seeing the details about what the conditions were like and how staff got out there and I just think that's a really important story. I wanted to talk on the outreach to

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medically vulnerable customers. You mentioned it again today. I wanted to ask you to elaborate a little bit on, one, I know -- excuse me. I know people opt into that and have to make themselves known. If you could provide us with some information about how many people are on that medically vulnerable list. If they were without power, what were next steps for making sure those individuals were safe? I never really heard the part two of that story, how our staff responded and what you did, if you weren't able to reach some of those individuals. >> So for that program, those customers have to have a backup plan, and that's something that is communicated and shared with us. So if we're not able to reach them, they have an emergency

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contact that we reach out to and make that contact and then make sure that their plans are implemented. I see that my deputy general manager is with us. I'm going to let them expound on that more. >> Yes. Kerry Overton. Jackie is correct that we work with those medical vulnerable customers to have existing plans in place prior to any emergency. We started our contact with those customers. There were 220 customers associated with that listed. We started our notifications and contacts as the storm was -- we were in our preparation for the storm. We reached all 200 of the 220 directly either the customer or their contact that's listed on file. We do

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outreach to them. Of the 20 that we did not hear back from, we issued a notice out to ems to do emergency wellness check, and depending on the time period that the emergency management system, as they got through the checks, there were 9 that we had to send a crew out from our field services group to make a check just because of the timing that ems was also overloaded. Only one customer had to get transported to the hospital. They chose to be there rather than staying in their house. There was no conditions, medical issues at that time. Others had declined and felt they were okay at their home. One chose to go to the hospital. >> Thanks for that. Can I make sure I captured that? I missed one little piece of that. So there are 220 individuals on the medically vulnerable

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registry. >> That's correct. >> Of the 20, you did field checks -- checks. Of the 220, one individual needed to be transported? >> Of the 220 -- it's both. >> I see. >> Yeah. Yeah. It was only one person out of the 220 total that had to be transported to the hospital. >> Wow. So does that mean the rest of them still had power, or that they didn't need -- they weren't in a situation where they felt like they needed -- me may have lost power but didn't need to be transported. >> If they lost power, they had made arrangements. Many of them, if they had lost power, we made contact with them, but they decided that the conditions were that they chose to stay at their house. They felt safe. >> Thank you very much for that and for filling us in on how staff responded in those situations where they weren't able to make

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contact and weren't able to verify that individual was okay. How do -- can you remind us just how people are able to access -- how does one get themselves on the list? What's the process and what are -- what's the threshold for being part of it? >> Yes. Our customers can sign up on our website or they can contact us through our utility call center. Those conditions are for those customers that are either on life support equipment or definition of critical illness. Those also need to be supported with a doctor's

notice supporting what that critical illness is. We would do a review within our caps organization. They will be managed directly through this team providing outreach

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services to make sure they are going through the application process all the way through the point they are on on the medical vulnerable list or given a reason why they cannot be placed on that list. >> Thanks very much. Thank you for that information. >> The number is 494-9400. 5 12-49 9 99 -- >> Thank you support supporting them year-round, not just during emergencies. >> Thank you very much. >> Any more questions? Cathy? >> I'm sorry. Nobody else has any other

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questions? So one issue I would like to explore either here -- I have some others, but I think they are reasonably easy to address in the property. You are probably addressing them in the report, which is why I'm not raising them. I'm not sure how much of a problem it turned out to be and that kind of thing. But I am interested in answering a question. I know many of the public were asking at the time and since. About the load shed required of surrounding municipalities or other municipalities in the area. It sounded like in many cases, other municipalities were able to rotate and seemed to have just much more requirements for that. I'm wondering if you could address that. It seemed like -- was it that the amount benefit from some of those smaller municipalities was not great and that's why the cities seemed to

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have borne more of the responsibility for -- more of the requirements for that load shed? If you could address that. It may be a misconception that the requirements seemed to be much less for those municipalities or there may be a reason why that was the case. But just wanted to ask you to address that. >> So a number of the communities are wholesale customers of another provider. So that then the load shed requirement that they have gets spread across a bigger footprint. They are more spread out. They don't have as much critical load on their systems. So there were multiple communities that were impacted because of the inability to rotate outages, which as I mentioned in my opening

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remarks, they are controlled outages. I think that there is misunderstanding that's out there, but Boston energy was not the only utility that was challenged in being able to rotate outages. >> Yeah. I completely understand that and know that some of the other large cities -- I mean, it sounds like all of the other large cities were really impacted, and I'm going to try to reach that new phrase, too, which is more descriptive of the actual circumstances. I'm not sure why the smaller areas may not have been impacted at all or been able to rotate. Some might be wholesale customers or over a large territory so it gets spread out more so I'll have to think through that. They may not have

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critical loads that would have to be on their system. They didn't have critical loads next Lee and -- necessarily so it was easy to rotate because they didn't have to maintain power the whole time. >> That's correct. >> Thank you. >> Okay. Anything else on Boston energy? Thank you so much. Thank you to your staff. Look forward to you will a the reports at the end -- to all of the reports at the end. >> Thank you, and thank you for your support. >> Absolutely. I think now we move to the Austin water manager. >> Thank you, mayor and council and they are on the line. They are just going to be moved over. We do have the director who'll lead off this presentation as soon as he gets over.

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>> Okay. >> Hello. I have the assistant director here available today and happy to answer any questions that you may have. >> Okay. Thank you. Colleagues, questions on Austin water? Cat T he -- >> I have some. Why don't we start by talking about -- I know we've talked about consumption and how quickly -- not consumption, but the dropping. How quickly the water situation became dire and that early on or when you started to get the numbers, you actually sent somebody to verify it because it had dropped. So the resources had dropped so dramatically. I don't know if you had an opportunity to see the questions I posted on the message board today.

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I'll read the one. At the water forward task force briefing, there was a question about how consumption during the winter storm compared to the average summer comparison. It seemed to be and it may be a misunderstanding, but it seemed to be that the consumption was pretty comparable. Is that accurate? Was that an accurate understanding of that conversation and then if so, why was the storage issue -- why was the storage at the reservoirs so depleted during the winter storm. Do you remember that conversation? >> I think I can narrate that a little bit. >> Thank you. >> So I think there were some fundamental differences between the use patterns we saw during the winter storm emergency and the typical use patterns we would see during a typical winter but also if you compare it to a

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summer day, I think there was a lot of differences there. I'll try to kind of communicate that a bit. In a typical, say, demand day, you go through cycles. You would have increased demand in the morning and then it tapers off and then there is another peak in demand in the evening as people are coming home from working taking showers. In summer, that can be amplified because of irrigation and cooling is part of that. You always plan for your peak days to happen in the summer. That was flipped upside down with this storm. We had peak days and peak hour demands in the winter. One of the big differences was, the peak on that Tuesday into Wednesday morning and afternoon, it really >> It really never abated, the

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peak continued to climb, you might recall from our graph, we hit a peak hourly pump paneling rate of 327 million-gallons a day on an hourly rate, and the only thing that stopped that from climbing is our storage system, our reservoirs, essentially started to empty. And, really, you know, I think as we've been communicating a combination of every day demand but also this intense demand from all of the burst pipes across the system. And certainly not just the public side. I think as we're now several months into it, it's a little bit unknowable in total, there were certainly tens of thousands of burst pipes. We saw a kind of sustained peak that really didn't cycle down and continue to climb throughout the day and ultimately depleted our storage. Typically your storage would go down during a morning peak but the peak would abate and you would be able to rebuild your storage, which is what we do every day. We go through those kind of

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cycles. I will say also, the utility is not configured to meet peak demands in the middle of winter. We do the bulk of our maintenance on our plants and some of our reservoirs during the winter months. Really December, January and February are our lowest use months, and February particularly is our average lowest use month, and so we use that time to do a lot of our maintenance. And that was one of the things that we're going to be working through in the after-action, is how do we approach maintenance in a world where you have to meet peak demand, not only in the summer, but maybe in the spring or the fall because of a flooding and an event like we experienced in 2018 and now during the winter. I think that's going to take a different approach to how we go about maintenance in our plants and we've started to start to think through that. Similarly, in our storage systems, we often take some of our storage systems down, our tanks, to inspect them and

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clean them, what we would call recoat them or repaint them, that that is also something we do in cold weather months and another area that we're going to have to think about recycling or rethinking some of our maintenance. Maybe even deferring some maintenance that we would normally do until we can add additional storage across our system. I think the other challenge with meeting the winter storm emergency demand is we experienced significant freeze damage to our plants. You know, we've updated the council on some of that in the past, and even some of our piping systems that were insulated against winter freezing ultimately experienced freezing. And so that's some work that we're going to have to evaluate as how to strengthen that winterization. Another aspect of our operations in the winter that we experienced is our ability to restart a basin was inhibited with the winter storm. Water systems, chemicals are

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not as effective during highly cold weather events, and we face some challenges there. Also, we typically, when we have a basin for maintenance, we have it dewatered. I mean, we're working in there and our crews are down there and we don't have water, and in the summer, if we have to restart a basin, if it's not down for a capital improvement, we can often fill it with water and start it in production pretty rapidly. We had some problems with that during this winter storm with the basins being dewatered, again, they experienced additional freeze damage from the water not being an insulating part of that. And so that was another lesson that we learned is we're going to have to have our basins filled with water, even if they're not in operation during the wintertimes so we can restart them and lower the risk of freeze damage. So I know that's a long answer to the question, but -- but it was -- you know, it was a combination of those factors that we experienced.

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>> Tovo: Yeah, thanks for that. I mean, some of it we'd certainly addressed before in terms of the burst pipes and how that happened all of a sudden, but I appreciate you walking us through the demand difference, how the peak demand looked different during this event than it does in the summer and the replenishment, but also the issue about the maintenance. >> I think the upshot is we're going to have to work towards having more capacity available at our plants and in our storage systems year round. That, again, historically we would do our maintenance in the winter and even in the fall or spring, but with these kind of all season risks, we're going to need to rethink that, and that's probably going to mean additional dollars. We started a little bit of that with some outside contractors coming in and helping us do maintenance faster, cleaning things faster where we can cycle them through, you know, instead of maybe being down for a month, maybe it's only down for a couple of weeks, and I think those are more areas that we're going to have to

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examine. Councilmember R Ellis? >> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. Director mazaros, I really appreciate the leaks map that is online. I know that is something that has been interesting to see, you know, some of the information that maybe wasn't as publicly accessible previously, is now something that people can go and look at all the time and understand if there's an issue that's just affecting them or if there's some bigger situation. And I also appreciate a while back in one of these meetings that we had you shared a graphic that had kind of a generalized system plan of which section people are in the water system and kind of which elevation they are. I would love to see something like that online kind of in realtime. Are we full? Did something go offline and we need to wait? I think it could do a lot to ease the concerns of individuals who may find themselves in a situation where the water's not coming back on as quickly as they want it to. And as we talk about the system stores and the water

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treatment plants and other things that, you know, just a big city's going to have to deal with. There's going to be freezing, there could be bad weather, there could be other situations that knock things offline or just other -- other situations where we may find that things are taken offline and people need more information. And I think it would be really great to have something interactive that's updating in realtime to kind of let people know a little bit more information about water outages. Do you think that's something that's possible to do? >> Yes, we concur having more visibility in the status of the system, you know, more, as you mentioned, you know, where there's an outage, the extent of the outage, where we know about leaks, the status of those leaks. You know, more transparency into the system. That's a part of our evaluation process, and we're already formulating steps to make that an improved part of our utility. >> Ellis: Okay.

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That would be great. I won't get too specific about what it should look like, because I know people on the back end are probably thinking through that and trying to figure that out. As far as water utilities are concerned, is there kind of a best practice of backup water options like bottles of water? I know there's the partnership between the emergency operations center and we've kind of talked about it in their planning as well, but are there any utility best practices to try if something happens where people don't have drinking water available that the utility also has a backup plan? Or how -- how does that relationship work? >> Well, I think, as you mentioned, partnering with homeland security emergency management and others to build a more ready capability, I think the best practice would be to have more resources available, have our own potable water trucks, tankers, potable water storage totes,

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more bottled water already stored and ready for distribution. I think the model we've been using is to call up those services on an as-needed basis and the model we need to switch to is having those services and resources already secured and ready to go. Particularly in this emergency, when you had an entire region, an entire state experiencing this, the ability to get potable water trucks and totes and bottle water was significantly curtailed given the demands and having those things in place beforehand, kind of a resiliency warehouse supply, that that's the best practice we want to work towards. >> Ellis: I think that's quite important, especially given that it could be portions of, you know, the extreme parts that are hard to travel to, like far southwest d8 and far northwest d6, just might be a consideration on top of the other considerations that I know that you already have. And I will just close by

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saying thank you to assistance director. I was texting her at hours I would not expect her to respond at and she was. I know there were a lot of people stepping up to try to make everything happen that they possibly could, but thank you. >> You bet. I don't think Anna slept for a week. >> Ellis: I would believe that. >> Mayor Adler: We all add our thanks. Councilmember kitchen? >> Kitchen: Yes, and I just warranted to say thank you also, and also build a little bit on some of the conversations that we've been having at the committee and other places is that the additional visibility on the Ami system, for example, and the rolling out of the Ami system, which is -- I always forget, advanced metering infrastructure, but the fact that that gives individuals such a better idea of what

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their use is and a way in which to monitor and detect if there are problems, I appreciate the efforts that have been made and the additional rollout that's going to be occurring. So just to ask you to keep in mind if there's a need for assistance in accelerating that rollout, that's something to continue to talk about. I know y'all are moving quickly and we talked about that some last week, I guess, but that one as well as other recommendations out of water forward, I think that what we've just experienced also highlights the importance of that water forward plans and the different initiatives that are under way. And I'm not sure how visible those are at the moment to the public. You know, it's a multiyear long plan and so people tend to forget what we have going

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on to implement those -- those improvements, and so -- I just suggest, you know, continued connecting people back to understanding what's already in the works that can help meet these kinds of challenges, I think, is important. So I just wanted to add that. >> Thank you, councilmember. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Anything else on water? Kathy? >> Tovo: Yeah, I had just a quick question, and it kind of relates to the Ami, which I think is really -- is really pretty exciting, and I'm -- I think that will also help empower individuals and customers with information they need to maybe even detect leaks, like I found I had a leak after the storm. You know, after it was not an obvious one, but likely resulted from some of the cold, so... But I did want to ask, as we -- we've talked a little bit about some of the

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looking ahead issues -- sorry, I'm having trouble finding my list now here. Where did it go? Some of the other items on the looking ahead issue, but I did want to ask you what your plans are for -- are you going to change the way in which you share information about preparation? So, for example, we have talked a little bit about shutting off water and how -- I know there was conversation and information coming out of Austin water about how to -- how to locate your -- the meter shutoff near the street. Many people probably didn't have that tool in advance that allows you to actually open the lid and turn it off, but I want to invite you to talk about what -- what are some of the ways in which you are going to educate your customers that you might not have contemplated before, and what means are you going to use to educate them? And some that -- you know, some of the items that I think -- at least some of us

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learned a lot about as a result of this were those, you know, how do you find your shutoff, what kinds of tools can you have on hand that would help you, that would enable you to do that? Can you treat -- can you -- if you're doing rainwater collection, can you treat rainwater collection to potable standards? Should you fill up a bathtub? You know, these are all the questions, some of which you answered during the time and some are maybe part of a new education campaign. So what are your intents as far as additional or expanded or different kinds of community education, either in advance of an emergency or during an emergency? >> Well, I think a few thoughts there. It's important that we communicate in advance of emergencies. I think that, you know, one of the lessons that we have, the more people understand what to do before you're in an emergency circumstance, when the system is, say, most vulnerable, that -- that's not

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the time to be prepared, trying to get people prepared and understanding what to do ahead of time is certainly the goal. And councilmember, you know, I think you're hitting on some of the topics that we've

been thinking about targeting is -- is improved videos and online content that's available at all times for, say, how you turn off the water at the property. A lot of customers, you know, maybe go decades without ever having to do that, and you don't want to figure that out when there's a huge leak in front of your house or at your house, that you want to know how to do that before -- you know, how to locate it, what tools you need. It may be buried. I mean, it may be hard to locate. I mean, these are on the private side. And so giving customers advanced information about how to do those things, I think, is important. We would like improved guidance on faucet dripping. That's one of the things we want to work through is, you

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know, what does it mean to drip a faucet and what's the difference between dripping and streaming? You don't have to do that for all faucets, just ones that are more at risk and how we communicate that. I think we'd also like to communicate other ways customers can protect their private plumbing without running water through faucet dripping. For example, something as simple as being insulators for your outside hose Bibbs that you put -- instead of running a hose bibb, turning it on and running it, insulate it, wrap a rag around it or there's little insulating things you can buy. Doing more education and videos and web content of those kind of nature, I think, are the things that we would like to do. Also, I think, in advance is educating when we're coming up to a period that might be high risk for, say, like another winter storm and ideally if people, say, wanted to fill a

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bathtub of water just in case, it's better to do that before the storm than right during the middle of the worst of the storm when our system is most vulnerable. And in trying to work through, you know, how to communicate with customers on how to prepare for that, how much water to have available. Maybe you have some jugs of water, maybe -- you know, councilmember, you might have mentioned this in a previous discussion, you know, providing additional guidance like, you know, every home might want to have 10-gallons of water available. I know one of your questions was, you know, how even to use other sources of water, like rainwater. You know, generally, any source of water that's boiled can be used for potable purposes. So if you have rainwater at your house and you boil it, it's -- it's essentially potable. You know, some of those instructions, even simple things. Now, I'm getting a little out here, but if any of you have ever backpacked you know there are small water filters, nano

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filters that you can put any nonpotable water through and you can create potable water by squeezing them through these filters. Again, educating folks that that's something they can do to be prepared is

have a small little nano filter. They only cost 30 bucks at your house or your apartment. That's another way potentially that we may do things. Again, I'm just talking stream of consciousness here a little bit. Those are things that we'll refine and be ready for the next winter. >> Thanks, director mazaros. And we did talk about some of the water storage and just as you suggested we did talk about in terms of preparing the community for what they might want to have on hand. And, you know, I wonder -- it seems like it would be good to do this a few times a year, because one of the things that happened right before the storm is that various hardware stores sold out of those little insulation things. And the same is true with the

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keys to open and turn off your water valve at the street. You know, those were also sold out, at least right after for a while. It took me a little bit to locate one of those gadgets that you can open your water shutoff thing with. So, you know, I guess I would just encourage you as you're thinking through how to communicate, if we could do it a couple times a year so we don't have a run on the stores for these pieces of equipment that people are encouraged to kind of get them -- get them in advance, which allows you to budget for them, too, although some of them we're talking about, I think that little shutoff tool was six, something, it was under \$7, as I recall. But, you know, it allows people both to budget for those emergency supplies but also to get them at different times of the year so that we're not all heading to the store the week before a winter storm to try to get everything we need. But I like -- I like the thoughts that you -- the way in which you're thinking about how you can educate different ways through videos and other

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means, and certainly would expect our utility bills to also be one way of kind of driving people to either those online videos or to other sources, since that's something we're all receiving every month. >> Councilmember, it's a great point. I think, you know, back to Ami, beyond the actual meter at your house that will replace with a digital device, the portal that we keep talking about is operational now, and that can reach all customers. We can use your e-mail and your mobile number that's in our regular billing system and use this portal software to communicate with you and so you don't have to have the new meter for the portal to work. And so -- and as you know from our previous discussions, the portal, we used it -- we sent out nearly -- I think it was over 500,000 e-mails and phone calls through the portal. So I think what we can do throughout the year is use that portal even to communicate to people hey, you know, it's the fall, it's

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September, October, now is the time for you to be thinking about the winter and maybe, you know, buy your turnoff tool or buy your insulators, kind of like more of a regular annual reminder through various technologies that people -- we're not just asking them to pull it from our website, that we're pushing it into them. >> Tovo: That's great. Councilmember R Ellis? >> Ellis: Sorry, I thought I saw you say Allison. A total random idea I just had, but if those devices to turn the water on and off are that cheap, that could be a good promotional item for Austin water. It might help in the long run to be able to reach people and teach them how to use it, and that just could be something to keep in your hat if that's ever an option. If they are that affordable, it seems that something we'd be able to do to educate people how to use them and have the tool. >> You know, a lot of your

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turnoffs, you don't need a special tool. A lot of the turnoffs on the property side are simple just little valves that you turn, and it's not a special tool. Sometimes they can be, what they're called stop and waste valve, you turn them in a dial. So other times when they break or they're older, you might need a special tool. But I agree with you, I think there's opportunities to educate and even promote things through Austin water sponsorship of items. >> Ellis: I really appreciate that, I know it's very disappointing when people finally need to use something or can't find it or realize that tool isn't going to function for what they need. >> Yes. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, anything else on water? All right. Thank you, director. Thank you, you and your staff. >> Thank you, mayor. >> Mayor Adler: Manager, we're now concluding with just

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identification of next steps. You want to throw that open, just say what it is that you're doing on your side of the issue here? >> Sure, mayor and council. Again, really appreciate the dialogue we've had today and last week. It will inform how we're putting together the various after-action reports. As you know, many of them are coming from the specific departments, but they're all coordinated through our area and director Ortiz will be really working with all those department directors to make sure they're encapsulated in our overarching response. So I might have director Ortiz just describe that and we stand to answer any other questions you may have before we conclude today. Director Ortiz? >> Thank you, Spencer. It's very important to me that we capture every opportunity we can to learn from this event. And therefore, one of the things that we're working with, all the different city

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departments and agencies and every community agencies that we're able to identify is to look at what after-action report or hot wash that they're conducting and make sure that it's -- we're having a

consultant reach out to them and get that information and incorporate that information into after-action report as best as we can, as well as in some situations even having specific meetings with those agencies so we have a better understanding of those lessons learned and how to best incorporate them into the overall after-action report. We hope to get this report done here over the summer and be able to start working on those corrective actions with all the departments as we speak. Some of them will wait for the actual report -- we're not waiting for the report, those that weren't -- that we can go ahead and start, we're -- work has already started trying to address those areas where we can improve.

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>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Colleagues? Manager, look forward to the process. Obviously a lot of information coming from a lot of different places, community panel is going to bring a lot of information and data, also raise a lot of issues. The council conversations, both here and last week, the council conversations and the water committee and the electric utility, Austin energy committee. So we all look forward to learning as much as we can. Kathy, you want to conclude us? >> Tovo: I just had some things that I wanted to raise, and I think I had saw councilmember alter had her hand up, too. You know, just as I'm kind of looking at the notes I made for myself, one, I'm going to try to submit a lot of these questions through the Q & a, unless you don't need me to do

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that, city manager, unless you can just use what I already have. I think I have some additional ones that came up after our conversation last week, but most of these I would anticipate you are addressing, but I will take that step and kind of formally submit them. I am really interested in knowing that one overarching question, like how have we used the information from the resilience report that our city staff did on our facilities, how has that -- you know, how did that stand us in better shape to weather this storm, to face this storm, rather? And the same is true of hurricane -- of the hurricane Hugo after-action, so I hope those are going to be some of the things you're responding about what actions were implemented and which ones are being recommended. I guess what I'm thinking about what we as a council might want to focus on, I'm

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certainly interested still in better understanding what went well, you know, where some gaps were, I think part of that is going to be the community information and those stories from the community members of hurricane Harvey -- sorry, for some reason I keep saying hurricane Hugo for some reason. I'm also interested as many of you have spoken to how we build that more community resilient framework. And just some things that keep coming up is like how we train ourselves, how we train our

staff, how we train community members, how we really make a climate and a culture here in Austin of community resilience and how that spills over into the kind of preparation that our individual departments do and the kind of work that they put into community education. I think some departments are very active in that regard, and others may be less so, but a more coordinated effort might be -- might be useful and really how do we elevate the importance of that. I used to hear a lot about

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cert training, I don't hear much about cert training anymore, and that might be one platform for really making that effort. And then there's just some data level. I would imagine there's some kinds of data that are included within my questions that I think probably my colleagues share an interest in as well. In fact, maybe some of them asked these questions and I'm bedded them within mine for those -- just, for example, of those individuals who were sheltered at our city facilities, how many of them had been through coordinated assessment, for those that might not have been, did they go through coordinated assessment during their time or was there not the infrastructure and capacity to do that kind of work, where did they go once they left the shelter? Were some of them able to exit into housing or permanent shelter, some of those data points, just information that I think we can benefit from. And then, mayor, you mentioned another really important body of information which is what we know about those individuals who are housed in hotels and that experience. And then what services? You know, if we could have provided a range of services,

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what would those services have looked like and what would have been helpful. So that identification of what was challenging is going to be really useful, I think, for helping us now how to face -- how to face the next crisis. So thanks. Thanks, again, to our staff who supported this and to my colleagues who made time to come and the questions that you've raised, I think, will really help us flesh out what went well, what we need to work on and how we better prepare. I think Alison -- councilmember alter has her hand up, mayor. >> Mayor Adler: I'm muted. Sorry. Councilmember alter? Can you hear --

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>> Kitchen: You're muted, Alison. >> Mayor Adler: You just did that in solidarity, for sure. >> Alter: So thank you, Kathy, for bringing us altogether on this and I think it was important to cosponsor this request and I think it's important for us to get some of these questions both answered and have them out on the table. Mr. Ortiz, you had pretty fast in your overview of when we're getting the after-action report, so can you, one more time, tell me like the timing that we're anticipating. >> Sorry, I forget --

altses >> Alter: That's okay. >> We're working on the after-action now as we speak. We anticipate to have a finished product at some point this summer, probably early August at the latest, if not earlier. And then we'll review that and publish it before the end of the fiscal year.

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So right now, I think our goal is to look at trying to have a finished report that would be presented by the end of August, but we're meeting with the different organizations that are having after-action reports independently and we're getting their information and we'll be incorporating that into the overall report. >> Alter: Thank you. I want to echo what Kathy said about those -- the two reports that she mentioned in particular with hurricane Harvey and the climate resilient infrastructure, but I -- but I do want to add, you know, we've also been through an emergency with respect to the bomber and the water boil and there were reports from each of theirs, and frankly, we're -- I guess we're still in the emergency of the pandemic, but I would think that there's some things that had we taken the time or had the time to learn from from that, that would have also, you know, stood us in good stead.

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So, for instance, once acm, Hayden Howard mentioned earlier that their social service cabinet was useful for her within her group, and taking that sort of time to reflect. I hope that as part of this, we will also look at some of the intergovernmental coordination mechanisms and what's happening with that, and I know you have the organizations, but one of the challenges of us not having emergency training is then we're dealing with, you know, the trustees that are calling us at aid or we're calling the trustees and we don't know where to direct them and they can't go call youment or I'm getting called from the rolling wood councilmembers and there's a lot of this intergovernmental stuff where councilmembers might be able to be really helpful in addressing challenges in the community and in the wider county more quickly, but,

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again, we have to have clear knowledge and we have to have some expectation that what we're asking is both appropriate, because I think there were times when some things may not have been appropriate, but also that what we're asking is going to get a response in a timely manner so that we don't have to go to outside channels on a regular basis. And then I wanted to kind of underscore this notion that I think has echoed throughout our conversation, which is that when we are in an emergency of the size and magnitude that we experienced with the storm, as with the pandemic, the city is one player. We are an important player in our community's response, but we cannot be the only one. And it is a very dangerous notion for people to assume that the city is the only

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actor that can or must take responsibility moving forward. So I really think to the extent that we can think about how do we build these muscles for the community response, how do we make sure there are a significant number of leaders in the community who have connections that are geared towards this sort of emergency response, and that we can, you know, marshal them in times of need to help the community. I think there's some interesting things and ways that we can think about that. You know, the resilience hubs is one, and, again, I will go back to our climate emergency declaration which deals with a lot of this preparedness and other kinds of things, but, you know, there are many of these climate disasters where the individual response just as in the pandemic, that individual response to keep

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you safe is way more important than anything that the city does. And so I think it's worth us having our resilience officer really spending some time thinking about how we build that. I've been reviewing the reimagining public safety task force recommendations in greater detail, and, you know, a lot of what they're, you know, recommending in that is creating capacity at the community level to meet needs, that the city either isn't the right person -- isn't the right actor to meet those needs or otherwise, so I don't yet have a plan of, you know, exactly how we do this, but I think we need to think seriously in our after-action about, you know, what could the city do to help seed and cultivate those actions of which we have plenty in our city and our community has

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demonstrated over and over again, but we do have parts of the community that would benefit from either greater community action in those times of need. Thank you. >> Councilwoman alter, you said it very well. I think there's -- when we have a disaster of this magnitude, there's plenty of disaster work for everybody. The city needs to be involved in all the areas, but we don't necessarily need to lead everything. We've just got to figure out how to support our community to ensure that we can recover from those disasters as fast as we possibly can with the minimum amount of property damage and save as many lives as we can. But I -- I agree with everything you said. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues? All right. I think, then, that ends this work session. I, too, manager, think that

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one of the real opportunities we have here is figuring out how it is that we organize and expand and facilitate the community response. I trust we'll be able to really do well on all the other after-action stuff, because it fits what's normally part of the after-action, but it's real clear from this that there's an untapped potential here if there's a way for us to be able to help facilitate, organize and take advantage of it, and it's outside of our emergency variable. That said, colleagues, it is 3:50 P.M. We will adjourn this meeting. I'll see you all tomorrow in our special-called joint session with Travis -- Travis county. See you all then.