Keystone Heights City Council Meeting Sept 21,26 6pm, 2nd Rd, Millage,Bud Ord

ANYONE WISHING TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING ANY TOPIC ON THIS EVENING'S AGENDA IS REQUESTED TO COMPLETE A CARD AND RETURN TO THE CITY CLERK. SPEAKERS ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUIRED TO LIMIT THEIR COMMENTS TO THREE (3) MINUTES.
THE CITY COUNCIL PROHIBITS THE USE OF CELL PHONES AND PAGERS WHICH EMIT AN AUDIBLE SOUND DURING ALL MEETINGS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE AND RESCUE OR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ON CALL. PERSONS IN VIOLATION WILL BE REQUESTED TO LEAVE THE MEETING.

"Please turn off cell phones"

Date: Sep 21 2026 (6pm)

Call to Order

1. Call to Order-Mayor Nina Rodenroth

Mayor Nina Rodenroth called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Invocation

2. Invocation, Jamie Booth, City Manager

City Manager James Booth led the meeting in an invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

3. Pledge of Allegiance-Vice Mayor Welch

Vice Mayor Dave Welch led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

4. Roll Call-James Booth, City Manager: Councilman Ryan Knight, Vice Mayor Dave Welch, Councilman Dan Lewandowski, Mayor Nina Rodenroth, Councilman Brandon Ludwig

City Manager James Booth called the roll:
Councilman Ryan Knight-present
Vice Mayor Dave Welch-present
Councilman Dan Lewandowski-present
Mayor Nina Rodenroth-present
Councilman Brandon Lewandowski-present

Public Hearing

5. Final Reading of Fiscal Year (FY) 26/27 Millage and Budget Ordinances

- 1_Ordinance 2026-620_ Millage 2026.docx
- 2_Ordinance 2026-621_Budget 2026.docx
- 3_20260909_ Draft FY26_27 Budget.pdf
- 4_ KH Property Tax Analysis Mil Rate Increase September 2026.xlsx

Mayor Nina Rodenroth opened the Public Hearing for the Millage Rate and Budget.

Councilman Brandon Ludwig made a motion to have the millage rate ordinance read by short title.
Vice Mayor Dave Welch provided a second.
Vote: 5-0; motion passed

City Attorney Rich Komando read the ordinance by short title.

Public Comments:
1. Dr. Geraldine Robbins, 34 SE Nelson's Point, Keystone Heights, FL
Dr. Geraldine Robbins stated that the council should not increase taxes.

2. Dr. John Zieser, 505 SE Palmetto Ave. Keystone Heights, FL
Dr. John Zieser stated that if $10k is digital dust, then let us have it. He asked the council to consider the rollback rate. For future annexations, he recommended annexing homes on existing paved roads.
Mayor Nina Rodenroth closed the public comments.

Councilman Brandon Ludwig moved to adopt the current rate of 3.6073 mills.
Vice Mayor Dave Welch seconded the motion.

Discussion:
Councilman Brandon Ludwig remains concerned about the increasing cost of health care insurance (14% in the fiscal year FY26/27 budget).
Vice Mayor Dave Welch stated that $10K is a small but symbolic amount, as all costs are going up, so the city budget should have an increase.
Councilman Ryan Knight stated that the city needed to titrate away from property taxes and that we should deliver a tax reduction or rolled back rate. He stated that over the next few years we need to find an alternative source of revenue.
Councilman Lewandowski stated that he very much disagrees that property taxes do not matter and disagrees with property taxes going away.
Mayor Nina Rodenroth does not disagree with Councilman Knight but stated we need to operate on what we currently know and open other options in the future.

Vote by Roll
Seat #1 Councilman Ryan Knight-Nay
Seat #2 Vice Mayor Dave Welch-Yea
Seat #3 Councilman Dan Lewandowski-Yea
Seat #4 Councilman Brandon Ludwig-yea
Seat #5 Mayor Nina Rodenroth-yea
Motion passed by roll call vote 4-1 at 6:37 pm

Mayor Nina Rodenroth opened the hearing on the tentative budget.

Councilman Brandon Ludwig motioned to have the budget ordinance read by short title.
Vice Mayor Dave Welch provided the second.

Rich Komando, City Attorney, read the ordinance by short title.

Public Comment:
Dr. Geraldine Robbins stated the council is only discussing revenue but not reductions in expenses. She asked if the city was tracking attendance and the cost of events and if the city could make the events profitable like Albuquerque's Hot Air Balloon Festival. She also reminded the council of Davy Crockett's "it's not yours to give speech."
Mayor Nina Rodenroth closed public comments.

Councilman Brandon Ludwig made a motion to approve the budget.
Vice Mayor Dave Welch made the second.

Discussion:
Councilman Dan Lewandowski then stated that the fiscal year budget can be changed through amendment and requested feedback as we move through the year.
Councilman Ryan Knight stated he does not support the FY26/27 budget for the same reasons presented in the millage discussion.

Vote by Roll:
Seat #1 Councilman Ryan Knight-Nay
Seat #2 Vice Mayor Dave Welch-Yea
Seat #3 Councilman Dan Lewandowski-Yea
Seat #5 Councilman Brandon Ludwig-Yea
Seat #4 Mayor Nina Rodenroth-Yea
Motion passed by roll call vote-4-1, at 6:47 pm

Public Comment

6. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Consent agenda-

7. City Council Meeting Minutes Sept 14, 2026 6pm

City Council Meeting Sept 14 minutes.pdf

Councilman Dan Lewandowski moved to approve the consent agenda.
Councilman Brandon Ludwig provided the second.
Vote 5-0, all in favor motion approved.

8. Friends of Keystone New Years Eve Special Event Fireworks

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Councilman Dan Lewandowski made a motion to approve the consent agenda.
Councilman Brandon Ludwig provided the second.
Vote: 5-0, all in favor; motion approved.
Sent Mrs. Debbie Beals an e-mail informing her of the approval.

Action Item

9. Clay Electric Easement for Keystone Heights Airport Turn Lane Project

20260820_Sketch of Description_Clay Electric Easement_KHA Turn Lane Project.pdf

Scan 2026-8-20 (15,53,58).pdf

Scan 2026-8-20 (15,53,35).pdf

CIty Manager James Booth stated he would like to withdraw this agenda item, as we had not received all the necessary documents.
Councilman Ryan Knight made a motion to table the action item.
Vice Mayor Dave Welch provided a second.
Vote 5-0, all in favor, motion approved.

City Attorney Report-Rich Komando

10. City Attorney Report-Rich Komando

City Attorney Rich Komando had no comments but yielded his time to the city manager. City Manager Jamie Booth stated that 15 city challenge coins had been provided to each council member to recognize excellence, contributions to the city, or support of the city. 25 coins have been held in reserve for the council to use throughout the rest of the year. Staff requests that council members provide names and reasons for presentation of the coins for simple tracking purposes. City Hall will be closed on Friday to allow for two heating and air-conditioning units to be replaced on the roof. The next city council meeting will be held on Monday, October 5th.

City Council Comments

11. City Council Comments

Councilman Dan Lewandowski stated that he had attended the Northeast Florida League of Cities (NEFLC) board meeting and dinner the previous week. NEFLC will be suspending membership dues and grants to 501(c)3 organizations in FY26/27 due to fiscal pressures on member cities.
Mayor Nna Rodenroth summarized her attendance at the NEFLC dinner and the City's Fall Festival held Saturday. She said Drew Bell, Events Director, had knocked herself out making it an excellent event.

Adjournment

12. Adjournment, Mayor Nina Rodenroth

Mayor Nina Rodenroth adjourned the meeting at 6:59 pm

Meeting Adjourned: