

## Erin Nelson

---

**From:** Gary Lichtenstein [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2026 6:27 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Davila; Britt Hornsby; Spencer Wade; Gary Haws; Josh Ewing  
**Cc:** Dawn Dilego; Erin Nelson  
**Subject:** Re: Property Tax Increase for ESM Position

Hey Josh,

thanks for pointing this out. I got my info about the \$83k cap in 2024 talking to a woman at the Property Tax Division of the Utah State Tax Board. We spoke 2 times and she could not have misunderstood what I was asking, which was what was the maximum amount Bluff could raise in Property Taxes if it wanted to fund a fire department. She actually called me back with this \$83k figure. Presumably, it was based on a certified figure. If that's true, then Bluff's taxable base has increased 5x in two years! Can that be possible? The only way to know for sure is to find out the 2024 taxable base from the County Assessor, which I might do. Up until today, I figured that the 2024 figure would be a fair estimate of today's rate--I couldn't have been more wrong. I'll recant in future missives.

Actually, the increase (if that's what it is) is a potential game changer as far as Fire and EMS go. In 2024-25, the figures I got made me believe that Bluff couldn't support our own Fire Department. We could now, with this higher taxable base. However, if we wanted to support our own department, there are good reasons to structure it as an SSD.

Best,  
g.

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 03:29:10 PM MDT, Josh Ewing <mayorewing@townofbluffutah.gov> wrote:

Gary: Thanks again for sharing your thoughts. While I may disagree with the political viability of your alternatives, they're certainly worth considering.

I am curious why you keep repeating that Bluff is trying to raise property taxes to the maximum legal limit.

Per [Utah Code Section 10-6-133](#), municipalities are limited to a maximum mill levy of 0.007 per dollar of taxable value. Given Bluff's current taxable value of \$60,880,179, we could legally raise over \$420k per year in property tax revenues. I am not suggesting that we should pursue raising taxes to the legal maximum, but I also don't think it's helpful to imply that the proposal we are putting forward maxes out our taxing authority.

I'm hoping when I see you this evening, we can find a time to meet, as email back-and-forth is a hard way to make sure we have a common understanding of facts/assumptions.

Sincerely,

--

**Josh Ewing**

*Bluff Mayor*

---

**From:** Gary Lichtenstein [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 15:11  
**To:** Josh Ewing <mayorewing@townofbluffutah.gov>; Jennifer Davila <jennifer@townofbluffutah.gov>; Britt Hornsby <britt@townofbluffutah.gov>; Spencer Wade <Spencer@townofbluffutah.gov>; Gary Haws <Gary@townofbluffutah.gov>  
**Cc:** Dawn Dilego [REDACTED] Erin Nelson <manager@townofbluffutah.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Property Tax Increase for ESM Position

Hi Gary and TC,

Thanks for reaching out. I'm happy to share with the TC if the group feels it's a good use of their time. I will also comment on SJC's proposal to increase Sales Tax to fund EMS, as shared by Jeremy Hoggard during the 5/5 TC meeting. The two are related, since HB456 (2025) allows SJC to enter into interlocal agreements with municipalities to provide flowback funds for EMS (and Search & Rescue) to municipalities. Considering that Bluff contributes over 16% of all TRT funds in the County (while comprising only 2.1% of the adult population), we have a vested interest. Also, with our adult population being an average age of 68 compared to 35 for the rest of the County, we have increased need. Our town should oppose the 1% Sales Tax increase and pursue TRT funds to support EMS before raising Property Tax to its highest limit.

best,  
g.

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 02:17:40 PM MDT, Gary Haws <gary@townofbluffutah.gov> wrote:

Gary,

I agree with Josh in this being a busy week. Thank you for sharing with the town council this information. As having been in many roles as a firefighter, I very much appreciate you taking the time to put it all on paper for us to read.

I do, however, think it would be in the best interest of the town if you were placed on the agenda of a town council meeting, so we all could hear and discuss the information. Then Josh can share with all the council any missing context or assumptions he feels are being made.

Thank you again,

Gary Haws

---

**From:** Josh Ewing <mayorewing@townofbluffutah.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 14, 2026 6:58 AM  
**To:** Gary Lichtenstein [REDACTED] Gary Haws <Gary@townofbluffutah.gov>; Jennifer Davila <jennifer@townofbluffutah.gov>; Britt Hornsby <britt@townofbluffutah.gov>; Spencer Wade

<Spencer@townofbluffutah.gov>

**Cc:** Dawn Dilego [REDACTED]; Erin Nelson <manager@townofbluffutah.gov>

**Subject:** Re: Property Tax Increase for ESM Position

Gary: It's been a busy week, so it took me a while to get to reading your letter.

Thanks for taking the time to engage in the process and send your thoughts. As a long-time firefighter, I very much value your feedback and appreciate you taking the time to get it on paper.

With that said, I think you're missing some context and making some assumptions about what we are trying to accomplish here. We'll provide more background at our Open House on Tuesday at 6PM, if you're able to come.

However, I would also offer to buy you a coffee/tea/soda and talk this through in person, individually. Maybe next Thursday morning if that would work for you?

Best,

--

**Josh Ewing**

*Bluff Mayor*

---

**From:** Gary Lichtenstein [REDACTED]

**Date:** Sunday, May 10, 2026 at 13:23

**To:** Josh Ewing <mayorewing@townofbluffutah.gov>; Gary Haws <Gary@townofbluffutah.gov>; Jennifer Davila <jennifer@townofbluffutah.gov>; Britt Hornsby <britt@townofbluffutah.gov>; Spencer Wade <Spencer@townofbluffutah.gov>

**Cc:** Dawn Dilego [REDACTED] Erin Nelson <manager@townofbluffutah.gov>

**Subject:** Property Tax Increase for ESM Position

Greetings Town Council,

Please find the letter attached that expresses my strong concerns about the proposed property tax increase and Emergency Services Manager position. As you may know, I have been pressing for action to address Fire issues especially for at least two years. I appreciate that the Town Council is finally turning attention to the issues, but I believe that absent a town strategic plan for emergency services, this proposal puts the cart before the horse.

I request that my letter become part of the public record.

Thanks very much,  
g.