

Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes

October 1, 2024

Bluff Community Center at 4:00 p.m.

190 N 3<sup>rd</sup> East P.O. Box 324

435-672-9990

Regular meetings are held the first three Tuesdays of every month at 4:00 p.m. Requests to be on the agenda may be submitted in writing to Ann Leppanen (ann@townofbluff.org) at least 4 days before the meeting. Agendas and minutes are posted at:

townofbluff.org and audio, in addition, at the Utah Public Notic Website.

This meeting was held virtually and in person.

**The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

Mayor Ann K. Leppanen, Luanne Hook, Jennifer Davila, Linda Sosa, Brit Hornsby

Town Manager Erin Nelson

Notetaker Melanie Daniels

**Approval of Bluff Town Council Special Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2024**

Council Member Hornsby motioned to approve the minutes and Council Member Hook seconded. There was no discussion on the motion and Council Members Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Davila, and Hornsby voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2024**

Council Member Hornsby motioned to approve the minutes and Council Member Hook seconded. There was no discussion on the motion and Council Members Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Davila, and Hornsby voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Bluff Town Council Special Meeting Minutes of September 24, 2024**

Council Member Hornsby motioned to approve the minutes and Council Member Hook seconded. There was no discussion on the motion and Council Members Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Davila, and Hornsby voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments made at this meeting.

**Unfinished Business:**

**1. Update on United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Grant for a Portable Generator**

Town Manager Nelson updated the Council on the final grant details after the Town submitted their grant application to the USDA. The Town will be responsible for a \$17,000.00 cash match and the USDA will provide the Town with \$47,000.00 through a reimbursement system once the Town selects a generator for purchase. The Town had initially asked for \$50,000.00 in grant assistance with a \$14,000.00 cash match, and did not specify a unit the Town will purchase. The Council discussed what generator characteristics would best benefit the town and possible restrictions stipulated by the grant that Nelson will follow-up on.

**2. Discussion and Vote on Adjustment to USDA Grant for a Portable Generator**

After discussing the adjustment of projected expenditures for this grant, the Council expressed the necessity for this type of resource. The Council clarified these funds would come from the Capital Projects fund and they would be willing to support expenditures up to \$18,000.00. Council Member Hornsby motioned to approve \$18,000.00 matching for the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Grant for a portable generator and Council Member Davila seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion and Council Members Leppanen, Hornsby, Davila, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Report on Environmental Protection Agency Government to Government Grant Meeting on September 24, 2024**

Council Member Davila, Town Manager Nelson, and Mayor Leppanen attended the required meeting with the Town's EPA grant officer and reported on the nature of the conversations had. The grant officer was understanding of the Town's situation and hesitation to draw down EPA funds. There was light discussion on possibly searching for other community partners, the timeline of meetings moving forward, and how mediation will impact these check-ins. However, the grant officer pointedly remarked that this grant was a grant controlled by the Town and not Utah Dine Bikeyah.

### **4. Discussion of Request for Mediation with Utah Dine Bikeyah Pursuant to the Terms of the Acquisition and Redevelopment Agreement**

Mayor Leppanen combined discussion from the previous agenda item with this topic as they both relate back to the September 13 Joint meeting. She outlined all attempts made to contact the Utah Dine Bikeyah's Board, Board Chairman, and Executive Director about how the partner entities could move forward on renovation of the Cooperative Culture Center. The Town's legal counsel advised that the Town not move forward without reaching out to UDB and receiving a response. The Council discussed the letter delivered to UDB and the options available to the Town. The Mayor will reach out to legal counsel again this week for an update on the situation.

### **5. Discussion of Approved Financial Institutions Available for 2025 and Request for Change of Address Notice from Zion's Bank**

Mayor Leppanen asked the Council if there was interest in investing manpower in researching the Town's banking options before the Council must vote on the banking institution for that year. The Council discussed the other banks in the latest list of approved banking institutions and the possible ways the Town could manage their accounts. Ultimately, the Council decided to have the Bookkeeper and Mayor consult with the Town's Accountant to discuss the logistics of a possible transition, and other options Council Members suggested in the discussion.

#### **New Business:**

### **6. Report on Financial Report Format; Report on September 2024 Financials**

The Town Bookkeeper explained the type of reporting she felt would best inform and benefit the Town Council. There was discussion on the reports preliminarily generated for the Council entailed and how the focus on time periods would make managing the Town's financial situation easier for Council Members. After the discussion Council Member Hook motioned to pay the bills from 9/30/2024 and Council Member Hornsby seconded. There was no discussion on the motion and Council Members Hook, Hornsby, Leppanen, Sosa, and Davila voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

### **7. Report on Bluff Fort and Town of Bluff Joint Fundraiser for EMTs and Bluff Volunteer Fire Department on September 21, 2024**

The Council was happy to report there was over \$3,000.00 raised by the Emergency Services fundraiser hosted at the Bluff Fort, however, after the event representatives from the Bluff Fort asked for a meeting with Town Manager Nelson about the future of the event. The Council discussed the trends of the fundraiser since the start of the event and how they felt about altering aspects of the event moving forward. There was consensus that the event should continue and stay on or around the 9/11 weekend. The Town will work to find the best solution and support the continuation of the fundraiser.

## **8. Report on September 9, 2024, County Transient Room Tax Meeting and September 17 and 24, 2024**

### **County Economic Development Meetings**

Council Member Davila attended the September 9, 2024, County Transient Room Tax meeting and was able to relay to the Council the tourist trends given to her in the meeting and how the County is reporting softer numbers than usual. There is an anticipated loss in revenue as Goulding's Lodge now belongs to the Navajo Nation. Council Member Sosa reported on the County Economic Development meetings and the anticipated activities of those bodies.

## **9. Transformation Network Fall 2024 Indigenous Community Engagement Series**

Mayor Leppanen encouraged Council Members to attend the fourth webinar of the Indigenous Community Engagement series.

## **10. Discussion of Joint Meeting with P&Z on October 3, 2024**

Friday October 4, 2024, at 1:00pm is the tentative meeting time for the Planning and Zoning Joint meeting where the Council intends to discuss the RV ordinance before it is shared with the Town's attorney. The Council also anticipates discussing the schedule of meetings for the 2025 calendar year, and all required procedures required in announcing the P&Z meeting schedule.

## **11. Discussion Regarding Airport Zoning Regulation Changes and Implementation of Airport Influence Area as Required by State of Utah**

Late last week it came to the attention of Town Manager Nelson that there was a FAA regulation passed down through the state to local municipalities in control of public airports requiring them to enact an overlay zone. The overlay regulations will need to be adopted by the town by the end of the year and will extend 5,000 feet from the airport. The Council considered the other ordinances Planning and Zoning will need to complete this year and how this will need to be addressed. The Council agreed this should be discussed at the joint meeting on Friday, October 4.

## **12. Reminder that Each Household is Entitled to Four Free Covid Tests from the United States Government beginning September 30, 2024**

Mayor Leppanen wanted to remind the public that each household can get four free covid tests from the federal government and it would greatly benefit them to order them. The Town will continue to do what it can to provide tests for community members, however, cannot continue to do that forever and encourages community members to use all resources at their disposal.

## **13. Other/ Adjourn**

Council Member Hornsby attended the Cooperative agencies meeting for the Bears Ears Monument and gave a general run down of the main issues raised by other entities in attendance.

It is Jimmy Carter's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and is the only president to have lived that long.

There was no other business and Council Member Hornsby motioned to adjourn. Council Member Davila seconded and there was no discussion on the motion. Council Members Sosa, Leppanen, Davila, Hornsby, and Hook voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.