

MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, November 12, 2020, 3:30 PM
Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

PRESENT: Mayor Harris Sondak
Council Member Margaret Bourke
Council Member Cliff Curry
Council Member Sheridan Davis
Council Member Elise Morgan

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

WORK SESSION

- **MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT) PRESENTATION ON REOPENING DURING COVID-19**

00:00:05

Mayor Sondak called the work session to order at 3:30 PM. He read the Letter of Determination regarding conducting the Town of Alta public meetings without an anchor location, which applies to this work session and the regular session directly following.

I, Mayor Sondak, hereby determine that conducting a meeting with an anchor location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at an anchor location, Pursuant to Utah Code Section 52-4-207(4), and [Alta] Resolution 2020-R-12. The facts upon which this determination is based, include the percentage number of positive COVID-19 cases in Utah has been significantly higher since May 27, 2020. The seven-day average of cases has been over 1,726 since November 2, 2020. The COVID-19 patients in Utah hospitals have increased during the same period. Over half the State cases are in Salt Lake County. As of November 2, 2020, there have been 620 deaths in Utah due to COVID-19. This meeting will not have a physical anchor location. All attendees will connect remotely. Attendees may join the webinar by registering for the meeting through the Town website: www.townofalta.com, or the meeting can be watched on YouTube. Additionally, comments may be emailed to the Town Clerk at plever@townofalta.com. This determination will expire in 30 days on December 3, 2020.

00:02:05

Mayor Sondak noted that there had been some requests to postpone the item regarding the zoning ordinance, which was to be the main topic of the work session. The Town Council had agreed to postpone the item. The work session would be used to hear a presentation from MIT regarding reopening during COVID-19.

00:06:10

Four students of MIT presented data and other information collected regarding COVID-19 and provided recommendations for safe reopening. Their analysis was based on MIT research that had been, and continued to be used, to make decisions on MIT campus surrounding dorm capacities, dining hall capacities, and so on. The equations used to make these recommendations included calculations of air flow, particle travel, and other factors influenced by mechanical engineering. They presented their findings and explained that chair lifts were generally low risk, even when stationary. Chair lift lines were a little riskier, and it was important to enforce face coverings and keep the volume of conversation down. A locker room was higher in risk, but it could still be mitigated. They recommended limiting capacity to ten people at a time, keeping talking to a minimum, and adding a HEPA filter. The area with the highest risk was indoor dining, even with distanced seating and limited capacity. To mitigate the risk, they recommended limiting dining time, reducing capacity, and adding HEPA filters. Even with those mitigation efforts, they were unable to calculate an infection rate below half a percent. Other recommendations included daily wellness checks for employees. More information would be available on their website.

Link to MIT presentation:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/13AUWjZfSekW8rss-ZnXnJ0T327SvpFuDfunMf62qEqE/present?slide=id.g54124bca6c_0_15#slide=id.ga9c12f2a4e_0_177

There was a discussion regarding the dining situation and potential mitigation efforts.

The work session was adjourned at 3:59 PM.

REGULAR SESSION

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION LETTER READING REGARDING NO ANCHOR LOCATION

00:32:32

Mayor Sondak called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and stated that he had read the Letter of Determination at the beginning of the Work Session.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

00:33:20

Town Clerk Piper Lever said that staff had received a letter from Del Draper, that was provided to the Town Council and posted on the website.

Kyle Maynard stated he had comments regarding the zoning ordinance, but since that had been delayed, he took a moment to thank staff and the Town Council for the time and effort put into the ordinance. He also thanked the Council for agreeing to postpone the item for further discussion.

Pat Shea echoed Mr. Maynard's words of appreciation and commented on the jurisdictional issue.

Brent Pratt asked that the Town Council consider the Utah CPACE program. He read a short description of the program. He requested that the Council expedite the program and allow the resort to recapitalize their property.

Mayor Sondak assured Mr. Pratt that they were currently looking into this. They wanted to support local businesses, but they wanted to be sure it was a viable program for the Town to be involved in.

Sean Ribble, Director for Green Works Landing, explained that this was the direct capital group that works on CPACE. He provided a background of the company and the program, and he invited the Council to visit utahcpace.com for more information and /or contact him directly with any questions.

3. SKI AREA UPDATE – *Mike Maughan*

00:47:55

Mike Maughan, with the Alta Ski Area, reported that they received roughly 32 inches of snow during the last storm, and they were already seeing skiers. Unfortunately, many of the skiers didn't seem interested in wearing masks or staying physically distanced. They were continuing to make preparations to open the ski area, with a target date of November 21st. There were concerns about opening on a Saturday, so they were still considering alternative dates. They continued to monitor what was happening in the industry overall.

00:52:30

Mayor Sondak noted that a ski area in Colorado had chosen to open without advertising it, and he asked if this was something they would consider in Alta. Mr. Maughan confirmed that they could open early without advertisement. This would allow them to test the systems they've put in place without being overwhelmed by patrons. They already anticipated closures to parking lots over Thanksgiving weekend to keep numbers down. Mayor Sondak then asked if it were plausible to open only with skiing and restrooms. Mr. Maughan answered affirmatively. If COVID-19 numbers continued to climb, they might not be able to operate restaurants or even ski lifts.

00:56:00

Council Member Bourke asked about Alf's, and Mr. Maughan reported that the project had been completed and they had received the certificate of occupancy. The expansion included an outdoor coffee and waffle shop and restrooms on the lower level. They were looking at limiting dining time to 30 minutes.

There was a brief discussion regarding overall capacity limitations.

4. UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY (UFA) UPDATE

01:01:35

Jay Torgerson provided a report from UFA, including the Quarter 3 statistics. With the increased number of COVID-19 cases in the valley, they were also seeing an increase in cases among employees, which notably were traced to family interactions and not work activity. If the numbers continue to increase, they could face staffing issues. There were plans in place to mitigate those issues. He confirmed that all meetings would be held digitally until further notice.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- Treasurers Report for October 2020
- Town Council Meeting minutes for October 14, 2020
- Staff Report

01:08:40

MOTION: Council Member Davis moved that the Town Council APPROVE the Consent Agenda. Council Member Bourke seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

6. QUESTIONS REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

01:09:28

Council Member Davis asked about the number of suicide attempts happening in the canyon. Town Marshal Mike Morey said that he didn't have statistical information beyond what was provided in the staff report. The number of people in mental health crisis that they've encountered over the past six months was higher than what they're used to seeing. Internally, this issue was discussed frequently. Officers were being trained for overdose situations, and they were working on getting Narcan supplies in every vehicle.

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

01:13:32

Mayor Sondak commented on the COVID-19 numbers that they were seeing in Utah. The mood at the Salt Lake County Health Department was grim. The most recent emergency order from the Governor was linked on the Town's website. He urged everyone to be extra cautious with their holiday plans. There had been some discussion of testing protocol for Alta Ski Lifts, and the Alta Clinic had made some progress on this. The availability of the tests themselves seemed to be the limiting factor. Mayor Sondak had sent requests to both the County and the State about getting more testing capability for the community. He then expressed his concerns for maintaining COVID safety during emergency evacuation situations in the canyon. He had been working with UTA on this issue. Mayor Sondak also reported on the results of the recent election, the CARES

Act Funds, the selection of a new auditing firm, and the meetings he attended since the last Council meeting. He reported the temporary dog licenses, as follows:

- George Fett 30 days (10/9 -11/8) Grizzly Gulch
- Tricia Petzold 14 days (10/9 – 10/22) Peruvian Areas
- Rion Martell 3 days (10/9 10/11) Peruvian Areas
- Whitney Harris 4 days (10/15 – 10/11) Blackjack Road

8. INTRODUCTION TO UTAH RANKED CHOICE VOTING – KORY HOLDAWAY

01:34:32

Kory Holdaway presented information regarding ranked choice voting. The group Utah Ranked Choice Voting was a 501(c)3 organization that was created to promote ranked choice voting throughout the state. More information could be found at utahrankedchoicevoting.com. Currently, the group was working to get this information to municipalities in preparation for the next municipal election. In 2018, the Utah Legislature passed a bill allowing cities to use ranked choice voting in municipal elections, and two cities utilized this type of voting in the last election. Both cities reported positive results. He briefly described how ranked choice voting worked and stated that the purpose was to get a majority vote for one candidate. Ranked choice voting led to a more civil campaign process, since candidates would seek to appeal to the voters rather than post a negative campaign against another candidate. If the Town of Alta was interested in utilizing ranked choice voting, the Council would be asked to pass a resolution notifying the lieutenant governor's office by April 15th. He noted that Salt Lake County was looking into this for the upcoming elections. The Council should also send an informal letter to the County Clerk to let her know of their interest.

Mayor Sondak added that this could potentially save on costs, because it would do away with a primary election.

Council Member Bourke asked if there was a potential downside to ranked choice voting. Mr. Holdaway said that the biggest pushback he hears was concern about voter confusion. The key to avoiding voter confusion was simply educating the public on the new system.

Mayor Sondak felt this would be an improvement to the current voting system, and Council Member Bourke expressed support for pursuing this type of voting.

9. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT)

01:51:55

Mayor Sondak noted that this presentation was made during the work session.

10. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ORDINANCE 2020-O-4 SUPPORTING LAND USE AMENDMENTS

01:52:40

Mayor Sondak explained that there were questions raised about jurisdiction over uninhabitable structures, and it was requested that the item to be continued for further discussion. If the item were postponed tonight, there would be a conversation between the Friends of Alta, the Alta Ski Lifts Company, Town Staff, and the Town Council. He hoped that they would be able to reconcile the concerns.

MOTION: Council Member Curry moved that the Town Council TABLE the Discussion and Possible Action on Ordinance 2020-O-4 to the December Town Council Meeting. Council Member Davis seconded the motion.

Council Member Curry commented on the items of concern. He agreed that there should be an exemption for Ski Area structures on Forest Service Property, but not for private property. He also asked if different sections of the zoning ordinance could be voted on separately. This would allow the Council Members to vote for or against specific items.

Town Attorney Polly McLean said that the Council could look at voting on each section separately.

The Council agreed that this should also be included on the next work session agenda.

A vote was taken, and the motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXPLORING PUBLIC SAFETY COSTS AND SERVICES

02:03:20

Council Member Bourke explained that earlier this year, she was part of a committee that was investigating public safety costs and how the Town could potentially pay for those costs. Due to COVID-19, there was a lot of uncertainty with budgetary items, and she felt this was a good time to explore other funding sources. One alternative funding source investigated was implementing a fee related to providing enhanced and disproportionate municipal services. Westminster College had expressed interest in doing a study for the Town of Alta to research costs and possible allocation for disproportionate and enhanced services. Council Member Bourke requested that the Council put an item on the December 2020 agenda to review a potential study proposal and ultimately, consider voting to fund such a study.

Mayor Sondak commented that the Town had done a study on business licenses somewhat recently and asked John Guldner what the rules on procurement would be for such a study. Counsel Polly McLean said she had just reviewed the matter and that for purchases estimated between \$2,000-\$15,000, 3 telephone bids were allowed, but for excess of \$15,000, an RFP is required. Town Administrator John Guldner said the business license study was done 8-9 years ago at a cost of about \$10,000 and it was probably time to do another study for business licenses, but he wasn't sure if these two items could be studied together or should happen separately. Town Clerk Piper Lever said that the study considered disproportionate and enhanced services as part of the study. When asked, Piper said she would send the study out to the Council. Jen Clancy said the study was dated 2012.

The Council discussed the potential of the study and were generally in favor of Council Member Bourke continuing her communications with Westminster College to find out scope and cost of a study and provide a funding proposal the Council at the December meeting. Concerns were raised related to budget and staff time required to conduct a study

12. **NEW BUSINESS**

02:24:45

There was no new business.

13. **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

02:25:10

MOTION: Council Member Davis moved to ADJOURN at 5:55 PM. Council Member Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

APPROVED by the Town Council on Dec 9, 2020

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

Piper Lever, Town Clerk

