

## CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

### STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

JULY 28, 2012

Marilyn E. Crotty, University of Central Florida, Facilitated the workshop and called it to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.

Present: Mayor Joe LaCascia, Vice Mayor Mike Blethen, Councilor Trudy Block, Councilor Don Kimsey, City Attorney Thomas Cloud and City Manager Patricia Jackson. Also present were Department Heads Mary Ellin Barrett, Kathy Delp, Charles Nichols and Pam Lawson.  
Absent: Councilor Kelly Downing.

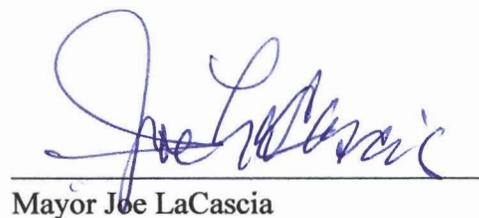
Marilyn Crotty then led City Council and staff through the Visioning Process to 2022, a list of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.), Identifying Strategic Issues, Establishing Goals, Determining Objectives and Setting Priorities.

A copy of the report is attached and made a part of the official minutes.

The workshop adjourned at 4:00 p.m.



Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk



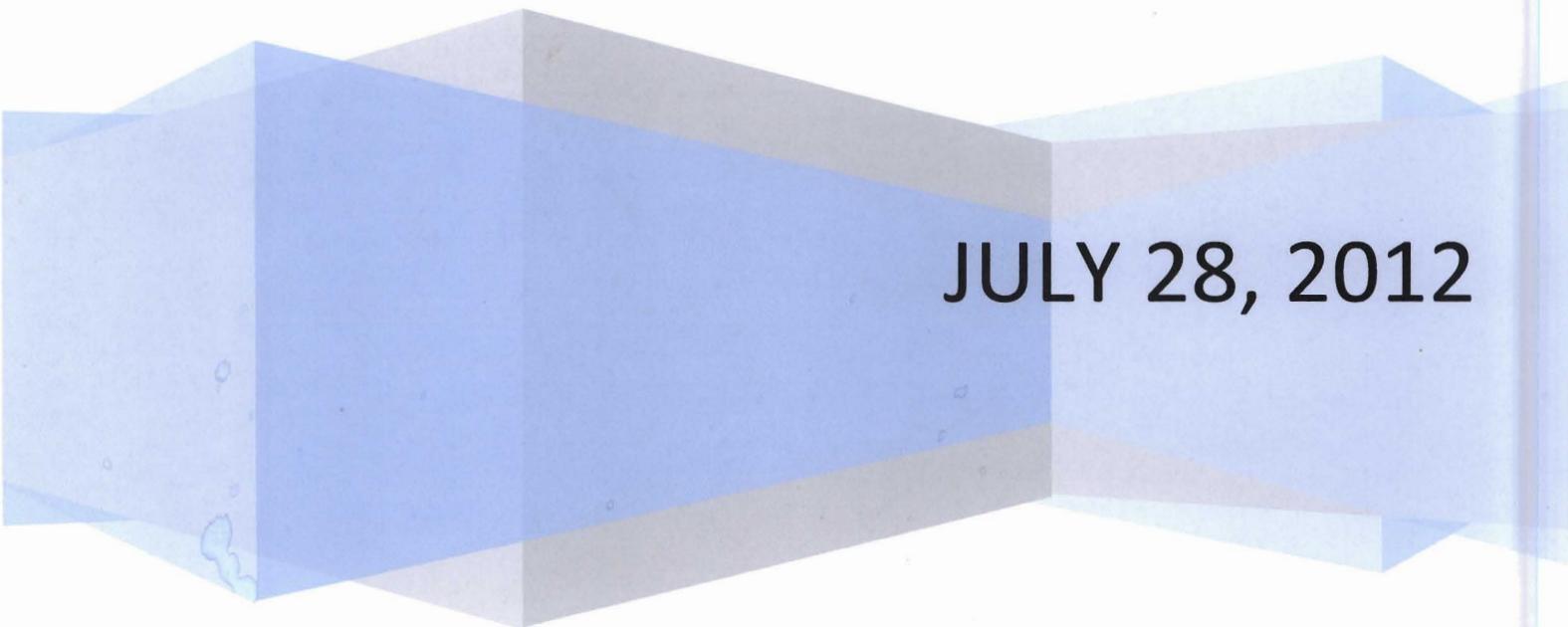
Mayor Joe LaCascia

**FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

# **CITY OF POLK CITY**

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP**

**Facilitated by Marilyn E. Crotty, University of Central Florida**



**JULY 28, 2012**

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Polk City held a Strategic Planning Workshop on July 28, 2012. Ms. Marilyn Crotty, Director of the Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida facilitated the session. The Mayor, three Council Members, and senior staff participated in the day-long workshop that was held at City Hall.

Ms. Crotty asked the elected officials to speak about their visions for the future of the city in 2022. All of the participants then assessed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Polk City.

Based on this discussion, the Council identified strategic issues that should be addressed in the next few years. The list of issues was incorporated into six goals for the city. At this time, the elected officials specified objectives under each goal and selected the priorities for implementation. The objectives receiving the most support were identified as priorities. The rest of the objectives are designated as Other Objectives.

This report is a summary of the discussions and conclusions of the workshop.

## **VISION – POLK CITY 2022**

*The Mayor and Council Members were asked to describe their visions for the future of the city ten years from now. The following comments were shared:*

Transportation is improved and there is access to the new University

You know when you are in Polk City

The city provides good utilities

There is a balanced economic situation where payment for city services is shared by all

Polk City continues as a bedroom community

There has been limited population growth, mostly in Mt. Olive North

There is a viable downtown business district with restaurants and additional stores

The City has taken advantage of opportunities provided by Polytechnic University

Polk City has maintained its small city character with additional amenities

The Van Fleet Trail and other natural resources have drawn people to the city

Industrial development has been spurred by the new university

There are work opportunities here for graduates of Poly U

Polk City has been able to take the lead and design its future as a proactive community

*The Council and staff then identified what they perceive as strengths and weaknesses of the city and its government. They also identified opportunities and threats that the city faces. The following chart is a compilation of these ideas. The number in parens ( ) next to each comment indicates how many participants made this comment.*

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Staff (4) (knowledgeable; qualified to get the job done; dedicated and hard working	High debt (3) (9.7 mil)	Planned growth (2) working together for a planned community	Bound by Auburndale and Lakeland on 2 sides preventing growth
Council (2) smart, caring city council members; strong council that has been brave enough to make the difficult decisions to move the city in a more positive financial position	Utility rates (2) high water rates	Approximately 250 lots already platted for development	Auburndale would prefer Polk City doesn't exist
Community/people (3) made up of good, hard- working people; people willing to help	Utility infrastructure; no or little system growth opportunity	Grant funding (3) available for several projects; for more recreational items as well as items for building, expanding, growth; Polk County could help city get grants for public improvements	The city's current debt is high; the city currently cannot afford to take on any more debt
Location – close to Poly U	Highest ad valorem taxes for residential and business	Existing core improvement area	MOSN development rate 20 times faster than city, both population and economically
Access to roads – I-4	Lack of revenue for additional staff	Adjacent growth in Lakeland; new roads	Effort of major residential development to seek contraction from city
New university next door	Limited resources	Capital improvements	Lakeland

Utility capacity	Lack of funds available (2) reserves	Library	Complacency
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Small town living close to big city conveniences	Limited ability to raise funds without grants or growth	Children	Limited Property area
Polk City Elementary	Staff getting caught in the middle	New university (4) within a couple of miles; have property that can accommodate housing needs which has infrastructure	Polk County could litigate the city into bankruptcy
Existing recreation facilities	Education	Education (2)	Local city limit growth
The city has a good base to work from	Not located in ideal location	Cross training city employee will limit city size and cost	State official can shut down city (D.E.O.)
Financially we are in a better place than we were	No viable labor force through education to attract any business other than warehousing	City utilities existing at most locations available for commercial development	In not having U.S. government that is not in favor of capitalism
Blank sheet – not much here yet	Inability to see need for change	Can change – business development	Individual agendas
Small city is able to change priorities	People not ready to change for future	Everyone to work together to accomplish a common goal	That we all do what we want as individuals
	Lack of agreement on where we should be going	Use this to find out what people really want	Citizens feeling that no need for existence of city

## STRATEGIC ISSUES

*The Council identified strategic issues and organized them into like categories:*

### **Financial**

- Increase revenues
- Decrease debt
- Grants

### **Infrastructure**

- Utility expansion – north, northeast
- Upgrades to utilities

### **Community Engagement**

- Two-way communication with the public
  - Education on issues
  - Encourage participation
- Structure youth programs
- Partnerships
  - Sports teams
  - Youth groups
  - Nonprofits

### **Delivery of Public Services**

- Additional consumer friendly services
- Parks and recreation

### **Economic Development**

- University connection – road, communication
- Building viable downtown
- Leverage Van Fleet Trail – positive assets, activities
- Strengthen relationship with business community, partnerships
- Embrace our history

### **Governance**

- Charter changes - Council districts
- Intergovernmental relations
  - Strengthen relationships – collaboration
  - State and federal legislators
- Current and future staffing needs
  - Retention
- Council agreement on common goals
  - Other government entities

*The Council agreed these six strategic issues were appropriate goals for the city. The Council then identified objectives under each goal. The final activity of the day was the selection of priorities. Any objective that received three or more “dots” (number of dots identified by number in ( ) in front of each initiative) is considered a priority. The rest of the objectives are listed as other. There is no significance to the order in which the goals and objectives are listed.*

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **GOAL - FINANCIAL**

#### **Priority Objectives**

- (3) Develop strategies to reduce debt
- (3) Create a realistic five year capital improvement plan that includes repairs and replacement

#### **Other Objectives**

- (2) Identify and pursue appropriate grants to support city goals
  - Develop a reserve policy

### **GOAL - INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **Other Objectives**

- (2) Develop a technology plan to address current and future needs
  - Explore the potential for extension of water and sewer lines
  - Analyze replacement of water meters with new technology
  - Implement stormwater master plan

### **GOAL – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Priority Objective**

- (3) Enhance website to allow for interaction with and from citizens

#### **Other Objectives**

(1) Reevaluate and reinvigorate the Citizen’s Advisory Board to expand its charge and increase its effectiveness

(1) Expand the newsletter by allowing for advertising – develop a plan to offset costs

Identify community groups and organizations in the city to further partnerships with the city (key contacts)

Establish Friends organization for the library

## **GOAL – PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **Other Objectives**

(1) Identify additional services or delivery methods to enhance the lives of residents – survey residents to identify skills and talents they can provide as volunteers

(1) Revisit the rules of the Activity Center to allow for expanded services

Explore possibility of adding “healthy living” opportunities and activities for adults in the city

## **GOAL – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Priority Objective**

(4) Develop and implement a marketing plan for the city

### **Other Objectives**

(1) Initiate “Complete Streets” program

Create additional community events and activities – Farmers’ Market, Founder’s Day, etc.

## **GOAL – GOVERNANCE**

### **Priority Objective**

- (3) Appoint a charter review committee for possible revisions to the city charter

### **Other Objectives**

- (2) Develop an incentive program for employees

Increase relationships/interactions with other governmental entities and leaders by both staff and Council – municipal, regional, state, federal

## **CITY OF POLK CITY PRIORITIES**

- (4) Develop and implement a marketing plan for the city
- (3) Develop strategies to reduce debt
- (3) Create a realistic five year capital improvement plan that includes repairs and replacement
- (3) Enhance website to allow for interaction with and from citizens
- (3) Appoint a charter review committee for possible revisions to the city charter