



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING**

**TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 155 F. Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470
Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

Town Council Strategic Workshop – Detailed Summary

Meeting Purpose

The meeting functioned as a strategic planning workshop focused on:

- Establishing a structured **5-year strategic plan**
- Identifying timelines and responsible parties
- Addressing long-standing land use and code enforcement issues
- Improving infrastructure, drainage, and beautification
- Enhancing transparency, communication, and governance processes

Public comment and council discussion centered heavily on **fairness, consistency, accountability, and trust in government processes.**

1. Public Comment & Resident Concerns

A resident raised multiple concerns reflecting broader community frustration:

A. Floodplain Development & FEMA Regulations

- Requests to revisit floodplain rules, particularly agricultural applications.
- Concern that requirements (e.g., berms, fill calculations) have been inconsistently applied.
- Perception that compliance costs are excessive for average residents.
- Desire for clearer, simpler rules aligned with FEMA while allowing reasonable agricultural use.

B. Tree Mitigation Policy

- Town standards perceived as more restrictive than Palm Beach County's.
- Questions about tree relocation practices and fairness.
- Concerns about transparency in how mitigation trees are distributed.

C. Zoning & Equestrian Estates

- Desire for simpler zoning rules.
- Objection to limiting 10-acre parcels to one residence.
- Concern about inconsistent treatment between equestrian and non-equestrian properties.

D. Infrastructure Concerns

- Canal bank erosion and culvert reinforcement deficiencies.
- Potential washout risks and town liability exposure.

Underlying theme: Residents want fairness, clarity, and predictable enforcement.

2. Five-Year Strategic Plan Framework

The council began organizing initiatives into categories with timelines and responsible parties.

2.1 Okeechobee Boulevard Corridor (Top Priority)

Identified as the town's central strategic focus.

Key Components:

- Land use and vested rights resolution (90 days–2 years)
- Opposition to road expansion (ongoing)
- Traffic mitigation and grant applications (annual pursuit)
- Trail connectivity and safe crossings (2 years)
- Infrastructure improvements (weirs, culverts, pump house – 2 years)
- Beautification (1 year initial phase)

Major Themes:

- Maintain two-lane character.
- Balance aesthetics with maintenance costs.
- Use tree mitigation funds where possible.
- Consider reclaimed water for irrigation.

- Be realistic about long-term staffing and upkeep expenses.
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2.2 Trail Connectivity & Linear Park Concept

Proposal to:

- Connect existing trails (E Road, C Road, Hyde Park, Gruber, 161st).
- Possibly designate as a “linear park.”
- Add signage and improve crossings.

Timeline: ~2 years.

Departments involved: Recreation, Public Works, Legal.

2.3 Southern Corridor Study

- \$75,000 planning grant (non-matching).
 - Report expected in June.
 - Public workshops planned.
 - Implementation timeline to be determined after final report.
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3. Vegetative Debris & Manure Management

A significant and complex discussion.

Identified Problems:

- Manure hauling and illegal dumping.
- Storage compliance.
- Odor and groundwater contamination risks.
- Traffic impacts from hauling.

Transfer Station Feasibility (6-Month Exploration):

- Potential partnership with County/Solid Waste Authority.
- Possibly located near Southern Boulevard.
- Evaluate environmental compliance.
- Assess revenue potential.
- Determine public vs. private operation.

Concerns:

- Risk of attracting outside manure volume.
- Environmental safeguards.
- Financial viability.
- Whether the town should operate such a facility.

Conclusion: Explore feasibility but proceed cautiously.

4. Long-Standing Property Issues & Code Enforcement

Council acknowledged systemic weaknesses.

Common Violations:

- Unauthorized food trucks and street vendors.
- Illegal outdoor commercial storage.
- Unpermitted structures and barn conversions.
- Illegal gas pumps.
- Slaughter operations.
- Rooming houses inconsistent with zoning.

Major Issues Identified:

- Selective enforcement perceptions.
- Complaints allegedly disappearing.
- Repeated case postponements before magistrate.
- Fines reduced or waived.
- Lack of deterrence.
- Case stagnation.

Strategic Action:

- Code enforcement designated as its own strategic category.
- Within 90 days, Community Standards Director to present:
 - A measurable improvement plan.
 - Resource and training needs.
 - Performance metrics.
- Within 3–4 months:
 - Compile list of long-standing problem properties.

Goal: Improve professionalism, consistency, transparency, and results without micromanagement.

5. FEMA / Floodplain Development Applications

Council requested a 90-day review by the certified floodplain manager to:

- Confirm ordinance alignment with FEMA.
- Clarify agricultural allowances.
- Identify needed revisions.
- Improve efficiency and consistency.

Key tension: Ensure compliance while avoiding unnecessary burdens.

6. Drainage & Resiliency Strategy

Current Status:

- Resiliency study completed.
- Grant applications submitted for large infrastructure projects.
- Major infrastructure exceeds town's financial capacity.

Next Steps (90 Days):

- Identify priority neighborhood drainage projects.
- Develop cost estimates.
- Evaluate feasibility and downstream impacts.
- Address easement constraints.

Approach: Incremental improvements guided by resiliency study.

7. Contract Oversight & Governance Reform

Council discussed lack of advance notice for major contracts.

Proposed Policy:

- 6-month review window for major contracts (charter officers, solid waste, auditor, engineer, planner).
- 2-month review for renewals.
- Develop spreadsheet tracking contract expiration dates.

- Staff generates list; council ensures compliance.

Purpose: Avoid rushed decisions and improve governance discipline.

8. Technology & Transparency Improvements

Internal:

- Implementation of Asana (training funded).
- 90-day rollout.
- Purpose: Track deadlines, prevent project stagnation.

Public Transparency:

- Improve MGO Connect system.
- Enable easier viewing of active code cases.
- Explore complaint status notifications (30-day evaluation).

Website Upgrade:

- 30-day exploration of cost and functionality improvements.
- Ensure statutory posting compliance.
- Improve Water Control District page.

Customer Satisfaction Survey:

- Short voluntary survey.
 - Likely implemented within 30 days.
 - Use feedback to measure service performance.
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9. Road “Gap” Analysis

Focus on unfinished asphalt segments.

Concerns:

- Deteriorating road segments.
- Easement refusals blocking completion.
- Grading beyond legal roadway width.
- Tree root damage.
- Safety risks.

Action (90 Days):

- Prioritized list of gap roads.
 - Cost estimates.
 - Barrier analysis.
 - Safety-based prioritization.
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10. 20th Anniversary Celebration

Proposed \$20,000 budget (not yet approved).

Ideas:

- Monument signage.
- Agritourism promotion.
- Commemorative logo.
- Coins, decals, swag.
- Town event at park.
- Promotional video.
- Green market.

Debate over theme scope and budget amount.

11. Succession Planning

- Meeting scheduled by end of March.
 - Approximately 45-day timeline.
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12. Governmental Advocacy

Recognized as critical:

- Grant writing.
- Legislative relationships.
- Infrastructure funding.
- Lobbyist seen as essential to achieving strategic objectives.

Overall Workshop Themes

- Transition from reactive to structured strategic governance.
- Establishment of timelines and deliverables.
- Emphasis on fairness and consistency in enforcement.
- Strong focus on transparency and public trust.
- Recognition of fiscal constraints.
- Heavy reliance on grants and lobbying.
- Incremental, measurable reform approach.
- Desire for improved internal systems and accountability.


Disclaimer: Minutes were created with the use of AI. Recordings of all meetings are available at <https://www.loxahatcheegrovesfl.gov/>


TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FLORIDA


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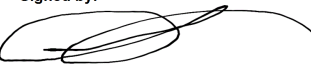
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Town Clerk

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Mayor Anita Kane, Seat 3

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Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Seat 5

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Councilmember Todd McLendon, Seat 1

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Councilmember Lisa El-Ramey, Seat 2

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Councilmember Paul Coleman II, Seat 4