

**MINUTES
SPECIAL ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING &
WORK SESSION
JUNE 29, 2015
9:00 AM
ALTA COMMUNITY CENTER
ALTA, UTAH**

1. Call the meeting to order

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. All members of the Town Council were present.

2. WORK SESSION: Mountain Accord Discussion

Mayor Pollard described the current status of Mountain Accord, including scheduled upcoming meetings and the status of the "Accord" document, which was in its third iteration as of June 29, 2015 and which will likely be revised in a final iteration prior to a Mountain Accord Executive Board meeting on July 13th. Mayor Pollard asked the council to focus discussion on section 3.4 of "Accord 3.0." Chris Cawley described areas of concern with language in section 3.4, including language describing the provision of water by Salt Lake City to the Town of Alta; language regarding land use decisions in the Town of Alta; language regarding the nature of the agreement represented by the Accord; and language which reflects Town Council Resolution 2015-R-4. Liz Schulte added minor points of clarification. Mayor Pollard opined that he was generally comfortable with the structure and content of the Accord and the agreement it represents, and added that he remains concerned about the proposed land exchange between Alta Ski Lifts (ASL) and the United States Forest Service (USFS). Mayor Pollard observed that the structure of the Accord hinges to a significant extent on this land exchange.

Harris Sondak indicated that he has a wide variety of concerns with the document, and acknowledged that many of his concerns are related to word choice or grammar. Harris described a variety of substantive concerns, including language referring to Salt Lake City's provision of water within the context of Mountain Accord's land exchanges, language regarding the Town of Alta's land use authority, and language implying that the Town of Alta will revisit its general plan and zoning ordinance in light of the land exchange.

Paul Moxley opined that all the major elements of the Accord are subject to numerous levels of review, and conditioned upon one another in such a way that for the Mountain Accord Executive Board to approve the Accord as it is written will not advance the possible outcomes of the Accord. Harris Sondak concurred and suggested the Accord should be a much simpler document for this reason. Paul Moxley suggested that he does not oppose the land exchange between Alta Ski Lifts and USFS.

Elise Morgan shared her concern that the distinct benefits to the Town of Alta implied in the Accord are unclear, whereas other interests represented in Mountain Accord will achieve more obvious advantages as Accord 3.0 is written. Elise stated that she is in favor of the land exchange occurring.

Cliff Curry stated that the Accord document is highly detailed, and that as such it demands diligent review. Cliff opined that urgency to advance the Accord reflects the desire of several parties to reach a "deal," and reminded the council that an agreement which does not benefit the Town of Alta may not be preferable to not reaching a deal at this point. Cliff observed that section 3.4 of Accord 3.0 includes

less detail than previous versions regarding the possible level of development which could be pursued on private, base-area land acquired through a land exchange, and that as such it is less favorable than previous versions of section 3.4. Cliff opined that while the Accord may not be legally binding, it is likely to be a politically binding document, which could significantly obligate the Town of Alta to pursue outcomes which may or may not be favorable to the Town, and which is likely to form the foundation for federal legislation enacting several possible Mountain Accord outcomes.

Harris asked whether ASL property in Grizzly Gulch would be acquired by SLC, or by the USFS, through the proposed land exchange. Liz Schulte replied that parties to the exchange have agreed that USFS would take ownership of Grizzly Gulch parcels through this exchange. Harris described concerns with Accord section 3.17, "Governance and Funding," particularly that certain sections appear written to support 2015 Utah HB 351, which establishes a new planning and zoning structure for unincorporated Salt Lake County within the Wasatch Mountains. Harris opined that provisions of HB 351 could restrict the Town of Alta to its current municipal boundaries, and objected to implication of the Town's consent to that possibility. Harris and Mayor Pollard discussed the "environmental dashboard" referred to in section 3.16.

Cliff, Harris, and Mayor Pollard discussed concerns with language regarding restriction of private property rights and with Accord section 3.8, "Land Acquisition Program."

Mayor Pollard invited comments from the public. Mark Haik agreed that much of the language in Accord 3.0 is expansive and non-specific, and that one high-level question the Town of Alta must consider relative to the potential land exchange is whether higher density development will one day be permitted in Alta. Mark observed that Summit County and Park City are moving rapidly toward planning, design, and implementation of significant mass transit infrastructure, and opined that Salt Lake County and the State of Utah have significant interests in building the Wasatch Front ski area market share relative to the market share controlled by Summit County ski areas. Mark suggested that recent statements by SLC legal counsel regarding water use in Little Cottonwood Canyon appear to contradict the notion that SLC will provide additional drinking water to the Town of Alta if ASL donates private land to the USFS, as described in the Accord.

Onno Wieringa asked that council members recognize that the land exchange will balance a privatization of base-area land with public receipt of a very large amount of what is currently private land in the Town of Alta. Onno stated ASL terms for the exchange of its private parcels as arranged in Accord 3.0, which include significant transit and transportation improvements in Little Cottonwood Canyon, a connection to Big Cottonwood Canyon, additional water for snowmaking, a study of human waste management, and commitments of some kind for culinary water and development approval for a 100 room hotel, and eight "shops." Onno stated that ASL's goal in seeking private land in the base area is to gain flexibility for planning of base area functionality, and he committed to working with the Town of Alta and other base area businesses in this planning. Onno opined that in gaining improved transportation infrastructure and the opportunity to plan the use of private land in the ski area base, the Town will achieve very significant benefits in Mountain Accord.

Layne Jones, Mountain Accord Program Manager, observed that Mountain Accord is an historic effort to convene the range of jurisdictions and other interests involved in the Central Wasatch Mountains in collaboration, and reminded the council that declining to move forward with an agreement will leave all of the various proposals under negotiation in Mountain Accord "on the table," and that these proposals may be pursued in the future in a less collaborative manner.

Karen Travis requested that language in Accord 3.0 not diminish private property owners in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Jen Clancy, Friends of Alta, informed the council that Friends of Alta supports the collaborative intent and structure of Mountain Accord, and reminded the council that Friends of Alta does not support a train or a tunnel being developed in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Onno Wieringa stated that ASL may seek to obtain 2 acres on the north side of SR 210 in the Town of Alta in the land exchange. This land would be adjacent to a small parcel of land being conveyed to the Town of Alta by the USFS, in order to facilitate the Town of Alta having flexibility to plan a year-round trailhead, a community center facility, or other facilities, should it so desire.

Mayor Pollard reflected on Laynee Jones' statements regarding Mountain Accord's focus on the long-term future of the central Wasatch Mountain region. Mayor Pollard acknowledged how difficult it is to balance a long-term, regional proposal with immediate local priorities. Mayor Pollard opined that it is unlikely that any entity engaged in Mountain Accord will emerge without compromising its own interests to some extent.

Cliff Curry thanked audience members who addressed the council, and reflected on points of consensus held by Alta community members: the need to preserve the environment, the need to improve transportation, and the centrality of alpine skiing to Alta's economy and its' culture. Cliff reiterated that any deal made in Mountain Accord must be a deal that is beneficial for Alta, and opined that it is likely that a transformational approach to the future of Alta could be created that will improve the Alta community.

Layne Jones stated that the Mountain Accord Executive Board plans to make a final statement of support on the Accord at a July 13th meeting.

Cliff Curry asked Laynee to consider Town of Alta Resolution 2015-R-4. Laynee opined that the conditions stated in that resolution are not "deal-breakers" and will be considered. Mayor Pollard and Elise Morgan expressed concern that condition number 3—"that reasonable expansion of the Alta Ski Lifts special use permit area be considered"—was not allowed for in Accord 3.0. Laynee suggested that this issue be understood in light of the possibility that Grizzly Gulch will only go into preservation if a range of other conditions are met, and observed that the Accord does not prohibit expansion outside of the Mountain Accord study area.

Harris Sondak observed that language in Accord 3.0 referring to a land exchange between USFS and Snowbird Ski Resort states that any resort base area development in American Fork Canyon facilitated by this exchange would include on-site water reclamation facilities, and opined that such infrastructure may also be beneficial in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Mayor Pollard, Laynee Jones, and several council members described upcoming milestones, including publication of Accord 4.0, the scheduled July 9th town council meeting and work session, and the July 13th Mountain Accord Executive Board meeting.

3. Motion to adjourn – 1:08:50

Paul Moxley introduced a motion to adjourn the town council meeting, Elise Morgan seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

Passed and approved this 9th day of July, 2015.

Katherine S.W. Black
Town Clerk

Piper Lever / S
Assistant Town Clerk