

## Erin Nelson

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**From:** Lois Young [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 2, 2026 7:52 AM  
**To:** dawn dilego  
**Subject:** Fwd: A Message to Our Town

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** dawn dilego [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Mon, Jun 1, 2026 at 11:11 PM  
**Subject:** A Message to Our Town

Dear Bluff:

The Bluff Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) has shown up for this community nearly without fail for the past 50 years. We've protected homes, businesses, families, and thousands of visitors who pass through our corner of the Southwest each year. We've done so without compensation and without complaint. Now, with great humility, we ask for something modest in return.

The proposed property tax increase will fund a part-time Emergency Services Program Coordinator (ESPC). This is a town administrative position that will provide needed support to the all-volunteer fire department. It is a clearly defined position with a detailed job description, which is available upon budget approval. The role includes scheduling, record keeping, grant writing, compliance reporting, inventory management, recruiting coordination, and interagency communication, among other tasks. It provides next-level organization to help our departments thrive.

Our strategic plan is under development and includes immediate priorities such as growing membership, building administrative infrastructure, establishing our financial base, and preparing for an eventual governance transition between the county and town. We have much to do and not enough free time to establish the sturdy foundation required for our next iteration. The ESPC allows for this. Additionally, the Town has state-mandated responsibilities, including Wildland Urban Interface requirements under HB 48. BVFD is currently managing these on top of full-time jobs, family, and responding to actual calls. We have hit a limit of available resources to meet our expanding needs.

Creation of an ESPC protects wallets as well as properties. Bluff's ISO fire protection rating directly affects what property owners pay for insurance. If that rating slips, or the department fails, premiums go up, or coverage disappears. The question is whether you pay a little now or a lot later. For many property owners, the resulting tax increase is roughly equal to the monthly cost of streaming subscriptions or dinner out (see the Town of Bluff's published impact statement for specifics). We hope that essential fire protection is as valuable to you as today's non-essential comforts.

This is not a magic bullet, and we can't promise a fix-all. We can promise to make the most of this resource and the support it provides. The volunteer model that built this department, a model dating back to Benjamin Franklin, is under serious national strain. Rather than waiting for inevitable failure, we can take this step toward sustainability. It is time to invest in the future of public safety.

The weight of this predicament can no longer fall on volunteers alone. The cost of maintaining services is high. We welcome alternatives to the proposal, provided they deliver meaningful financial sustenance. Simply adding more volunteers is not the solution. Withholding this level of support pressures already-strained

volunteers and is also not a solution. We invite reasonable, actionable ideas. Otherwise, a vote against this proposal is a vote for the status quo, and the status quo is not working.

It should be noted that the majority of BVFD roster members support this initiative.

With Regards,  
Dawn M. DiLego  
BVFD Chief