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Town of Palm Beach United Way sends \$90,000 to Bahamas to help rebuild community docks in Hope Town

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The Town of Palm Beach United Way recently sent \$90,000 to the Bahamas to help build new public docks in Hope Town. The Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties partnered with the United Way to contribute an additional \$35,000 toward the docks.

The community group Hope Town United will use the combined \$125,000 in funding to construct one temporary dock and three public docks in Hope Town. Hope Town is a small settlement on Elbow Cay, one of the most prominent cays in the Abaco region and where Hurricane Dorian first made landfall on September 1, 2019.

As Hope Town is only accessible by boat, Hope Town United Chairman Matt Winslow said rebuilding the public docks is essential.

“As the ferries recommence service, there will be an influx of residents, volunteers, skilled labor support and second homeowners who will be coming to Hope Town to begin the rebuilding process,” Winslow said. “They will all be landing at our reconstructed public docks, which is why it’s so important for us to rebuild them as soon as possible. On behalf of the entire Hope Town community, I would like to thank the Palm Beach United Way and the Community Foundation for their generous gifts which will be hugely helpful in our recovery process.”

The \$90,000 grant exhausts the Town of Palm Beach United Way’s Bahamas Recovery Fund. In total, the United Way distributed \$689,000 to six organizations. The funds are being used to rebuild docks, houses, community centers, shelters and water systems in Man-O-War Cay, Treasure Cay, Green Turtle Cay, Elbow Cay, Coopers Town and the North Abaco district of the Bahamas.

Keith Beaty, co-chairman of the committee in charge of distributing the funds, said he is pleased the committee was able to spread dollars to several different communities in the Abacos.

“All of these communities were hit hard by Dorian and it’s important to help each of them rebuild because they all contribute in unique ways to the beauty, charm and vitality of the Abacos,” Beaty said. “I thank the Palm Beach community for stepping up to support the Bahamian people and communities that mean so much to so many of us, and that have such a strong connection to South Florida.”

Other members on the Bahamas Recovery Fund Committee are Jay Boodheshwar, co-chairman, Mayor Gail Coniglio, Gary Lickle, Bill Paty, Matthew Smith and Cindy Sulzberger.

The Town of Palm Beach United Way started the Bahamas Recovery Fund in collaboration with the Town of Palm Beach in early September to support long-term recovery efforts in the Bahamas following the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian. The fund was kick-started by a \$100,000 matching grant from John and Jana Scarpa followed by a \$50,000 matching grant from The Matthew and Tracy Smith Foundation and a \$100,000 matching grant from the Cathleen McFarlane Foundation.

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ONE COMMUNITY. ONE GOAL.