

Bluff Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
Agenda for Thursday, August 21, 2025, at 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm
IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL
190 North 3rd East, Bluff, Utah 84512

6:10 pm Roll Call

P&Z Commissioners: Amanda Podmore (Chair), Marcia Hadenfeldt, Brian Whitney, Malia Collins, Gary Haws

Town Staff: Krieg Benally

Old Business

1. Solsmart update

Whitney reported that the initial draft review with Solsmart was delayed due to an emergency, and the new proposed a meeting on September 2nd. Hadenfeldt suggested that the work session could continue to address these topics, and the commission agreed to review the draft airport zone ordinance from the Hanson Group for potential recommendation to the town council or further discussion at the next meeting.

2. Renewable energy ordinance update

The commissioners spent time discussing and revising the drafted energy ordinance document. Hadenfeldt suggested making some basic modifications to the drafted renewable energy ordinance for language clarity. The commission discussed refining definitions and sizes for residential projects, with a focus on reducing the number/types of projects. The recommendation from Sarah (from Solsmart) indicated that anything under five (5) acres could be classified as “residential”. They agreed to review sample charts from Sarah and consider using her recommended sizes.

The team also discussed renewable energy sources and the need to update their conditional use permit language to include specific studies as warranted by site conditions. Hadenfeldt and Whitney planned to follow up with Sarah or her team to clarify size requirements and other details. There was also discussion about exempting residential solar-powered lights from regulations, agreeing to define them as self-contained lighting fixtures that harness sunlight for home and surrounding outdoor space illumination. Hadenfeldt and Podmore refined the definition to specifically exclude larger solar installations, while Collins shared information about her meeting with Solar for All noting the benefits of portable balcony solar panels that can be plugged into 120-volt outlets to provide residential and battery backup power, noting their popularity in Europe for rental properties. Utah is the only state in the United States where this is legal.

3. General Plan 2025 update

The group discussed the general plan update, with Podmore reporting progress on text updates and noting that the public hearing is tentatively scheduled for October 28th.

New Business

4. Airport zone ordinance from Hansen Group

The commission also reviewed an airport zone ordinance from Hanson Group. The commissioners talked about building height restrictions and aviation safety requirements. Hadenfeldt raised questions about potential restrictions on energy development projects near the airport particularly regarding solar and wind installations. Whitney clarified that federal aviation regulations (14 CFR Part 77) already provide comprehensive standards for construction near airports, which are incorporated into the local ordinances. The commissioners agreed that while they could be more specific in their overlay zone ordinance, the existing regulations likely provide sufficient coverage for any future development projects.

The commission would like to put together questions about the ordinance and potentially have Hanson Group present before voting on it at a future meeting. Hadenfeldt and Whitney will schedule a separate meeting to develop questions.

5. Items for next agenda

Land Use Clearance Application
Renewable Energy Ordinance
Airport Overlay Ordinance
General Plan
Building Department Update

6. Other

Hadenfeldt asked about the LUC process and whether the commissioners can review LUC applications during a work session, or if they need to only review LUCs through email. There was further discussion regarding the Open and Public Meetings Act and how to balance communication. Podmore noted that the public is unable to comment during work sessions, so it would not necessarily make sense to talk about the LUC during a work session.

Collins noted the Utah League of Cities and Towns Annual Conference is taking place October 1st and 2nd in Salt Lake City.

Collins met with Dennis Shumway, the county's Environmental Health Director. Shumway would like to host an event to educate property owners on septic systems and also have septic designers and other companies available to connect with the public.

Collins motioned to adjourn, Hadenfeldt seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:56pm.