

MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 3:00 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

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

- **DISCUSSION OF ZONING ORDINANCE CHANGES**

00:18:50

Mayor Sondak called the work session to order at 3:00 PM and noted that Council Member Morgan was excused. 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 1,035 since October 5, 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 October 5, 2020, there have been 488 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 November 7, 2020.

00:21:37

Town Administrator John Guldner said that there was one item left for the Council to reach a consensus on with the zoning ordinance changes. That could be found on Page 10 of the redline

version of the draft document. This part of the ordinance dealt with stream regulations, and structures that were exempt from setback and building requirements. Staff included a list of possible exemptions, and they understood that the list could not include every possible structure. The proposed language clearly states that these items would be exempt only if such structures met the regulatory standards of the agencies that have jurisdiction over the property. That clause was also added to another section of the code regarding building permits. In the previous meeting, concerns had been raised about other agency's ordinances being out-of-date with current science. The suggestion was made to add language requiring approval from the Town's Building Official or Engineer. If this were the case, the ordinance would include a list of parameters for the Building Official or Engineer to follow. This issue was not resolved during the last meeting.

00:27:52

Mayor Sondak's concern was how the Town could make sure development was consistent with current science, since that was out of their expertise. Other entities had been charged with protecting the area, and he felt that they could rely on those partners.

00:29:43

Council Member Davis agreed that other agencies were reliable partners, but the Town Council was the one overarching entity that looks at the culture, geography, and ecosystem as a whole for the Town of Alta. This was an opportunity to have more cooperation between agencies. She leaned toward Council Member Bourke's suggested language, which would set the bar higher for development coming into the area.

00:31:14

Mayor Sondak asked that Council Member Bourke's proposed language be put onto the screen for review and discussion. Council Member Bourke described the purpose of the proposed language. She echoed the concern that each entity was focused on a specific goal, while the Town of Alta was focused on the area as a whole. The Council was responsible for seeing the big picture. The purpose of the language was to grandfather in current structures and treat them as if they conform to current standards. The ordinance would allow the building official to work with the various entities to see what was current acceptable science and ensure that it was being followed. They needed to keep the ecosystem as healthy as possible. Mayor Sondak said that the proposed language states that the Town would be fine with minor improvements, so long as they were approved by other relevant agencies. He didn't understand the role of the building official in these instances. Council Member Bourke said that this language would allow the building official to see site plans that were approved by other entities. The Town should know about things before they happen rather than after the fact. Staff confirmed that the current ordinance did not require plans for minor improvements to be submitted to the Town.

00:43:53

Mayor Sondak was not at all opposed to development complying with the relevant agency's ordinances. The real questions were: what must be delivered to the Town, and what was the role of the Town. Council Member Bourke brought up the concern of land changing ownership in the future, and all of the buildings on that land would be suddenly non-conforming. Town Attorney Polly McLean wasn't sure that the proposed language actually protected the Town in the way that she wanted. There was some discussion regarding the language. Council Member Curry

encouraged the Council to come to a consensus and vote on this action during the November meeting.

00:55:08

Mayor Sondak stated that the approval of the zoning changes was on the agenda for that night. He requested that the action item be postponed.

- **ALTA CHAMBER VISITOR BUREAU**

00:55:41

Assistant Town Administrator Chris Cawley introduced the Board of Directors of the Alta Chamber and Visitors Bureau (ACVB).

Rosie O'Grady, President of the Board, gave a presentation regarding ACVB and upcoming adjustments to the organization. ACVB started in 2011, and the purpose of that organization was to increase awareness of vacation opportunities in Alta, provide visitor information, and provide marketing opportunities for all members. Funding come from the Town of Alta (80%) and membership fees (20%). ACVB will be entering into a new partnership with Alta Community Enrichment (ACE), and the Board felt that this would be a great benefit to the Town and the members of ACVB. As part of that change, the position of ACVB Coordinator would be suspended. The four pillars of the new strategic plan are: Destination Marketing, Community-Guided Visitor Information, Public Arts and Events, and Membership Services.

There was a brief discussion regarding the collection of membership fees, and when invoices should be sent out.

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**

01:21:38

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

2. **CITIZEN INPUT**

01:22:10

Mayor Sondak said that a comment has been submitted by Mark Haik regarding the way that the Town of Alta was funding Fire and Emergency Services. The full written comment is attached to the minutes.

1:24:56

John Bryne, a resident, commented on the proposed ordinance amendment regarding service animals.

3. WATER SYSTEM UPDATE – *Keith Hansen*

01:26:26

Keith Hansen said that it had been nearly a year since he had spoken with the Council, and he felt it was appropriate to provide an update on what had been happening lately. The Town of Alta was awarded a grant from the Bureau of Reclamation for new equipment in Bay City Mine. After getting approval from the Division of Drinking Water, they were able to order the new equipment in mid-August of this year. They were able to install new LED lighting in the mine, and they purchased a new 50 horse-power, submersible pump to replace one of the existing pumps. The pump would be installed during the second week of November, since the rail track had to be repaired before the equipment could be taken into the mine. Rather than getting rid of the old pump, they had opted to keep it in the mine in the case of an emergency. A new water meter had also been delivered and would be installed before November 1st.

01:35:20

Mr. Hansen next addressed the treatment plant. They were to a point where the media in Filter A needed to be replaced. They purchased the replacement media, but there was a process to disposing of old media. Unfortunately, the samples taken showed high levels of toxicity, which meant that the media could not be disposed of locally. This would increase the disposal cost significantly. The normal cost of disposal was \$2,000, but the disposal of this load would be closer to \$6,500. He noted that the media in Filter B would need to be replaced around this same time next year. The life of the filters could be extended if they lower the PH but doing so created other problems in the system. They briefly discussed temporarily storing the media until it could be disposed of. This would allow the media to be replaced sooner rather than later.

01:47:25

Mr. Hansen then addressed sewer, which was the last item of his report. This summer, they had to replace a mainline section of sewer in the canyon between manholes 122 and 128. As part of that project, they eliminated five manholes. The Town of Alta was responsible for a portion of those costs, and they should be receiving a bill for roughly \$30,000. In their normal maintenance of the sewer line, they discovered a crack in the line between the Gold Miner's Daughter and the Peruvian. The crack was not causing a loss of sewage into the environment, but it was a sign of aging infrastructure. This portion of the sewer line was 30 feet underground. Mr. Hansen's recommendation was to patch the crack as a short-term protection. The line would need to be replaced in the future.

4. UTAH DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION WINTER OPERATIONS UPDATE – *Jake Brown, Damian Jackson*

01:53:41

Jake Brown, with UDOT, said that their communications team had been working hard to get things ready for the winter season in Little Cottonwood Canyon. They would be implementing the sticker program again this year, and the mouth of the canyon would be widened. Currently, they were working to change the traction law for the canyon, which would allow UDOT to require snow tires and all-wheel-drive vehicles at all times in the canyon. They would be doing road closures to reduce overcrowding. Mr. Brown was confident in their plans for snow clearing and traffic control. There would also be a method in which the resorts could send word to the mouth of the canyon to let visitors know if they had reached capacity.

02:05:20

Damian Jackson provided an update on operational procedures for potential avalanche closures and other emergencies. Their primary goal was to keep people safe, and prevent situations where visitors are trapped in the canyon or at the resorts.

Mayor Sondak noted that they did not expect to be shooting artillery over the town this year, except for a few properties near the Hellgate Cliffs.

5. SKI AREA UPDATE – *Mike Maughan*

02:23:30

Mike Maughan, Alta Ski Area, expressed appreciation for the Town of Alta and UDOT for working with the Ski Area to prepare for the winter season this year. They had wrapped up summer operations and the campground was closed. The punch list for Alf's expansion project was being completed. The snow making system would soon be running tests, and they could be making snow for the last week in November, if weather permitted. Mr. Maughan addressed the winter operations plan for this year, which included limiting capacity to 55% on all indoor spaces, the elimination of the children's ski program, take-away food options, and having physical distance markers and signage. They would have a more definitive plan for food and beverages once those managers arrived in Alta. The Alta Ski Area was exploring ways to limit capacity through parking, UTA would be running at 20 people per bus, and Ride Share vans would be reduced. Mr. Maughan felt optimistic about the upcoming season.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- Treasurers Report for September 2020
- Town Council Meeting minutes for September 9, 2020
- Staff Report

02:37:10

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

7. UFA REPORT – *Jay Torgersen*

02:38:10

Jay Torgerson reported that UFA was continuing with their COVID Response Plan. They had seen a significant increase in cases over the past week, but they had not seen an increase in call volumes. They hadn't seen a transfer of COVID-19 between employees and patients. Most of the employee cases were happening between employees or outside social situations. UFA was currently in the process of a Captain's Test and a new recruitment program. They anticipated hiring 30 new employees in February. He also reported on deployments and specific situations they responded to in the past month.

8. QUESTIONS REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

02:53:30

There were no questions.

Town Clerk Piper Lever said that staff had been approached by Momentum Recycling about the company taking over the billing of glass recycling. Mayor Sondak requested that staff send applicable information to the Council so that it could be discussed and action taken at the November meeting.

9. MAYOR'S REPORT

02:55:15

Mayor Sondak reported that Town Office continued to operate with one employee at a time, and they were not accepting walk-ins. On Saturday, October 3rd, a postal employee tested positive for COVID-19. They followed procedure and disinfected the entire post office over the weekend. They were able to reopen the post office that Monday. Mayor Sondak provided a report on the meetings he had attended during the past month and listed upcoming meetings. Ballots had been mailed out, and there was a legitimate ballot box in Alta for the residents to use. During the next meeting, there would be a presentation regarding Rank Choice Voting, and the Town had until March 2021 to implement that system, if they chose to. Mayor Sondak reported the temporary dog licenses, as follows:

- Mariana Abelson: 3 days (9/5 – 9/7) Blackjack Rd
- Alexandra Meiners: 6 days (9/11 – 9/16) The Meadows
- Brooke McMasters: 3 days (9/18 -9/20) Albion Basin
- Nick Besobrasov: 3 days (9/24 - 9/26) Powder Ridge
- Theresa Levy: 9 days (9/25 -10/3) Blackjack Rd
- Anna Levy: 9 days (9/25 -10/3) Blackjack Rd
- Alexandra Meiners: 30 days (9/29 – 10/28) The Meadows
- John Philips: 2 days (9/30 – 10/1) Powder Ridge
- Kathleen Moore: 10 days (10/2 – 10/11) Blackjack Road
- Forrest Bourke: 8 days (10/4 – 10/11) Grizzly Gulch

It was noted that the next Town Council meeting would take place on November 12th, rather than the 11th.

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

03:20:52

MOTION: Mayor Sondak moved that the Town Council TABLE the Discussion and Possible Action on Ordinance 2020-O-4 to the next Town Council Meeting, and to discuss the item during the work session.

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved that the Town Council APPROVE Ordinance 2020-O-4, without the proposed changes to Section 10-1-7 and 10-6a-9G.

There was a discussion regarding procedure. Attorney McLean said that the Council could remove those sections and approve everything else, but they wouldn't be able to tweak any other sections of code again without noticing the changes.

Council Member Curry seconded the motion to TABLE the discussion. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ORDINANCE 2020-O-5 REGARDING DOG LICENSE ADA AMENDMENT

03:30:00

Mayor Sondak explained that the proposal was to amend the Dog License Ordinance, specific to service animals. Deputy Town Clerk Jen Clancy stated that the current ordinance lists only seeing and hearing service animals as acceptable exemptions. They felt this was overly limiting, and it didn't adhere to the true definition of "service animals" according to the ADA. The proposed language was more in line with federal regulations. There was some discussion regarding the language, and staff noted minor changes.

03:37:50

MOTION: Council Member Davis moved that the Town Council ADOPT Ordinance 2020-O-5 regarding Dog Licenses, as amended. Council Member Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent of the Council.

12. NEW BUSINESS

03:38:10

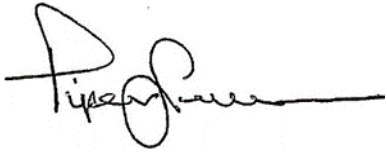
There was no new business.

13. MOTION TO ADJOURN

03:39:00

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved to ADJOURN at 6:21 PM. Council Member Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous consent of the Council.

APPROVED by the Town Council on Nov 12, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Piper Lever". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Piper Lever, Town Clerk