Bluff Town Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 4:00 pm MDT

4:01 pm: Meeting called to order

Roll Call
Town Council: Mayor Josh Ewing, Britt Hornsby, Jennifer Davila, Spencer Wade, Gary Haws
Staff: Erin Nelson, Malia Collins (virtual), Charmayne Sandoval

Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting
Reviewed with amendments suggested by Ewing to accurately reflect a code of reference discussion regarding state rules of order and procedure, on page 2.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 11, 2026, Town Council Work Session
Reviewed with minor stylistic edits regarding the accrual rate discussion.
Ewing calls to approve meeting minutes for August 4 & August 11, 2026
Voted in Favor: Haws, Davila, Hornsby, Wade & Ewing
Motion passes unanimously.

Welcome Charmayne Sandoval – TOB Part Time Notetaker & ADA Compliance Coordinator -
Mayor Ewing and Town Manager Nelson welcomed Charmayne Sandoval to her new role managing meeting minutes, records procedures, and training for ADA compliance. It was noted that while she will work remotely much of the time and may not attend every single meeting in person, she will coordinate closely with staff.

Public Comment Period:
Linda Sosa - spoke as a local resident regarding health leave. She suggested 10 days of health leave per year with a cap of 30 days, noting that allowing rollover helps staff build a personal health bank for unexpected major illnesses while preventing pressure to use up leave unnecessarily.

Unfinished Business

1. Discussion and Vote on Town of Bluff Employee Benefits
The council proceeded to debate and vote item-by-item on employee benefits to provide clear direction for staff to draft formal written policies and initiate health insurance enrollment.

Health Insurance
- Mayoral Proposal: Pay 100% of top HSA plan premium for full-time employees
- Alternative Proposed by CM Haws: Pay 80%

Discussion: The council discussed utilizing Utah Local Governments Trust / PEHP (Public Employees' Health Program) to tap into a small-town insurance pool. Town Manager Erin Nelson noted PEHP guidelines regarding eligibility and contributions. Debate centered on whether to cover 100% of a middle-tier HSA single-employee plan or an 80% split.

Ewing calls for a vote to approve offering 100% premium coverage of the top HSA plan for full-time employees (single coverage).
Voted in Favor: Haws, Davila, Hornsby, Wade & Ewing. None opposed. Motion passes unanimously

Vacation + Holidays

- Mayoral Proposal:
  - Same paid holidays as recognized by the State of Utah (currently 12)
  - Vacation accrued at 15 days annually in first year
  - Vacation accrues one additional day per year to a maximum of 25 total vacation days
  - Accrual cap of 1.5x annually accrued vacation days
- Alternative Proposed by Councilmember Haws:
  - 13 paid holidays
  - Vacation starts at 15 days per year
  - 5 years: 17 days per year
  - 10 years: 18 days per year
  - 15 years: 19 days per year
  - 20 years: 20 days per year
  - Cap paid vacation accrual for all years of service at 20 days per year

Discussion: Reviewed the mayoral proposal (12 state-recognized paid holidays, 15 vacation days accrued annually in the first year, increasing by 1 additional day per year up to a maximum of 25 days, with a 1.5x annual accrual cap) versus an alternative sliding-scale proposal by CM Haws.

Ewing calls for a vote to approve 25 days of PTO after 10 years and the 1.5x accrual vacation time proposal. Voted in Favor: Haws, Davila, Hornsby, Wade & Ewing. None Opposed. Motion passes unanimously

Health Leave

- Mayor Proposal:
  - 15 days of health leave annually
  - Days do not roll over
  - Tracked by anniversary date
- Alternative proposed by Councilmember Haws:
  - 10 days a year

Discussion: Compared the mayoral proposal (15 days annually, no rollover) with CM Haws' alternative proposal (10 days annually, rollover up to a 20-day cap, with an option for employees to receive a payout for up to 32 hours of unused sick leave at the end of the year).

Ewing calls for the vote to approve 10 days a year, max rollover of 20 days, and a 32-hour payout option for unused sick leave
Voted in Favor: Haws, Davila, Hornsby, Wade & Ewing. None opposed. Motion passes unanimously

Post-Partum Leave

- Mayoral Proposal:
  - Six Weeks of 100% Paid Leave

Parental Leave

- Mayoral Proposal:
  - Identical to the benefit provided to state employees per Utah Code 63A-17-511
  - 3 weeks of paid leave for eligible employees (includes birthing mother)
  - Runs consecutive to postpartum recovery leave (for a total of 9 weeks of paid leave for birthing mother)
- Alternative Proposed by Councilmember Haws:
  - 3 weeks of paid leave for spouse of birthing mother (e.g. cannot be combined with post-partum leave)

Discussion: The council reviewed state policies regarding paid postpartum and parental leave. The mayor's proposal aligned with state rules allowing 6 weeks of 100% paid postpartum recovery leave for birthing mothers, plus 3 weeks of parental bonding leave (which can also be utilized by eligible spouses). Concerns were raised regarding the potential duration of absence for small-staff operations.

Ewing calls for a vote to adopt the same policy as state guidelines for postpartum (6 weeks of paid leave) and three weeks of parental three weeks of leave which includes the adoption policy.
Voted in Favor: Hornsby, Wade, Ewing. Opposed: Davila, Haws. Motion passes three to two.

Bereavement

- Original Proposal
  - 5 Days of Paid Leave for Immediate Family
  - 3 Days of Paid Leave for
- Mayoral Proposal Adopted from Councilmember Haws:
  - 3 days of Paid Leave for the death of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, and corresponding step- or in-law relationships).
  - 1 Day of Paid Leave for the death of an extended family member (uncles, aunts, cousins, and corresponding step- or in-law relationships).

Discussion: Reviewed the streamlined proposal adopted from Haws providing 3 days of paid leave for immediate family deaths and 1 day for extended family members.

Ewing calls for a vote to approve 3 days for immediate family and 1 day for extended family members.
Voted in Favor: Haws, Davila, Hornsby, Wade & Ewing. None opposed

2. Discussion Regarding Providing Retirement Benefits

- Option 1: participation in Utah Retirement Systems (URS)
  - 13.19% employer contribution for URS-eligible employees
- Option 2: Private 401K Plan
  - Option 2a: 3% Employer Contribution x 3% Employee Match
  - Options 2b: 3% Employer Contribution + Optional 3% Additional Employer Contribution with 3% Employee Match

Discussion: Time constraints prevented a full final vote on retirement options. The council introduced Option 1 (participation in the Utah Retirement Systems [URS] with a 13.19% employer contribution) versus Option 2 (a private 401[k] plan with matching contributions). The discussion will be carried over to the next session.

New Business

3. Discussion about Providing Town-Sponsored Food Truck Area (Davila)

Discussion: Town-Sponsored Food Truck Night: Council member Jennifer Davila briefly introduced a discussion item regarding the potential establishment of a town-sponsored food truck night and possibly developing an area where food trucks can park. It was suggested to talk with businesses in town to eliminate a competing issue.

Looking Ahead / Reminders / Other

4. Upcoming: Legal Consultant RFP, Housing Consultant RFP, Secondary Water Project

The legal consultant RFP decision and interviews are expected to be brought forward in early September. A housing consultant RFP is being prepared for next month. A secondary water update will be discussed with Patrick to see if a presentation to the council makes sense. The town will discuss whether to take a formal position on Proposition 7 (the sales tax for EMS) at the first September meeting, keeping in mind that legally no funds can be spent to promote a proposition.

5. Reminders/Other:

- P&Z Joint Meeting on September 15th TC Meeting at 4:00 PM
- P&Z Zoning Code Open House on September 17th at 5:00 PM
- Utah League of Cities and Towns Annual Convention Oct 27 & 28 (register by 9/29/26)
- Emergency Services Pancake Breakfast, Saturday September 19th 8-10am
- Candidate Forum TBD: Tuesday 9/29 or Wednesday 9/30

A joint Town Council and Planning & Zoning meeting on zoning is set for September 15th, followed by a public open house on September 17th. Council members were encouraged to review the town zoning ordinance beforehand. The Utah League of Cities and Towns annual convention requires registration by September 29th for the best rate. The annual Emergency Services pancake breakfast will take place on September 19th at the fire station to benefit both fire and EMS. A casual "meet the candidates" night for open county-level positions (such as sheriff and county commission) is being planned for either September 29th or 30th. The mayor signed a time-sensitive letter of support for a Bears partnership grant request to the BLM for stewardship lands around Bluff. Town Manager Erin Nelson presented a potential free vehicle donation from Certa—a 2009 two-wheel-drive express cargo van—to assist the roads department. The council agreed to accept the donation administratively while planning to develop a formal vehicle use and driver policy. Councilmember Jennifer Davila raised a question regarding why the BLM removed a Bears monument sign even though its location remains inside the monument boundaries. The mayor agreed to email Mr. Palmer at the BLM to inquire about the removal.

6. Adjourn (5:50 pm)

For request to receive emails/meeting invitations, email: office@townofbluffutah.gov
Minute Taker: Charmayne Sandoval
Draft Minutes Published: August 25, 2026
Meeting Minutes Approved: September 1, 2026