

MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, January 10, 2019, 9:00 AM
Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

PRESENT: Mayor Harris Sondak
Council Member Margaret Bourke
Council Member Cliff Curry
Council Member Elise Morgan
Council Member Sheridan Davis (via telephone)

STAFF PRESENT: John Guldner, Town Administrator
Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator/Treasurer
Piper Lever, Town Clerk
Mike Morey, Town Marshal
Nora Pincus, Town Attorney

OTHERS: Mark Haik, Mike Maughan, Maura Olivos, Blake Thomas, Roger Bourke,
Karen Travis, Paul Skeen and Alawna Echols of Eide Bailey

1. WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS ALTA SUMMER RECREATION VISION AND GOALS

00:00:38

Mayor welcomed everyone to the work session and explained why this discussion was moved to the work session.

Assistant Town Administrator Chris Cawley stated that he had produced a staff report containing comments from the last work session and the emailed comments he received from the Council Members. He included the General Plan Vision Statement. Based on the comments he received, it seemed like the Council had more ideas in common than in conflict, and they were all more or less germane with what the Vision Statement provides for the Town going forward. Some of the differences were in more specific action items that the Town could take to achieve a vision for what summer recreation should be like in the future. Everyone mentioned sustainable management techniques for recreation that mitigates environmental impacts, a range of recreation options, environmental education, and the Town's role in managing visitation in some way. The study done by Dr. Haas strongly recommended that the Town coalesce around a statement of intent regarding recreation opportunities. Assistant Town Administrator Cawley encouraged the Council to focus on discussing the similarities in their ideas rather than their differences.

00:05:57

Council Member Bourke noted that there were only statements from three of the five members, and she wanted to know the opinions of the other two. She wasn't sure that they had a coherent vision for summer recreation yet.

00:9:50

Council Member Morgan felt that the current Vision Statement in the General Plan was enough to guide the Council's actions, but there was definitely a need for more goals. She agreed with many of the comments collected by Mr. Cawley. The Ski Area, with the US Forest Service's agreement have taken over operations of the Albion Basin for summer recreation, and she envisioned the Town of Alta as being a guide in helping to oversee it. Many of the details would be determined by Alta Ski Lifts and the US Forest Service. She encouraged the Council to come up with a few items for the upcoming summer that they could share with their partners, and then the Council could continue to work on long-term goals through the rest of the year and beyond.

00:15:31

Council Member Davis would like to see the Town move toward a more semi-primitive status, with fewer cars in the canyon but more recreation opportunities. She believed that the area was close to capacity now with the number of visitors in both the summer and winter, and she wondered how it could be managed moving forward. She clarified that she wanted to see more people walking, hiking, and enjoying the outdoors in Alta, rather than just driving through.

00:19:19

Council Member Curry thought that the role of the council is to provide some community input to how the Town of Alta is used and traveled. He believed there is a revolution in transportation coming, so some of their current day concerns about transportation could look completely different in ten years. He believed that authorities with jurisdiction will have to harden the Cecret Lake Trail, because that's where all the traffic want to go. He advocated that that the Town should accommodate public demands and preserve a semi-natural open space environment in the rest of the open spaces.

00:23:32

Mayor Sondak agreed with Council Member Curry's comments about the Council needing to be flexible because things will change. The Town would meet with the Alta Ski Area before and after each ski season, and that meeting would be a good time to continue the process of refinement, adjustment, and innovation. The decision-making entities for the area were the US Forest Service, UDOT, Salt Lake County and City, the Alta Ski Area, the Central Wasatch Commission, and private property owners. The Town's decision-making ability was relatively limited compared to some other towns and cities. He agreed that the Council's job was to facilitate, make recommendations, and request changes. The Town should have some goals ready to present at the next meeting with the Alta Ski Area.

00:30:43

Council Member Bourke asked about the timeframe of the ILA and the MOU. Mayor Sondak responded that the MOU continues until October 2022, or until one of the parties withdraws.

00:34:55

Council Member Morgan said that the comments submitted by the Council were similar, but with different wording. She felt the council members were moving in the same direction. Council Member Davis appreciated Council Member Morgan's efforts in seeing consensus. Where there might be some disagreement is the idea of capacity. She suggested doing a capacity study.

Council Member Morgan didn't want the Town to be in the position of telling people that they could or could not access US Forest Service land to go hiking.

00:42:11

The discussion turned to the UDOT EIS, and Assistant Town Administrator Cawley reported that some alternatives were being proposed, including snow-sheds, intersection improvements, changes to Wasatch Boulevard, and trailhead improvements. He explained that one of the ideas was to prohibit road-side parking for a certain distance around the trailheads and increase the number of actual parking stalls in the White Pine parking lots. This wouldn't change the number of parking places for cars, but it would get more cars off the road itself.

00:46:22

There was a brief discussion regarding toilets at White Pine and the potential for composting toilets.

00:50:39

Council Member Morgan supported a capacity study, if that's what the Council wanted to do. She just didn't want to be in the business of telling people that they could or could not access the national forest.

00:52: 20

Council Member Curry said capacity can relate to the roads, parking, and/or people in the open spaces. With respect to the road, that was really UDOT's domain. Parking was essentially up to the Alta Ski Area and US Forest Service. It seemed like the Town of Alta could have some valuable input in the capacity of the open spaces and trails. He wasn't suggesting capacity as a regulatory limit, but study on behalf of the Town could establish a reasonable carrying capacity for the Albion Basin as a reference point for the community and the public to know if that capacity were being approached or exceeded.

00:55:49

Mayor Sondak ended the work session.

2. CALL TO ORDER THE REGULAR SESSION

00:56:05

Mayor Sondak called the meeting to order 10:05 a.m. and noted that Council Member Davis was present via telephone. Item 6 was discussed prior to Item 3.

6. DISTRICT 46 REPRESENTATIVE MARIE POULSON INTRODUCTION & LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

00:56:40

Utah Representative Marie Poulson introduced herself and stated that District 46 includes most of Cottonwood Heights, Murray, Holladay, Midvale, and Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons. She has been the Representative for the past ten years, and she's lived in the area for 40 years. The legislative session will begin on January 28th, and it was difficult to know what the big issues would be because there were many newly elected members this year. She was concerned with legislation that would somewhat counteract the citizens' initiatives that were passed recently. Representative Poulson remained present to listen to the Council's discussions and see what their concerns were.

Mayor Sondak said there was a desire for a community center, and the Town would accept any help from the State that they could get. He asked if the legislature would do anything about the Central Wasatch Commission, and Representative Poulson said she hadn't seen anything thus far.

Council Member Curry said another issue of interest to resort communities was the new law about driving under the influence. He asked about her position on the matter. Representative Poulson said she had attended a few sessions since the new law was initiated, and any citations that have been issued found the driver well over the 0.08 limit. She didn't think it was good for Utah to be the first state to make the change, because it seemed like it was less about public safety and more about anti-drinking. She knew that cities and towns that represented tourism in the State were highly concerned, particularly with the possibility of Utah hosting the Olympics again.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

01:07:44

Roger Bourke, asked about the Planning Commission's recommendation for an engineering study on providing sewer to the West Grizzly properties. He said the recommendation was based on the events that had been happening recently with flooding in the east, and fires in the west. Retrospectively, those things were foreseeable and could have been prevented. He felt the Planning Commission believed that contamination from the holding tanks in West Grizzly was a foreseeable disaster and the Town should do what they could to prevent it.

Mayor Sondak noted that the Town had sent an RFP to engineering firms on this issue.

01:10:54

Mark Haik asked Mayor Sondak to request an overview from Mr. Kapaloski regarding all the change applications that were presently on file with the Division of Water Rights affecting the Town of Alta. He agreed with Council Member Morgan that the Council should focus on what could be done in the near future in regards to the Albion Basin. He felt that people would self-limit and not go up on busy days. The discussion on limiting people was moot. He also encouraged the Council to advocate for private property owners in the Basin. He suggested that

the Town provide an adequate map of the land status so that patrons of the Basin would know where the private property was located.

01:16:28

Karen Travis expressed concerns with how gerrymandering negatively affects the voters of Alta. Speaking to Representative Poulson, she said that she would like to see a redistricting law that would even things out. Representative Poulson agreed this was an area of concern.

01:21:17

Mike Maughan, General Manager of the Alta Ski Area, reported that it was a good season for them, and there were a few days of very busy traffic. He thanked the Town of Alta and their Marshals for mitigating that impact. He reported that they were continuing to work with UDOT in the EIS process to find some solutions to traffic. One issue was that there was very little public land that had parking, and they were seeing an increase in patrons coming for recreations beyond the ski areas. He also met with the back country community and they were looking for solutions to their concerns about accessing US Forest land through private property. He also reported that they were seeing an increasing number of patrons from Park City, so they may want to consider providing public transportation from Park City to the Alta Ski Area.

01:31:08

Maura Olivos emphasized the importance of best management practices in land disturbance. She sent a Doodle Poll and asked stakeholders to complete it when possible regarding an upcoming ASL summer program meeting. She would get a meeting date and agenda to them as soon as possible. Regarding summer planning, she encouraged the Council to consider the reasoning behind what they want to see. She reported that ASL was offering preferred carpool parking at Wildcat Base, and they would be joining Snowbird's Ride App when it was up and running. She then listed several upcoming events.

4. MAYOR'S REPORT

01:41:13

Mayor Sondak reported on the various meetings he had attended in the past month. He also reported on the temporary dog licenses that had been granted since the last Town Council meeting.

5. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE 2017-2018 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OF THE TOWN OF ALTA—PAUL SKEEN—EIDE BAILEY

01:58:20

Paul Skeen presented the summary of the audit report, and Alana Echols went over internal control. There was an overage in the water fund, but all other funds were compliant. It was noted that Mayor Sondak needed to sign a Management Representation Letter once the Audit was reviewed.

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved that the Town Council APPROVE the 2017-2018 Financial Statements and Audit, pending review. Council Member Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

02:18:53

Town Treasurer John Guldner presented the Treasurer's Report for the period of December 10, 2018, to January 6, 2019, and highlighted a few items.

MOTION: Council Member Curry moved that the Town Council APPROVE the Treasurer's Report for the period of December 10, 2018, to January 6, 2019. Council Member Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent of the Council.

8. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

02:30:52

Assistant Town Administrator Cawley reported that he had attended a few meetings to discuss another application to the Wasatch Front Regional Council's Transportation and Land Use Connection Ramp program. Alta had received grants from the program in the past, and the project they were envisioning was to hire a project manager to help program out several years' worth of revenues from the 4th quarter sales tax money. He noted that this money had to be spent on transportation projects. That application was due next week.

02:33:15

Town Clerk Piper Lever said Jen Clancy, Deputy Town Clerk, wasn't present, but she wanted to report that they were expecting to renew another 25 dog licenses. They were also working on the new accounts receivable module setup and asked for the Council's patience as staff was trained on the new system.

02:34:00

Town Administrator John Guldner said the January 22nd Planning Commission meeting was postponed. Their next meeting would take place on February 26th.

02:36:54

Town Marshal Mike Morey said they had received communication about people wanting to be included on the Alta Central email and text list. He encouraged people to follow the Alta Central Twitter account feed, which presented identical information to the emails and texts.

9. APPROVAL OF THE TOWN COUNCIL DECEMBER 13, 2018, MEETING MINUTES AND TREASURER'S REPORT

02:44:00

The Council briefly discussed the minutes, and it was requested that the minutes be distributed to the Council a few days earlier so that they would have time to submit edits and resend them before the next Town Council meeting.

MOTION: Council Member Morgan moved that the Town Council APPROVE the minutes from the December 13, 2018, Town Council Meeting, as amended. Council Member Bourke seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

10. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 27, 2018, WORK SESSION MINUTES

02:24:50

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved that the Town Council APPROVE the minutes from the November 27, 2018, Work Session, as amended. Council Member Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

11. DISCUSSION OF TOWN OF ALTA GOALS FOR ALBION BASIN SUMMER RECREATION EXPERIENCE AS IT RELATES TO THE VISION STATEMENT IN THE 2005 ALTA GENERAL PLAN

This item was discussed during the work session.

13. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING TOWN COUNCIL MEETING STRUCTURE AND PROPOSED LANGUAGE

02:48:32

Mayor Sondak said that some of the organizations he was involved in had an open-ended meeting schedule, and some had a set timeframe. He asked if the Council would consider having a Town Council meeting scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. He suggested including an hour-long work session before the regular meeting to have discussion items.

Council Member Morgan was in favor of establishing an end time, and said it would be good to include more discussion topics in a work session.

Council Member Bourke said it would be difficult for her to make it to the meeting by 9:00 a.m. because the lifts don't open until that time. It may also be difficult for people coming up from the valley to make it by 9:00 a.m., depending on weather and traffic.

After some discussion, the Council decided to try having a work session beginning at 9:00 or 9:15 a.m., and establishing an end time of 12:00 p.m.

12. CWC UPDATE – MAYOR SONDAK

03:01:14

Mayor Sondak reported on the actions and discussions from the last Central Wasatch Commission meeting. There were multiple interests competing over the use of federal ground in the Central Wasatch, and the private ground in Central Wasatch was an issue of contention because people have used it as if it were public ground. The Mountain Accord has proved less stable than hoped.

13. ANNOUNCE PRELIMINARY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

The Preliminary Budget Committee Meeting will take place February 7, 2019, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the conference room.

14. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES AND ZONING ORDINANCE

This discussion was continued to the next work session.

15. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

16. MOTION TO ADJORN

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved to ADJOURN at 12:24 p.m. Council Member Curry seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

Passed and approved this 14th day of February, 2019.

Piper Lever, Town Clerk / S