

MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 4:30 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, Chief Unified Fire Authority (UFA)

OTHERS: Cameron Platt of Peak Law

SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

[04:29]

Mayor Sondak called the meeting to order and proposed moving agenda item two regarding the Town Council meeting schedule for upcoming the fiscal year to the end of the meeting. There were no objections.

Polly McLean, Town Attorney, introduced Cameron Platt of Peak Law who will be assisting her in her duties as Town Attorney.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

[04:31]

Mayor Sondak asked if there were any public comments to be read. There were none.

3. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING 2021-O-3 ORDINANCE CONCERNING FIRE RESTRICTIONS

[04:32]

Town Attorney Polly McLean noted that the current fire danger was extremely high and suggested the need for Alta to have a codified, year round fire restriction, to run from May 1st through October 31st annually. She also pointed to the need for a special ordinance to prohibit fireworks during summer seasons. She acknowledged Utah's state firework policy allowing for fireworks during the July 4th and

July 24th holidays, but that municipalities have the right to make restrictions if there are existing hazardous conditions.

Mayor Sondak pointed out that Salt Lake County urged municipalities to enact these restrictions. He shared an email from Utah State Representative Gay Lynn Bennion, a member of the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Committee, wherein she expressed her concerns regarding the extreme drought the state is experiencing, expressed gratitude for municipalities who had already enacted firework restrictions, and said that the fire restrictions had her support along with the complete support of the Unified Fire Authority.

Mayor Sondak highlighted a concern raised previously by Council Member Margaret Bourke regarding the slight differences in restrictions between agencies (i.e. the State, the UFA, and the Forest Service). He reiterated that the restrictions would align with State and UFA recommendations. Ms. Bourke had also sought clarification regarding charcoal grills and whether or not charcoal briquettes would be restricted under the annual fire restrictions.

UFA Chief Jay Torgersen explained that the State guidelines and US Forest Service guidelines vary slightly but not significantly. He addressed the question regarding charcoal grills and said that as it relates to fire prevention, charcoal grills and barbecue grills and stoves in general do not pose a concern as long as they are used as designed in an appropriate, cleared area, with a way to put it out if needed. He also stated that his team would work in conjunction with law enforcement to respond to recreational fires in restricted areas to extinguish the fire and to determine if a citation was necessary.

The Mayor offered time to Council Member Cliff Curry to share any comments or concerns regarding the proposed ordinances. Mr. Curry stated his opinion that the ordinances addressed the issues sufficiently and strongly encouraged the Town Council to pass the ordinances as written.

Note: Mr. Curry left the meeting shortly thereafter.

Council Member Morgan asked Ms. McLean if the State moved to stage two fire restrictions, would the council then need to re-adopt a new ordinance? Ms. McLean answered that Section II Number 3 of 2021-O-4 Ordinance prohibits open flames of any kind which is the equivalent of the State's stage two fire restriction. The Mayor stated that the Council is authorized to take that action due to the findings of the UFA regarding the current fire danger.

Mayor Sondak requested that speakers identify which of the two ordinances on the agenda they are addressing. He clarified that ordinance 2021-O-3 enacts Title 5 Article C "Fire Restrictions" which would codify fire restrictions from June 1st through October 31st each year; ordinance 2021-O-4 is specific to firework restrictions for the current year. Ms. McLean explained that 2021-O-3 does ban fireworks but 2021-O-4 is also necessary due to specific wording in the State code.

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved to APPROVE ordinance 2021-O-3. Council Member Elise Morgan seconded the motion. (No vote was taken at this time.)

Ms. Bourke suggested that the word "indigenous" be removed from 5-3C-7.2 Definitions. She also sought clarification regarding potential confusion over campfire restrictions, pointing to verbiage in the US Forest Service order that restricts campfires to "permanent concrete or metal structures." Chief Torgersen clarified that the intent is to restrict campfires and cooking fires to permanent apparatuses constructed for that purpose and installed and maintained by the US Forest Service or equivalent, not from makeshift or

temporary fire rings constructed from gathered rocks. He said this fits the same definition as the State guidelines. He also answered a question from Council Member Davis regarding the relative risk of a campfire taking off and causing a larger fire versus the risk of grills and stoves doing the same. He said the risk from grills and stoves is less than campfires, but even campfires in approved structures are relatively safe, it's the makeshift/temporary fire pits that cause the most concern.

Mayor Sondak asked if the metal barbecue box in the city park in any way violates the Forest Service rules. Mr. Torgersen said no. Ms. McLean clarified that the word "indigenous" came directly from the State code so that the ordinance would be in alignment with State regulations.

Mayor Sondak called for a vote. Four were in favor, one absent (Curry). The motion was approved.

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING 2021-O-4 ORDINANCE CONCERNING FIREWORKS RESTRICTIONS

[0:35:33]

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved to APPROVE ordinance 2021-O-4. Council Member Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RENEWABLE ENERGY BOARD APPOINTMENT

[0:37:54]

Assistant Town Administrator Cawley reviewed the resolution back in March to join with other Utah communities to create the Community Renewable Energy Agency. He noted that the Council must appoint a primary board member who must be an elected official, and an alternate board member who could be either an elected official or a staff member.

MOTION: Council Member Davis moved to APPOINT Mayor Sondak as primary representative for the Town of Alta on the Renewable Energy Board. Council Member Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (Mayor Sondak abstained).

6. ADOPT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE FY 2021-2022

Note: this agenda item was originally item 2 on the agenda, but was moved to the end of the meeting at the request of Mayor Sondak.

[0:46:26]

MOTION: Mayor Sondak moved to APPROVE the Alta Town Council Meeting Schedule for July 2021 through June 2022. Council Member Bourke seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

[0:50:57]

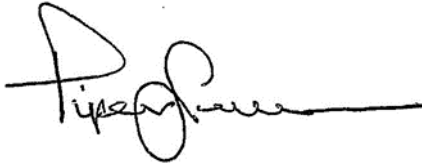
Council Member Bourke suggested that Ethics Policies be posted publicly on the town website. Ms. McLean agreed and Mayor Sondak approved.

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN

[0:55:38]

MOTION: Council Member Bourke moved to adjourn. Council Member Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVED by the Town Council on August 11, 2021

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

Piper Lever, Town Clerk