

MINUTES
KEYSTONE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
555 S. Lawrence Blvd., Keystone Heights, Florida
Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 10:00 am

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 MANAGER. 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.

Invocation led by: Councilman T. Brown

Pledge of Allegiance led by: Mayor Rodenroth

Roll Call: City Clerk - Present: Mayor Rodenroth, Vice Mayor Thompson, Councilman Brown, Councilman Lewandowski, Councilman Hart.

1. Public Comments – None

Vice Mayor Thompson discussed with the council that she would like to present an offer to the present City Manager, Lynn Rutkowski to continue in her position. Discussion followed.

Councilman Hart made a motion that the matter be tabled until after the interviews today. Councilman Lewandowski seconded. Passed 5:0.

Council members contacted the references that each candidate gave prior to today's interviews. Discussion followed regarding the results.

The interview process will be as follows: City Clerk Ms. Silva will ask each candidate the same questions. The council members will have a score sheet and rate the answer accordingly to their discretion. The score sheet is used as a tool but not to determine the candidate for the position. The council introduced themselves to the candidate. The candidate then had an opportunity tell the council about themselves before being asked the questions from City Clerk Silva.

- 2. City Manager Interview 10:00 am Elmon Lee Garner.** Mr. Garner gave a history of himself. Mr. Garner was originally from North Carolina. He retired from the Army after 20 years. Mr. Garner has a master's degree in public administration. He has been an interim City Manager. Questions were asked of Mr. Garner, then the council followed up with their questions to him.

Break for council

- 3. City Manager Interview 1:00 pm Jeff Shoobridge.** Originally from Cape Coral, Florida. He is presently living in Madison Lake, Minnesota. He was in the Navy. Mr. Shoobridge has a BA in political science and a master's in public administration. Questions were asked of Mr. Shoobridge, then the council followed up with their questions to him.

Break for council

4. **City Manager Interview 3:00 pm Charles Van Zant.** He was originally from Keystone Heights and attended high school there. He went to the Florida National Guard. Mr. Van Zant is a retired helicopter pilot. Graduate of the University of Florida. Superintendent of Clay County School District. Questions were asked of Mr. Van Zant, then the council followed up with questions to him.

Break for council

Once the council returned, Councilman Hart brought back the motion to give consideration to the present Manager, Lynn Rutkowski. Councilman Lewandowski seconded. Passed 5:0

The motion by Vice Mayor Thompson to offer \$80,000 to Manager Rutkowski and a vehicle for city use. Seconded by Councilman Hart. Passed 5:0.

Ms. Rutkowski was brought in before the council to have the offer presented to her. Ms. Rutkowski response was that she loved what she did as Manager for Keystone Heights and she has wavered back and forth on the decision, but she ultimately declined the offer.

The council accepted her decision.

Discussion followed regarding the candidates that were interviewed. Each council member discussed their pick of who they thought would be the best fit for the City Manager of Keystone Heights. Councilman Hart's choice was VanZant, Vice Mayor Thompson's choice was Shoobridge, Mayor Rodenroth's choice was Shoobridge, Councilman Lewandowski's choice was Van Zant.

Councilman Brown did not choose at this time.

Conversation followed by council. Motion was made by Councilman Hart to offer the position of City Manager to Charles Van Zant, Jr. subject to negotiations. If they fail in negotiations the offer will be rescinded and given to Jeff Shoobridge. Seconded by councilman Brown. Vote: 3:2.

Discussion followed regarding the employee package that would be offered to Mr. Van Zant. The council agreed upon \$80,000 for his salary.

Attorney Komando was directed by the council to open negotiations with Mr. Van Zant. Scored sheets were turned into the City Clerk.

Meeting Adjourned