

City of Keystone Heights City Council

Strategic Planning Workshop - February 20, 2025

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"

Call to Order: Mayor Rodenroth called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Nina Rodenroth, Vice Mayor Christine Thompson, Councilman Tony Brown, Councilman Elston "Speedy" Kussler and Councilman Dan Lewandowski

Absent:

Date: Feb 20 2025 (2:00 PM)

Public Comment

1. Public Comment

No public comments were given.

Topics of Discussion: Strategic Planning

2. Welcome and Introductions (10 Minutes)

- ☞ [Instructions for Prep Work--Keystone Heights.pdf](#)
- ☞ [Vision, Mission, Core Values Prep Work-Day 1.pdf](#)
- ☞ [Strategic Planning Prep Work--Day 2.pdf](#)

Facilitator Jeff Hendry, Director, Florida Institute of Government introduced himself and gave a brief overview of the Strategic Planning process that the Council will be participating in.

3. Overview of Objectives/Goals for the Day (10 Minutes)

Mr. Hendry spoke about the goals and objectives for the day.

Councilman Lewandowski stated he wants to target the largest priorities for the City itself.

Vice Mayor Thompson stated she would like to see the Council come together and agree on a Vision/Mission statement.

Mayor Rodenroth stated that it have been a few years since the Strategic Plan has been updated and she would like to embrace the community and see more individuals come to visit. Mayor Rodenroth would like to make Keystone Heights more of a destination for family recreation.

Councilman Brown stated that he believes we should be looking at infrastructure as traffic has more than doubled and he would like to see if we could provide relief for the community.

Councilman Kussler stated that he believes the Lake Geneva Park needs to be updated to ADA compliance, Geneva Jungle needs to be updated and the whole area needs to be updated for safety.

Councilman Lewandowski echoed Councilman Kusslers suggestion and added that he believes anything to do with "water" should be looked at. Keystone Heights was built because of the lakes and he believes it is a very important part of the community. Infrastructure is also large concern such as a septic to sewer transition and street flooding issues. There are several planned developments upcoming and how will that be handled with the increase of population.

Mayor Rodenroth discussed the population and stated that she believes we should focus on the citizens that reside in the city.

Councilman Brown stated he believes the CBDG grants could be used for the septic to sewer. Councilman Brown stated there is nothing here for the kids; such as a trade that would allow these young residents to obtain jobs to stay local. He stated that the building on Commercial Circle would be ideal for a trade school. He believes we should increase our commercial and industrial businesses within Keystone Heights.

Mayor Rodenroth spoke about the vocational school that is located in Melrose and spoke about the airport and some of the classes they offer that would benefit the community. She stated she would like to have a recreation center for the youth. She stated infrasture such as parking for everyone; a designated location for a parking area. Mayor Rodenroth also stated there is a need for retail within the city and would like to see an increase in that.

Councilman Brown spoke about annexation and the past experience with that. He stated that the city does not have services and we don't have alot to offer currently to entice annexation.

Mayor Rodenroth stated that the calmness and peace of Keystone Heights. She does agree that traffic is an issue.

City Manager Van Zant stated that most people claim all of Keystone Heights wether they live in the city limits or not.

Vice Mayor Thompson stated she worked at NAS Jax and stated when she would arrive home to Keytone is was a breath of fresh air and felt peace and comfort.

Mayor Rodenroth stated that the communtiy is very safe; our children walk to school and the community can safely walk at night.

Councilman Lewandowski stated he believes Keystone Heights is a bedroom community.

Mr Hendry reminded Council that the Airport is a huge asset to them and it could be looked into.

[4. Review of Council Work to Date \(10 Minutes\)](#)

[5. SWOT Exercise: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats \(55 Minutes\)](#)

Mr. Hendry stated Council will be identifying strengths of your community / city government as well as weaknesses. Threats to the city such as growth around the city itself.

Strengths:

Councilman Lewandowski stated:

1. Lakes
2. Airport
3. Churches
4. Schools
5. Camps
6. SOLO

Vice Mayor Thompson:

1. Citizens
2. Clay County support

Councilman Brown

1. Staff at the City

Mayor Rodenroth stated that most business have a positive outlook on the community.

City Manager Van Zant stated that businesses are very supportive.

Mayor Rodenroth:

1. Staff at the City
2. Citizens
3. Heritage
4. Civic Groups
5. Patriotic

Weaknesses:

Councilman Lewandowski

1. Keystone Heights is the forgotten part of Clay County (we fend for ourselves)
2. have more wants and needs then money to cover
3. lack of follow thru
4. loss of property values

City Manager Van Zant

1. Not finishing projects

Mayor Rodenroth

1. Community engagement

Vice Mayor Thompson:

1. So much that needs to happen with the lakes before they fill completely

Opportunity:

Councilman Brown

1. work with the County

Councilman Lewandowski

1. work with the County, FFA, TPO
2. benifits that could come from the airport
3. working with the school district
4. Septic to Sewer
5. Heritage Commission Chautauqua
6. Growth

Mayor Rodenroth

1. Clay County Economic Development relationship

Threats

Councilman Lewandowski

1. Growth
2. Growth of the surrounding areas
3. wealth transfer of the water

Mayor Rodenroth
Engineer Jamie Booth

1. growth in the state of Florida and water availability
Councilman Brown stated Clay County has a lobbyist and perhaps we should work with them.

6. Differentiation Between Vision and Mission Statements (15 Minutes)

Council participated in an activity regarding the vision statement and had discussion.
Councilman Lewandowski suggested a tri-fold regarding the trail head be created.
Council participated in an activity regarding the mission statement and had discussion.

7. Vision Statement Development (30 Minutes)

8. Mission Statement Development (45 Minutes)

9. Core Values Development (30 Minutes)

Council participated in an excersice regarding Core Values.

10. Review of Goals for Day 2: (5 Minutes)

Mr. Hendry provided review goals for day two.

Meeting Adjourned:

Mayor Rodenroth adjourned the meeting at 5:39 PM.