

Bluff Town Council Regular Minutes

July 20, 2021

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 6:00 p.m.

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

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of the Bluff Town Council on July 6, 2021

Deferred until the next meeting

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of the Bluff Town Council on July 13, 2021

Deferred, for modifications, until the next meeting

Unfinished Business

1. Update on the Status of the Community Garden at St. Christopher's Mission (Reagan Wytsalucy, Utah State University Extension)

Wytsalucy explained the \$22,000 grant funding the garden project would be finished this month. It has been used to purchase lumber, tools, small tillers, drip irrigation, shade cloth, a shed and more. Volunteers meet every Friday from 8:30 to noon and will be adding Monday morning. About 35 different volunteers have worked building and filling raised boxes with soil. A new grant will fund the project for the next four years. They are exploring several options for the harvest. She said it has been a great experience and noted the versatility and sense of community. Leppanen will be meeting with Americore to seek help filling the several dozen remaining boxes. The Council members thanked Wytsalucy and the volunteers for their wonderful project.

2. Report on St. Christopher's Willingness to Serve on the San Juan County Homeless Coalition and Next Meeting (Leppanen)

Leppanen and Hook visited the garden and met the new vicar, Joe Hubbard. He expressed an interest in being involved with the Coalition and will attend the next meeting with Leppanen, who has been representing Bluff. If he joins the group he will be the first person of faith and has had previous experience with these issues.

3. Update on Meeting on "Bluff's Community Needs" and Report on Meeting on Wednesday, July 14, 2021; Request by Molly Schmidt to Work with Planning and Zoning to Review Bluff's General Plan and to Request the Town of Bluff to Support and Vote a United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) Grant to Provide Technical Assistance and Training to help Rural Communities Develop Actionable Plans (Molly Schmidt)

Leppanen, Sosa, and Schmidt met with Michael Bryant, Jordan Karchner and others in a Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments (SEUALG) meeting to discuss Bluff's General Plan and community needs assessments and will meet again in August. Bryant, who had initially approved the Bluff General Plan, stated it is complete and covers the State requirements. Appendices could be added for action goals and future plans or projects. He suggested getting Planning and Zoning into the loop to look at all the various pieces.

Several days later Schmidt sent Council members a plan she had been working on that included a USDA grant and Big Water, a consulting firm. Big Water would assess housing needs and the strengths and weaknesses of the town. While it was obvious Schmidt had put a great deal of work into her plan, the Council chose not to move in that direction but stay with the SEUALG plan. Sayers stated SEUALG has been very helpful and supportive to the town and to circumvent them and P&Z could be harmful to our working relationships. We have received significant governmental help from SEUALG. The Council agreed with Schmidt that assessments are very important and help with grant funding but this is happening too quickly and does not include the school project which is a large planning piece. Schmidt will present to P&Z and Leppanen encouraged her to work with them. Leppanen will let Business Owners Bluff know our decision, Schmidt had also asked them for a letter of support and part of the \$20,000 needed in funding. Schmidt thanked the Council for their opinions.

4. Discussion and Vote on Purchase of Bluff's Old Elementary School

Leppanen motioned that we vote (yes, no, or abstain) to move forward on the contract with San Juan School District to purchase the building and secure funding within the next 60 days. Murray seconded the motion and Leppanen, Hook, Murray, Sayers, and Sosa voted in favor. Sayers has talked with funders and is ready to move forward. Sosa is not in favor of buying the school because she thinks monthly bills will be too costly but will help with the bookkeeping. Murray is in favor of the offer to purchase and moving forward. He has offered to deal with funding. Hook stated the infrastructure would be an important part of the Town. Leppanen noted the cost of attorney fees keep mounting and we need to move into the 60 days. She does not support purchasing and will let the three in favor of buying the school move forward with all work that is needed. It is not latchkey ready, it needs a fire suppression system and if it is purchased and left empty it cannot be insured with out one. Leppanen will check with our attorney for the next step. We have not bought the school. That vote happens at the end of the funding period.

5. Discussion and Vote on Business Licenses and an Amended Business License Ordinance, Short Term Rental Permits (Sosa)

Sayers motioned to approve the business license as drafted, Sosa seconded, Hook suggested changing the home based business definition to add one employee. Sosa explained workers could be hired without making them employees with benefits. She suggested changes to the exemption. Leppanen, Sayers, Sosa and Murray voted in favor, Hook voted against. It will be moved to a work session to fine tune how STRs, licenses, and permits will work.

6. Update on Tire Removal (Leppanen), NetForce Training (Sayers); Tri-Hurst Replacement of Skylights (Sosa)

Leppanen explained the woman working with Murray on tire removal had surgery and never got back to him. She is checking with the State on were the project stands.

Sayers said that John at NetForce will come and check our security systems and hook-ups with Emery Telecom. We will need to choose a computer for our town issued machine and will add this to the Work Session. Sosa explained she sent the documentation showing we completed the skylights to the insurance company.

7. Update on Citizen's Institute of Rural Design (CIRD) the Main Street Non-Motorized Travel Trail (Hook)

Hook has been attending the monthly workshops which will continue for 18 months. Molly Schmidt and Adrienne Caesar, who applied for these workshops, attend as well as some Council members and P&Z Commissioners. The next meeting is tomorrow at 11:30 and Hook welcomed others to attend. The Bluff River Trail and safe routes for children to follow to school is the focus and Schmidt will be leading the workshop that includes many other groups across the Country.

8. Update on UDOT Signs and School Highway Markings (Leppanen)

Leppanen thanked Robert Dowell and the UDOT Roads Dept. for painting the road at the school and placing safety signage before the new school year starts.

9. Roads Discretionary Fund (Haviken/Hook)

Haviken and Hook were asked for an amount for discretionary Roads spending for emergency and small area repair, large construction projects will go through the Council. Sayers motioned to create a \$5,000 discretionary for Roads, Murray seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Sosa, Murray and Hook voted in favor. Haviken pointed out the need to clean out the 7th st East ditch before we have a big storm. Where it goes into the highway it is UDOT's responsibility. Haviken asked if class c road funds could be used and it was suggested that the Council get a quote from Steve Helgerson. Leppanen will check with the Hole In The Rock group who have previously been a great help, and Haviken will check with UDOT.

New Business

10. GRAMA Request Regarding Social Media (Sosa) and Discussion of Social Media and a Need for Policy (All)

Sosa received a request for our social media policy from Mark Allen, a lawyer in the SL area. He has sent this request to all towns and cities. He also wanted to know how many requests we denied last year. This started from a law suit asking for the text message a San Juan Commissioner made during a Commission meeting. In a Records training two months ago the need for policy also came up. It is a matter of time before the legislature mandates this. All government records and emails are the property of the State and subject to GRAMA and retention schedules. This will be added to the Work Session.

11. Discussion of "Glamping" (All)

Leppanen explained this is becoming a large problem for many towns and would like Council members to think about the problem and we will revisit it in the Fall. Sayers pointed out it is largely unregulated and is a big problem in Moab.

12. Electric Car Chargers at UDOT Shed and Suggestions from a Citizen (Leppanen)

Leppanen received correspondence from a traveler who used to live in Bluff that the electric car chargers worked well but it was very hot with no shade. He suggested a protective covering. Hook suggested adding it to the Non-motorized Trail Project and

looking into partnering with UDOT so something could be in place for next year. Murray so moved, Sayers seconded and Leppanen, Sayers, Sosa, Murray, and Hook voted in favor.

13. Financial Update/Report, Tri-Hurst (Sosa)

Sosa presented the current bills:

P&Z Stipends - \$150.00

Carol Shook - \$184.70

Denny Bellison – \$72.73

Patricia Bellison - \$42.71

Erin Richards - \$40.00

Kathy Carson - \$591.04

Helgerson - \$50.00

Vance Nielsen - \$96.00 replace tire on recycling trailer

Rocky Mtn. Power – \$460.50

River Canyon - \$60.66

Bankcard - \$66.24

 XMission - \$15.00

 Google Suites - \$51.24

 San Juan Record - \$189.00

Waldeck Dufford - \$4969.50

Emery - \$74.95

US Treasury - \$328.30

BWW - \$79.13

Frontier - \$114.76

ARPA - \$250.00

Sayers motioned to pay the bills, Murray seconded and Leppanen, Hook, Murray, Sosa, and Sayers voted in favor.

14. Set a Work Session Date (All)

August 2nd at 10:00 a.m.

15. Other/Adjourn

The meeting ended at 7:39 p.m.

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 was able to connect and participate electronically.

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