

Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2022

Bluff Community Center at 6:00 p.m.

190 N 3rd East P.O. Box 324

435-672-9990

Regular meetings are held the first three Tuesdays of every month at 6:00 p.m. at the Bluff Community Center. Requests to be on the agenda may be submitted in writing to Ann Leppanen (ann@townofbluff.org) at least 4 days before the meeting. Agendas and minutes are posted at:

townofbluff.org and audio, in addition, at the Utah Public Notice Website

This meeting was held electronically.

The meeting started at 6:03 p.m.

Roll Call Mayor Ann K. Leppanen, Luanne Hook, Jim Sayers, Linda Sosa, Brant Murray

Approval of Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of May 3, 2022

Moved to next week's agenda

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business

1. Review of Fraud Risk Assessment and Vote on Approval (Leppanen/Sosa)

Leppanen explained that our accountant worked with us and we scored low on risk assessment. Murray motioned to approve as presented, Sayers seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor.

2. Review and Discussion of 2022 Proposed Amended Budget, Presentation and Adoption of 2023 Tentative Proposed Budget, Discussion of Property Tax Rate, and Reminder of Public Hearings, Request to Grant Access to Zions Bank Account to the Accountant (Leppanen/Sosa)

Copies of the two budgets are on our website and Council members have received them. There were no questions from the Council. Sayers motioned to accept the budgets, Murray seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor. The public hearing is Thursday, May 12th at 6:00 p.m. Leppanen explained at our next meeting we will discuss whether to change the property tax or keep it at the same rate. If we changed the tax we would have to go through the Truth in Taxation process. Our accountant has access to our Pelorus account and if we give him view only access to our bank account we would not need to scan bank statements to him to view for reconciliation. Murray motioned to grant him view only access, Sayers seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor. Leppanen and Sosa will call the bank tomorrow. Anyone wanting a paper copy of the budgets can contact a council member.

3. Discussion of Solar Farm and Telephone Conference with Lessee (Leppanen)

Leppanen had a conversation with Sam Sours, the regional director of AES Clean Energy, about the SITLA land. He requested no public hearing; they are working on an environmental impact study, size, location, and other issues. In four to six months when

they are finished gathering information they will join us in a public hearing. They are also reading our minutes and public comments.

4. Update on Lighting Ordinance and Agreement with Dr. John Barentine (Leppanen)

Dr. Barentine responded to Leppanen today about comparing our ordinance to the International Dark Skies ordinance, giving us recommendations and answering questions. He said our ordinance is similar to Bisbee, AZ and their cost was \$2,250. Murray motioned to hire him, Hook seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor.

5. Report on San Juan County Commission Meeting of May 3, 2022 (Leppanen), Report on Planning and Zoning Meeting on May 4, 2022 (Hook/Leppanen)

Leppanen reported that the Commissioners, Duncan Lyman and Mack McDonald are facing lawsuits for not following State law to hire an interim local attorney for the opening created by Kendall Laws resignation and the November election. A second opinion agreed the Commissioners should be following State law, not try to hire out of County. There is a temporary restraining order and there will be large litigation fees that will have to be paid from the County general fund if this goes forward. Two of the three Commissioners voted to hire an interim attorney out of County. Hook reported Joe Hubbard's land use clearance was approved and P&Z is working on the idling ordinance, forms and a joint meeting that includes BWW. One of the town jake brake signs is missing and an ordinance to have the two signs will be added to the next Council meeting. Leppanen pointed out the Council had received 55 proposed zoning edits from P&Z and many were unanimously approved. Some were definitions, table of contents, dates and numbering. The votes are part of the May 3rd minutes and the updated ordinance will be on the Town website. There were several larger issues. The Council voted unanimously to approve the zoning ordinance as amended. Leppanen was very appreciative of the hard work the P&Z Commission does for the town. Sayers thanked Kathleen Pakish for taking on minute taking and doing an excellent job.

6. Update on CCC Design Review Team, Grant with NDN, and Use of the CCC for Temporary Recycling Location (Sayers/Murray)

Today's meeting was canceled, the team is working on clearing up confusion related to contracts and grant application. Murray reported the recycling committee has tentative approval to use space at the CCC and is waiting for details and plans.

7. Quality of YouTube Audio (All)

Krieg Benally explained the YouTube static at one meeting is from a mobile device. Leppanen thanked Benally for the work he has been doing with audio-visual.

New Business

8. Request by Comb Ridge Eat and Drink for Local Consent for a Change in the Alcohol License (Russ Wheeler)

Moved to next week's agenda to allow for some research.

9. Review and Vote on the Contract for the Bluff Town Manager (All)

Leppanen reported the contract has not come yet from Chris McAnany but it will be on our next agenda. Pending the contract, Erin Richards has agreed to become our town manager and has started work. She will work remotely and in person until she relocates here in the Fall and is full-time. She will receive \$60,000 with no health stipend or paid benefits but will have holidays off and vacation time. Leppanen felt she was an excellent fit for the town; she has been working with Leppanen and Sosa, is extremely organized and understands budgeting and policy. Murray motioned to hire her at \$60,000 and

have her work partially remotely until the Fall, Sayers seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor.

10. Discussion and Vote on "Opening" the Bluff Community Center and Fire Mesa Kitchen for Public Rentals (All)

After discussion that included monitoring Covid and best practices Murray motioned to open rental of the Community Center with the restriction of groups of not more than 75 and three days between rentals, Hook seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Murray, Sosa, and Hook voted in favor.

11. Review and Discussion of Code of Conduct, Texting and YouTube Audio for the Bluff Town Council (All)

Leppanen encouraged the Council to review the Code of Conduct, which covers how the Council and public should act respectfully in and outside of meetings. Things like name calling or assigning motives of others is not allowed. She asked that the Council and the public use emails or phone calls, not texting, because it is not on the official record and makes GRAMA requests difficult. Sosa reminded members not to use cell phones in meetings.

12. Report on Meeting with Sunrise Engineering as to Water Rights and Future Work (Leppanen/Sayers)

Sayers reported that he and Leppanen had a good meeting with Ken Tuttle about our 40-Year Plan, that needs to be updated by the end of nine years, and what we should do in advance of that to protect Bluff's water. Having attended a recent Division of Water Rights meeting Leppanen is aware that water rights are at risk and the State will be looking at how much water Bluff, Blanding and Monticello are using. We have 690 acre feet and are using 80 acre feet. Tuttle will put to a project proposal together with several recommendations.

13. Report on San Juan County Economic Development and the "Wayfinding" Meeting on May 3, 2022 (Leppanen/Sosa)

Sosa reported this project started several years ago as a way to direct tourists to points of interest between Monument Valley and Spanish Valley using a common, distinctive sign. The CED has \$55,000 to meet and plan what our options are and will meet with the towns for recommendations. Towns can participate or may not want to. Leppanen met separately with the two planners and explained Bluff does not like sign clutter. The signs do not advertise but show points of interest with a focus on safety. UDOT representatives were present. Murray pointed out there is a point on the road between Bluff and Blanding where Shiprock and Monument Valley can be both viewed. He thought comfort stations would be good. This is a several year project.

14. Review Discussion of Bureau of Land Management Letter

Leppanen will send this to Council members.

15. Other

The public hearing for the budgets is Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

Sayers motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m., Murray seconded and Leppanen, Hook, Sosa, Murray and Sayers voted in favor.

Linda Sosa, Recording Officer

This meeting took place electronically in order to follow the social distancing guidelines given by state and local authorities. The public will be able to connect and participate electronically.

For requests to receive emails/meeting invitations email linda@townofbluff.org