

AT AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR
GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA ON JULY 16, 2022 AT 9:00
A.M., THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:

Present: Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5
Kimblin NeSmith, Vice-Chair, District 3
Eric Hinson, District 1
Brenda Holt, District 5
Ed Dixon, County Administrator
Rob Nixon, City of Quincy Manager
Morris Young, Sheriff
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk

Call to Order, Roll Call

Chair Green welcomed everyone to the Workshop.

General Business

1. Introductions and Expectations

Mr. Dixon gave a background on what he felt the Commissioners wanted to accomplish.

Dr. Alvin B. Jackson, Jr. said a few words of introduction.

2. Strategic Thinking

The word strategy derives from the Greek word **stratagos** (which derives from two words: "stratos"-army & "ago"-which is the ancient Greek for leading/guiding/moving to and referred to a military commander during the age of Athenian Democracy.

A strategy is typically the idea or a style of thinking which sets a course of action that promises a winning future position.

Strategic Thinking

Strategic thinking is the way people think about, assess, view and create the future for themselves and others.

It is much more than responding and reacting to both day-to-day and long-term problems, opportunities and new realities.

It is **proactive**, not reactive and focuses on creating a **better future and adding value**. Strategic thinking always involves change and imagining the results we can achieve in the future.

Major Characteristics of Strategic Thinkers:

- Possess the ability to move out of their comfort zone and use new and broader boundaries for thinking, planning, performing, analyzing and evaluating and continuous improvement.
- Very passionate about what they do; they have a deep source of energy and motivation.
- Lifelong learners, driven to teach others and share what they have learned.
- Differentiate between the ends (what) and the means (how); they defined in planned results at multiple levels before deciding how to achieve the results.
- Are risk takers. They do not limit themselves by current paradigms. They are comfortable investing in risking today's time for tomorrow's potential benefit.
- Possess the ability to develop a vision and then use that vision as the foundation for strategic thinking and planning.
- Continuously keep working, connecting in communicating because they never take their success for granted.
- Canned/will develop outrageous and extraordinary objectives that defined the desired results and measurable terms.

What is Strategic Planning?

- It involves preparing the best way (i.e. plan) to respond to circumstances of the environment or a situation, whether or not all circumstance are known in advance.
- Government often must be prepared to respond to a dynamic, often changing and even hostile environments or situations
- Without these plans, a Council is being reactive, not proactive and could make a decision that is not for the long-term benefit of the entire City
- Being strategic, then, means being clear about the established objectives, being aware of resources, and incorporating both to be consciously responsive to an event, environment or situation
- The process is strategic because it involves preparing the best way to respond to the circumstances of the organization's environment, whether or not it circumstances are known in advance; county governments often must respond to dynamic and even hostile environments.
- Being strategic, then, means being clear about the organization's objectives, being aware of the organization's resources, and incorporating both into being consciously responsive to a dynamic environment.

Determine Who is Accountable

- This is HOW you are going to get where you want to go
- The strategies, action plans and budget are all steps in the process that effectively communicate how you will allocate time, human capital and money to address priority issues and achieve the defined objectives

“What If” Thinking

- Scenario planning (sometimes called “scenario and contingency planning”) is a structured way for organizations to think about the future

- Staff sets out to develop a small number of scenarios or stories about how the future might unfold and how this might affect an issue that confronts them

Scenario Planning

- Scenario planning is NOT about predicting the future
- It IS about exploring the future.
- If you are aware of what could happen, you are more likely to be able to deal with what will happen.
- Scenario planning exercises involve identifying trends and exploring the implications of projecting them forward with high, medium, and low probable forecasts
- These can include political, economic, social and technological trends
- As different trends are chosen and different combinations of forecast levels are combined, a whole spectrum of possibilities can/will be identified

3. What is Economic Development?

The purpose of Local Economic Development (LED) is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all.

It is a process by which public, business and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation.

You have to put money in the budget for economic development.

Dr. Jackson asked if the Chamber was providing any services and Commissioner Holt said they could not name them. Dr. Jackson said if they are using the Chamber, the Chamber should be the entity that works with existing businesses because that adds value. He explained what he meant by working with them, they should be serving, they should be talking to them and as soon as one business says "I'm looking at a new product line" the Chamber should knock on your Economic Development door and say we have an existing business that is looking at expanding, could you provide them technical assistance. He said you have to be as proactive with existing businesses as you are with incoming businesses.

Project Confidentiality (F.S. 288.075)

Critical issues for most projects

- Develop Goals and Objectives
- You have to establish a formal economic development vision/mission (i.e., purpose)
- You want to show the County is ready to drive economic vitality through a clearly defined message or statement (i.e., vision and mission)
- You want this message to be direct and show the plan will improve the quality of life for residents, existing businesses and new businesses (i.e., is good for EVERYONE)

Think about the result; can what you want to achieve be clearly articulated?

- Is it full employment?

- Is it a diversity in economy?
- Is it sustainable growth?
- Is it enhanced efficiency?

Lunch Break taken at 12:04 p.m.

Workshop resumed at 12:26 p.m.

How to Report Progress

- People understand progress best when they can “see: the measurement of the change
- Wordy reports are hard to comprehend, but pictures speak to almost everyone
- Using graphs and target pictures will help people “see” the success.

You have to report, otherwise people will start questioning.

You want to keep increase in a property value.

4. Economic Development and Gadsden County

Gadsden County needs to establish a formal economic development mission/vision (I. e., purpose). You want to show the County is ready to drive economic vitality through a clearly defined message or statement (i.e., Vision and mission). You want the message to be direct and showed this plan will improve the quality of life for residents, existing businesses and new businesses.

Goal

Increase the County tax base through the addition of new targeted businesses

- Complete a target industries analysis
- Identify and create database of shovel ready sites and spec buildings
- Meet with target businesses, developers and investors to promote moving to Gadsden County
- Assist the targeted business through the development process from due diligence, to permitting to grand opening

Moving Forward

You have to take stock of resources. You don't know what you have to offer until you have identified what you have. A formal assessment or audit is needed. The results need to be collected in a database.

Buildings

- Where are buildings that are ready to be immediately occupied?
- Where are buildings that may need demolition or remodeling?

- Know the building characteristics-Neighborhood and what business is compatible in the area and any special features of that building/neighborhood

Regulations

- What regulations are in place-both Code of Ordinance and Land Development?
- Are there unique regulations a business needs to be aware of like noise, dust control, restrictions on hours of operation, required buffers, etc?
- Are these codes development/builder friendly or out of date with current standards or as compared to adjacent jurisdictions?
- Are any amendments needed?

Permitting

- Examine the entire permitting process from predevelopment meetings/concept talk to site plan review and approval through building permit
- How long does it take?
- Can it be streamlined?

Dr. Jackson passed out notepads to the Commissioners and asked them to list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

He said there were more weaknesses and that was seen by the outside and where discussions should start.

He said in closing, they have to develop a plan, everyone has to work together.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THEM, THE WORKSHOP WAS DECLARED ADJOURNED AT 3:48 P.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

RONTERIOUS GREEN, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk