

MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL WORKSESSION
THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2017
4:00 PM
ALTA COMMUNITY CENTER
ALTA, UTAH

1. The Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Mayor Tom Pollard and Council members Cliff Curry and Harris Sondak were present. Paul Moxley and Elise Morgan were excused.

2. WORK SESSION

- **Discussion on procedure for review of requests by groups or individuals for proclamations or resolutions. – 00:00:25**

The Mayor would like to establish a protocol to follow for individuals or groups that request proclamations or resolutions on local, state or federal issues. Staff conducted research on the protocols followed by other municipalities in the State of Utah (see attached report.) A few entities that were contacted by staff do not support issues that are outside their purview. Because so much of what the Town of Alta does is “partner oriented” the Mayor did not think a blanket approach like this fit the approach the Town of Alta should follow.

The following thoughts and ideas were discussed related to an approach on this matter.

- The Mayor has involved the Council in the past on matters like this and the Council appreciated that approach.
- The matters that are in the town’s purview are often symbolic in nature.
- Some matters that are outside our purview may be symbolic but there may be reasons to address those matters that are more substantive – they could be in the town’s interest to address.
- The town should establish when it has an interest in an issue.
- How issues come to the attention of the town – call to the Mayor, staff or a council member for example.
- The time tables for submitting requests were reviewed – two weeks in advance of the meeting is one possibility for example.
- Is it politically expedient to weigh in on issues? The Council should ask if a particular issue is important to the Town of Alta and the community. If it is, the Council may want to take a stand even though it might go against the position of some people with whom the Town of Alta might need positive working relationships.
- It was explained how items get on an agenda. Items are submitted to Kate, John or other staff members. They are reviewed by the Mayor who provides final approval on the agenda.
- The staff report provided a good overview of possibilities but generally speaking the approach the Town has in place has worked.
- Should there be a “gate keeper” and if so, who should be that person be?
- The concept of a consent agenda and whether the town should consider the same.
- Should the council consider using the example set forth in C-7 of the staff report? See attached

There was further discussion on whether the Town of Alta should create a formal policy on this matter. It was agreed that a full formal policy was not necessary for the Town of Alta but the town does need to establish a time line to follow when requesting the Council to address an issue. It was agreed that requests need to be submitted to staff at least two weeks prior to the Town Council agenda being established and distributed -- two weeks prior to the Friday before a council meeting. If an issue is determined to be one that needs further research or discussion, or is controversial, then that item might need to be placed on the agenda for a future month’s meeting.

Also, staff will continue to forward on to the Mayor and Council requests from groups and individuals on matters such as has been discussed to poll the Council on whether the item should be placed on the agenda. Town staff will also use the Mayor as the gatekeeper of resolutions and proclamation requests similar to the procedure for setting up the Council agenda.

- **Discussion on a resolution/proclamation regarding carbon dioxide emission pricing and/or climate change.**

The following thoughts and ideas were discussed related to this matter:

- Citizens Climate Lobby's proposal for revenue neutral taxing program and Cliff and Harris's concerns about that program – the wisdom and details of this particular proposal – would need to be researched further if we are to adopt those details. While such research is beyond the reach of the Town, respect was expressed for those individuals and groups that felt this proposal was a vehicle for affecting climate change.
- It was questioned whether the city councils that had passed resolution related to this particular proposal on climate change issue actually knew enough to make the statement that the members made in those documents.

Bill Barron from the Citizen's Climate Lobby (CCL) commented that they prefer a more direct approach similar to Salt Lake City Council's approach than Park City's. Bill saw the Town of Alta as a community that supports the preservation and character of the land and believes that Alta should take a stand on this issue. Bill opined that pricing carbon is really the only way we can get to the goal of limiting average global temperature increases to 2 degrees Celsius. Bill went on to explain that CCL believes in a market based solution because it appeals across the political spectrum.

Cliff opined that he finds the revenue neutral carbon policy problematic and therefore is not willing to fight for that policy. Cliff feels that there is no more important issue on this earth than climate change but he is troubled by the economics aspects of the revenue neutral taxing program – he feels carbon pollution is an evil that should be taxed and beaten down until it diminishes. Cliff feels that carbon should not be traded or supported.

Cliff gave credit to the work that CCL is doing in this area and would like to thank the efforts of CCL in bringing this issue before us as a spring board for meaningful local action; we should resolve to reduce carbon pollution by any means, strengthen our promotion of "anti-idling", and make carbon reduction a priority factor in the decisions the Town of Alta makes in the future. Cliff would like to aggressively address the promotion of anti-idling through signage and social media.

- Areas that the Town of Alta could address locally were discussed such as modifying or changing the building code or recommending that businesses purchase machinery that uses natural gas vs. gasoline or diesel and the avoidance of carbon fuel based generators.

Cliff addressed his intent in writing the draft resolution in from the council; the promotion of the anti-idling resolution passed in 2010. The Town of Alta should strengthen our public message on this matter.

- Harris asked if we should change the language of the resolution to say "partner with other agencies and organizations."

Roger Bourke recommended that the Town of Alta add another element to the proposed resolution; the "red snake" problem in the winter. Roger asked if there was way to speed up traffic in both directions to help with this situation and also to reduce the number cars on the road.

In response to Mr. Bourke, Cliff recommended that the Town of Alta come out clearly and strongly on transportation polices that promote carpooling. The Mayor mentioned that one of the principal findings that came out of the Mountain Accord process was to do whatever could be done to reduce the reliance on the single occupancy vehicle.

Harris asked if there was only one market based process (carbon pricing) .Bill Baron did not articulate any other process but restated CCL's preference for their particular carbon pricing method to reach a goal of a limit of 2 degree Celsius.

- There was further discussion on the language in the resolution that was drafted by Cliff.
- The council agreed that carbon emissions need to be lowered and the Town of Alta has an interest in striving to meet that goal.

Cliff would like to add a paragraph to the resolution that addressed carpooling. Harris suggested that paragraph three include such language and be framed as two possible examples of areas the Town of Alta could address.

Cliff agreed to work with Harris on the final language for the resolution taking into account the recommendations from the work session. The final draft will be sent to staff in time to send it out with the Council packet.

- **Discussion on a resolution/proclamation regarding the transfer of federal lands to the State of Utah.**

Harris felt the Park City resolution is the closest example we have seen to where he sits on this issue. The Council reviewed that resolution and agreed that the resolution speaks to the Interior Department's review of the national monument issue and not to the Utah State Legislature.

Harris recommended language the Town could consider; the outdoor recreation industry is the life blood of the Town of Alta and we should not alienate that industry. Harris went on to express that we should thank the federal government for the job they do that allows that industry to thrive. The Alta community relies on the Forest Service land within our boundaries.

Harris went on to opine that we should ask the federal government to adequately fund the US Forest Service, which manages our public lands.

The Council agreed that they were not prepared to address this topic at this time and that more "homework and ground work" needed to take place.

The Council completely supports the management of public lands in Little Cottonwood Canyon by the US Forest Service. The Forest Service is a great partner and they are great for our community and skiing.

The Town of Alta depends on snow and cares about the climate, outdoor recreation and the attitudes of people that pursue that type of recreation. It was agreed that the Town of Alta needed to send a statement of our values through a resolution.

The Mayor took public comments on the aforementioned matters before the Council.

- Margaret Bourke mentioned other issues that the Town of Alta could address when it comes to climate change: no burn days, a dark sky ordinance, curtailing the use of wood burning stoves and fireplaces and turning off lights.

There was a brief discussion on requiring a certain level of energy efficiency for all new buildings.

- Roger Bourke felt that climate change was a very serious problem and did not think that the proposed resolution has the sense of that seriousness. The Town of Alta needs to step up to this issue more vigorously.

It was agreed that climate change is one of the gravest threats to the human race and the ecological existence of the planet.

3. Motion to adjourn

Hearing no further comments before the Town Council, there was a motion by Cliff Curry to adjourn the work session of the Town Council. There was a second by Harris Sondak and the motion was carried.

Passed and approved this 14th day of September, 2017.

Piper Lever, Assistant Town Clerk / S