

**MINUTES**  
**ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 3:30 PM**  
Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** John Guldner, Town Administrator  
Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator  
Piper Lever, Town Clerk  
Jen Clancy, Deputy Town Clerk  
Mike Morey, Town Marshal  
Polly McLean, Town Attorney  
Jay Torgersen, UFA

**OTHERS:** Mike Maughan, Alta Ski Area; Kyle Maynard, Friends of Alta; Karen Travis; Rashelle Hobbs, Salt Lake County Recorder's Office; Josh Van Jura, UDOT EIS Team; Brianna Binnebose, UDOT EIS Team; Vincent Izzo, UDOT EIS Team

**WORK SESSION**

00:01:07

Mayor Sondak stated that having an anchor meeting location presented a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who might be present in that anchor location, given the continuing evidence that large gatherings are ill-advised amid the pandemic. He noted that positive cases have been rising, therefore, Alta will continue meeting without an anchor location. He stated that this declaration will expire on August 6, 2020.

**1. FY2021 BUDGET QUESTIONS**

00:02:20

Staff and elected officials briefly discussed the budget, including recommended changes. Council Member Margaret Bourke asked if the Town should engage a management consultant to assist in evaluating costs and expenditures. She suggested the way to move forward could be through a multidisciplinary graduate program. She also inquired on ACVB, explaining that last month there was no demonstrated return on investment. In addition, Council Member Margaret Bourke discussed the impact fund expenditures for the feasibility study, as well as the timeline for the study. She suggested that the funds could still be used within the given timeline due to the pandemic, but just not yet. Lastly, Council Member Bourke was concerned with whether or not

the Town was encouraging adequate water conservation; she offered several ideas to address this point.

Mayor Sondak stated that Salt Lake County offered its finance director, Darren Casper's, expertise to review the risks that Alta was facing due to low sales tax revenues. Mayor Sondak then noted that the University of Utah's School of Business was offering businesses teams of students to do consulting, as Council Member Bourke was suggesting. He would contact the person running that program. With regards to ACVB, Mayor Sondak recalled that while funds were allocated in the budget for this item, staff was advised not to expend those funds until the end of the year. Staff confirmed this was the case. There was further discussion regarding water conservation efforts being made in Alta. The suggestion was made to review the Town's water rate structure.

Council Member Margaret Bourke said while the impact fees were earmarked for capital improvement projects, it was possible to use impact fees beyond the end of the six-year-period..

## **2. WATER FUND EXPENSE**

00:10:36

The Town would be purchasing a new software module that would integrate with Caselle (the Town's accounting system) which was specifically designed to assist in utility billing. The software would also indicate monthly water usage.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

00:33:28

Mayor Sondak called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM and expressed appreciation for those in attendance.

### **2. CITIZEN INPUT** (Comments could be submitted in writing to [plever@townofalta.com](mailto:plever@townofalta.com) before 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7, 2020.)

00:33:56

Kyle Maynard commented on the UDOT EIS Presentation. He stated that Friends of Alta had long been an advocate for busses and utilizing the existing road infrastructure. Outside of specific transit preferences, the group had some concerns. Those concerns included 1) the use of mass transit as a pressure release valve for the road; and 2) the estimation of visitorship and the number of travelers per hour presented an efficiency problem to which the Council should inquire.

### **3. SLCo RECORDER'S OFFICE PROPERTY WATCH PRESENTATION** – *Rashelle Hobbs*

00:38:35

Rashelle Hobbs explained that the Salt Lake County Recorder's Office recorded every transaction that had to do with real property. They maintained a database of over 14 million documents, and

each property recordation had to be reviewed for accuracy. This process was time consuming and she had a great team of 42 employees that assisted in those efforts. So far this year they had recorded over 157,000 documents, and they were on target to have a record-setting year. Ms. Hobbs reported that the Salt Lake County Recorder's Office visited all the 16 senior centers in Salt Lake County to offer seniors complete records of their properties, free of charge. She explained that the Property Watch Program was created internally to notify residents via email of any changes made to their properties. In conclusion, Ms. Hobbs noted that per State law, property sales were not public information.

#### **4. UDOT EIS LLC TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES REPORT** – *Josh Van Jura*

00:56:01

Josh Van Jura, UDOT Project Manager, introduced Bri Binnebose, UDOT Communications Manager, and Vince Izzo, Consultant. Mr. Van Jura explained that the study area was SR-210, which starts at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon and runs up through the Town of Alta. He discussed traffic issues that sometimes occurred at the mouth of the canyon, particularly on busy ski days, when there was an over-capacity. Traffic modeling suggested that in the design year 2050, the travel times up the canyon were going to regularly reach the 80- to 85-minute range. UDOT's goal was to substantially improve the safety, reliability, and mobility of this study area. He compared the mobility issues of the canyon to those along Wasatch Boulevard. He discussed the process and schedule by which the three proposed alternatives were determined. Those three alternatives were, (1) an enhanced bus service, (2) enhanced bus service plus a bus service lane, and (3) a gondola. Mr. Van Jura explained the pros and cons of each of these options.

Council Member Sheridan Davis asked if UDOT had determined an upper limit of human capacity. If so, she wanted to know how that determination was made. Mr. Van Jura said no, explaining that because the goal was to determine how to get users to the two developed sites in Snowbird and Alta, the carrying capacity was not required because the required permitting for UDOT is a different process, whereas capacity falls under the purview of US Forest Service management. He continued explaining that UDOT took growth projections for its thirty-year planning horizon and backtracked into traffic modeling to determine how to reach the mobility goal. They assessed the percentage of people who needed to ride the transit alternative; from there, they determined transit alternatives that reached the mobility goal in the canyon and on Wasatch Boulevard, which included queuing.

Mr. Vince Izzo added that UDOT referenced data from the 30<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> busiest days during the year to make its projections. There was subsequent discussion on the matter.

Council Member Margaret Bourke was concerned about how overcapacity would affect mobility, given there was not additional acreage available for expansion. She was not sure that any of the solutions presented were long term. Mr. Van Jura stated that the 30-year planning horizon was standard. However, he acknowledged that there would be changes occurring beyond that time frame.

Mr. Van Jura concluded that the goal was not to put more people in the canyon; rather, it was to make the roadway and travel in the canyon reasonable.

5. **ALTA SKI AREA UPDATE** – *Mike Maughan*

01:30:10

Mike Maughan reported that the Alta Ski Area was up and running for the summer. The fee booth, campground store, and campground were open, with reservations beginning this weekend. All CDC guidelines were being followed for safety measures. He noted that the Albion parking project was also going well; the dirt had been moved and a gutter was currently being poured, with paving happening the following week. Mr. Maughan reported that the trail project was progressing. The heavy equipment had been moved up to Devil's Castle Road for a sloping project.

Mr. Maughan reported that winter operations were still uncertain at this point in time; however, they were actively collecting information from as many sources as possible on the matter. The U.S. Forest Service had informed them that all of the parking areas within Alta Ski Area's Special Use Permit were assets of the ski area. As such, they had the right to restrict parking within those areas as they saw fit, which could potentially affect backcountry skiers. Other alternatives were also on the table. Mr. Maughan explained that Alta Ski Area estimated a revenue loss of \$250,000 due to parking spots being taken by non-Alta skiers.

Council Member Margaret Bourke remarked that the summer road was well-graded. She thanked Mr. Maughan for the efforts that went into that project. She also thanked Mr. Maughan for Alta Ski Area's backcountry rescues that had occurred this summer. With regard to Devil's Castle Road, she noted that the track vehicles were creating the wash-boarding that developed over the summer. Lastly, she asked if there would be increased parking at the Albion parking lot as a result of the work taking place there. Mr. Maughan answered affirmatively.

*Note: Council Member Elise Morgan briefly left the meeting.*

6. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

- June 17, 2020 Minutes
- Treasurer's Reports
- Staff Reports

01:43:58

**MOTION:** Council Member Margaret Bourke moved to APPROVE the Consent Agenda. Council Member Sheridan Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

Council Member Sheridan Davis asked Mike Morey, Town Marshal, to convey his thoughts surrounding the murder of George Floyd. Mike Morey, Town Marshal, stated that no one at the Town Marshal's Office was okay with what happened surrounding the murder of George Floyd. Mayor Sondak read from the June 17, 2020, Town Council Minutes wherein Mr. Morey had previously remarked on this issue. He asked Mr. Morey if the minutes accurately conveyed his thoughts on the matter, to which Mr. Morey answered affirmatively.

## **7. QUESTIONS REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

01:47:47

Council Member Margaret Bourke asked Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator, about the number and timing of respondents to a recent survey. She also inquired upon some of UDOT's summer projects, and the funding surrounding those projects. Mr. Cawley explained that the planning was completed for UDOT's summer projects several months ago, and therefore the Town had little influence on design, scope, and funding, referenced in the aforementioned survey.

## **8. UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY – Jay Torgersen**

01:52:27

Jay Torgersen, Unified Fire Authority, stated that the most reported COVID-19 cases hit a record high at 722 as of today's date. Operationally, the fire department was still managing to keep up, as were other departments in the valley. There was a sharp increase in the Salt Lake valley over the last three to four weeks. If this trend were to continue, the State's epidemiologist was concerned about overwhelming the hospital system. The State was watching capacity for beds and ventilator systems. UFA's continuous recommendation was to self-isolate, observe social distancing standards, and maintain good hygiene. UFA is observing certain protocols in training and station operations. Mr. Torgersen reported a 40% increase in calls over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. The wildland fire crew had been busy with fires around the Salt Lake area as well with other fires in Arizona and New Mexico. Mr. Torgersen reported that UFA had started a strategic plan update, which helped evaluate the department's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the direction stakeholders wanted the department to move towards in the future. UFA welcomed input from the town and businesses to that process.

Mayor Sondak asked how UFA was doing on personal protective equipment (PPE). Mr. Torgersen reported that per the Logistics Division Chief, UFA was doing fine in this area.

## **9. MAYOR'S REPORT**

02:08:01

Mayor Sondak stated that COVID-19 was still the main issue affecting the community. He reminded everyone of updated rules regarding face masks in public places in Salt Lake, Grand, and Summit Counties. He further reported that the CARES Act funding had been received in an amount of just over \$11,000. Mayor Sondak had requested that the Town of Alta have more of its expenses reimbursed; he believed they would be receiving more funding in addition to the per capita allocation. There was a new intergovernmental liaison with Salt Lake County: Lisa Hartman. Mayor Sondak noted that due to COVID-19, the park was being kept closed. He reported having attended a conference with other mayors regarding CARES Act funding. He noted a website containing more information on the matter.

Mayor Sondak reported that he met with the US Forest Service and ski area regarding a closure order for staying on trails in various parts of Albion Basin. He discussed reopening plans at the University of Utah. The next Alta Town Council meeting would be on August 12, 2020.

Temporary dog licenses issued this month included: Paxton Maeder, Pam Labadie, and Brooke Maclean.

**10. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ADOPTING NEW WATER RATES 2020-R-17**

02:16:59

**MOTION:** Council Member Elise Morgan moved to APPROVE Resolution 2020-R-17. Council Member Cliff Curry seconded the motion.

Council Member Margaret Bourke stated that overages should be tiered to encourage water conservation. She suggested the Town of Alta discount rates for people who pay for water usage a year in advance. Mayor Sondak noted that the arrangement with UFA would not affect property taxpayers' taxes until they were due in November 2021. There was consensus among Council Members that the Town would reach out to Keith Hansen regarding its efforts to promote water conservation. Mayor Sondak suggested reviewing information in January 2021, Council Member Cliff Curry suggested making rates be an incentive to help users save money and water.

Mayor Sondak called the question. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

**11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO ADOPT 2020-R-18; CORRECTING THE CERTIFIED TAX RATE AS ADOPTED IN JUNE 2020**

02:30:04

**MOTION:** Council Member Margaret Bourke moved to APPROVE Resolution 2020-R-18. Council Member Sheridan Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

02:33:16

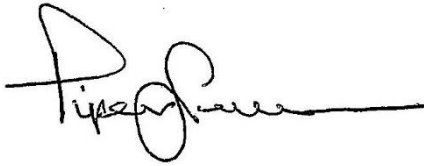
Council Member Margaret Bourke suggested establishing a committee to explore other options regarding the Town's public safety, fire, and medical expenses. Council Members Cliff Curry and Sheridan Davis were both supportive of this suggestion. Mayor Sondak stated that he did not think any part of the budget could be committed to that effort this year. Council Member Margaret Bourke suggested the committee be comprised of members of the community. Council members expressed willingness to receive information and ideas from an unofficial committee of citizens on this matter. John Guldner volunteered himself and Mike Morey to be part of that committee. Mr. Torgersen also suggested an opportunity for citizens to join the UFA strategic planning effort to review strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and to bring forward a different fee structure.

**13. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

02:42:47

**MOTION:** Council Member Elise Morgan moved to ADJOURN at 6:13 pm. Council Member Sheridan Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

APPROVED by the Town Council on August 12, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Piper Lever", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Piper Lever, Town Clerk