

Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Final Minutes
September 16, 2025
Bluff Community Center at 4:00 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 4:00 p.m. Requests to be on the agenda may be submitted in writing to Ann Leppanen (ann@townofbluffutah.gov) at least 4 days before the meeting. Agendas and minutes are posted at: townofbluffutah.gov and audio, in addition, at the Utah Public Notice Website. The public can participate via phone: (719)359-4580, Meeting ID: 92499673928# and via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/92499673928>
To view the livestream, or watch past recordings, please visit our YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTqBxSP-Erhxq6muVMX6vdw>.

This meeting will be in person and virtual.

4:01pm Meeting Called to Order & Roll Call: Mayor Ann K. Leppanen, Luanne Hook, Jennifer Davila, Linda Sosa, Britt Hornsby Erin Nelson Town Manager

Approval of Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2025. Hornsby motions to approve Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2025, Davila seconded, Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Davila and Hornsby voted in favor.

Approval of Bluff Town Council Work Session Minutes of September 9, 2025. Hornsby motions to approve Bluff Town Council Work Session Minutes of September 9, 2025, Davila seconded, Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Hornsby and Davila voted in favor.

Public Comment: None. Closed at 4:04pm

Presentation by Ticola Madison: Introduction to the Waterford Upstart Program

(4:04pm): Waterford Upstart Program is a free online preschool program that encourages parents to become educators for 15 minutes/day, 5 days/week. Goal to improve reading scores in Southern Utah. The program works in combination with in-person school attendance or not. Funded by UT State Legislators (tax payers), program provides a laptop and hotspot for use. If the program is completed, the family gets to keep both. Madison also requests that Town host a resource fair allowing programs like this to advertise events to public.

Unfinished Business

1. Report on Bluff 911 Fundraiser and Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, September 13, 2025 (Nelson)(4:10pm): Successful event with ~\$3,800 raised! ‘Thank you’ to all volunteers, community members in attendance, silent auction donors, business supporters and first responders.

2. Discussion and Vote on Stipend/Reimbursement for Travel to Advanced Emergency Medical Technician Course (All)(4:14pm): One person from Bluff is enrolled in Advanced EMT training. Recap from last week: Option to reimburse at federal mileage standard (~\$2,000) or set amount of \$500. Discussion: \$500 reimbursement may encourage others to attend courses; option to offer an additional \$500 once the course is completed; option to also pay for the licensing exam (\$160). Hornsby motions to reimburse for travel to Advanced EMT course and test required for the course totaling \$660, Hook seconded, Davila amended the reimbursement is to Elisabeth Baird-Bennett. Leppanen, Sosa, Hornsby, Hook and Davila voted in favor.

New Business

3. Discussion and Vote on Request by Kirsten Ewing for a Waiver or Reduction in Rental Fee for the Bluff Community Center and Local Consent for Alcohol at the Bluff Community Center; Discussion and Vote on Request by JR Lancaster for Local Consent for Alcohol at the Bluff Community Center; Discussion by the Bluff Town Council for a Change in Policy to Allow Alcohol in Town of Bluff Owned Properties; Discussion of Sample Municipal Policy for Consumption, Serving and Distribution of Alcohol (Chapter 4.21 Moab Municipal Code) (All)(4:21pm): JR Lancaster local consent tabled, completed form not returned. Change in Policy to Allow Alcohol Discussion: after reviewing Moab Municipal Code Leppanen acknowledged that alcohol is brought on site during events and there is the no control at this time, willing to consider changing policy with an ordinance outlining how to walk through the process of approval and providing Bluff with control; selling is different from private individuals bringing their own; Distance to playground (Moab Code states it must be 100ft from playground); Scored off area defining alcohol zone; in the future requiring individual requesting Local Consent to attend the meeting and present/answer questions. Waiver or Reduction in Rental Fee Discussion: request is to only paying cleaning fee; treating all people the same, non-profits doing service for town is the policy, multiple potluck parties hosted annually paid for privately, perception in town of policies not being adhered to; Clear line on policy adhering to a specific criteria (501c3, 84512 zip code) and importance of sticking to it. Collins to contact Ewing informing that the fee will not be waived. Council will continue discussing the alcohol consumption on the grounds at a later date.

4. Report on Meeting on September 11, 2025 with Ryan McArthur from Utah Department of Natural Resources, San Juan County Fire Warden, to Review Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) and Participation Wildfire Statement (PWS)

(Leppanen/Nelson)(4:38pm): Meeting attendees: Ryan McArthur, Chief Lott, Leppanen and Nelson. Bluff has been participating in the PWS for the previous 6-years, Chief Lott has been completing reports including in-kind 'credits' (time, hosting community fire-safe events) which apply toward the required premium (~\$2200/year) to participate. Clarification received regarding certain credits applicable for 3-5 years. PWS creates a collaboration between BVFD, SJC Fire and State, allowing BVFD Chief to delegate fires to higher entities, opening resources in participation, claims process, etc. Premium is calculated by municipality size and risk assessment (total land, wildfire risk, previous fires in incorporated limits, etc). For example, Cemetery Hill Fire will be included in Bluff's risk assessment 10 years from event and will affect premium amounts (1st and 10th year are weighed differently than the rest). Chief Lott has stated he is willing to update CWPP to ensure coverage if Bluff chooses to sign another PWS 5-year agreement. Discussion: Does this effect fire insurance rates? Utah State House Bill 48 (not passed as of 9/11/25) evaluates risk factors for residents, municipalities, counties, etc and can increase insurance costs, PWS & CWPP most likely factor into premiums and municipal participation may help decrease rates; PWS last signed 6 years ago, the dollar amount was less due to assessment of risk not including the entire Town Boundary; certain properties in county that are high fire risk, the Fire Warden will visit on an individual basis; CWPP is due at the end of September, Chief Lott is on schedule for completion; Town of Bluff is an eligible 'legal entity' as defined in the Cooperative Agreement; SJC approved this plan last week.

5. Report on Citizens Academy Training at the Cooperative Cultural Center on September 11, 2025; Request by San Juan County Sheriff's Office to Use the Cooperative Cultural Center for Training (Leppanen)(4:52pm): Fourth event of Citizens Academy at CCC on 9.11.25. Three Sheriffs Dept SERT Team participants and 5 Town of Bluff participants for an Active Shooter Training. Description of training: Sheriff's primary goal (take a bullet for someone else), review of room sweep, scenarios and evaluations of the building. Inquiry at the end of training if Bluff would be willing to allow them to use CCC for regular (1x/month)

training, as they have lost access to other buildings and the CCC has many unique challenges and training opportunities and safety of Government offices in certain rooms. Discussion: Once offices move over to building, requesting that they provide procedures/training to follow if the building is under attack; new Utah Law that two teachers per school be armed in the building; unidentified activity on/near grounds in evening, police presence occasionally would be positive; agreement for damage incurred/their liability insurance coverage; advanced notice when training is occurring and informing community. Hornsby motions to allow SJC Sheriffs office to use CCC for training purposes, Davlia seconded, Leppanen, Hook, Sosa, Davila and Hornsby voted in favor.

6. Bluff Community Center Shipping Container Mural Proposals (5:04pm): Collins presented two bids for murals on the shipping container located on the Bluff Community Center grounds. (Tiered bids from: Britton Design Co & Kate Aitchison) Aitchison's bid includes design workshops hosted at the local schools and Bluff Community Center. Discussion: budget discussion, funding as an inhibitor (Utah Arts Council - Community Grant, Community Fundraisers [Arts Festival 2026], National Endowment for the Arts); include mural with BCC grounds plan; shipping container location confirmation prior to mural commencement; Element Considerations (wind/sand/sun); they why: when delivered, community member complaints about the appearance of the container & urging council to do something to beautify.

7. Discussion and Vote on Request that the Town of Bluff Assume the Operations of the Bluff Food Pantry (Leppanen/Collins)(5:17pm): Ginny Burns & Leppanen met last week, Burns stated she is no longer available to run the Bluff Food Pantry. Burns has accomplished the main goal of getting it up and running and much appreciation expressed for all that she has put into its success. Currently, Nelson and Collins are reviewing their responsibilities, reviewing what the Food Pantry will take and to be considered. Suggestion for Bluff Community Foundation to take it on, however, food source USDA funding may be a complication. Discussion: ToB as managing body with community volunteers running day-to-day; many food grants have been cut, which could help pay salary for someone running; staff and council capacity to manage; UT Food Bank runs large facilities in County, funding from state/federal paying employees with additional fundraising to fill in the blanks; Food Pantry Board/Committee; versatile volunteer base of any service; Thank you to Ginny Burns for years of service and creativity to fund food purchasing; Town of Bluff continuing to donate space, unsure if it fits under a Town operated 'political activity', General Plan nor Strategic Plan encourage Town to manage, local churches, Non-profit organization, someone else take it on?; National Mayors Alliance to End Childhood Hunger political goals of NLCT is to end childhood hunger, ideas how to run food pantries originate from, defined role in the Mayor system. More research to be conducted.

8. Report on Bluff's Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting on September 4, 2025 (Hook/Nelson)(5:32pm): LUC for a commercial property across the street from Twin Rocks sparked discussion about allowances, approved to install utilities to enable them to add an additional long-term residence, reignited conversation between P&Z and Building Dept and if LUC was needed. Renewable Energy Ordinance Updates after SolSmart Conversation, things to consider: conditional use and the process (would have to be introduced). Airport Overlay Ordinance approved and passed on to Town Council, completed by Hansen Group, Public Hearing date in the works. Next Meeting is a Work Session, Thursday, September 18 @ 6:00pm. Conditional Use Question is on McAnany's desk.

9. Report on Bluff Water Works Meeting on September 10, 2025

(Leppanen/Sosa/Davila)(5:37pm): New sensors installed, tanks are at 9.5ft and holding; much discussion regarding rate increases and the unexpected costs; latest newsletter mailed out states 2024, curious if it is supposed to say 2025, no discussion at last BWW meeting.

10. Discussion and Vote to Approve Galaxy IT Proposal to Upgrade Current Laptops to Windows 11 (Nelson/All)(5:40pm): October 15, Windows 10 running on 4 of 5 council and two intern computers is being discontinued, no security patches available. Laptops can be upgraded to Windows 11 (and not purchase new laptops) at \$200/laptop. Desktop computer in Rm 2 is Windows 11. Inquired if council wants to: upgrade existing and/or purchase new computers/inquire with incoming council for equipment preferences. Discussion: IT budget includes new laptops; inquire with incoming council what device they prefer to help guide decision; Hornsby using iPad, much cheaper than a laptop and just as secure, Davila comfortable moving to iPad (iPad ~\$600); option to upgrade all and as laptops die, move over to tablets; Town Clerk and Bookkeeper need computers; hybrid option between laptops & iPads; allow P&Z to access computers, if needed; also a monthly cost per device for IT protection. Hornsby motions to approve Erin Nelson to upgrade 4 laptops to Windows 11 and procure 1 iPad for another council member, Davila seconded, Leppanen, Hook, Hornsby, Sosa and Davila voted in favor.

11. Discussion and Vote to Pay Bills (Nelson/All)(5:54pm): Legal bills, Asbestos Testing (GOEO grant may be reallocated to cover CCC asbestos testing and mitigation). Hornsby motions to pay the bills, Hook seconded, Leppanen, Hook, Sosa, Davila and Hornsby voted in favor.

12. Update on November General Election Slate of Candidates and Resignation of Luanne Hook in October 2025 (All)(5:55pm): Yesterday morning, 9.15.25 email from Vint DeGraw informing Leppanen of Luanne Hook's withdrawing from candidacy from November's election, upon discussion, Hook informed that she called Lieutenant Governor's Office and is also resigning from Town Council in October 2025. Ballots were to go to printers last week, SJC did not send off, a Bluff Town Council Emergency Meeting was called and resolution passed, (#90) canceling 2025 election. Confirmation received that ballots are not being printed nor will Bluff be charged. One final thing to do, publish in paper a 'notice of cancellation', which will require a language edit in resolution 90, becoming resolution 91. Hornsby motions to adopt notice of the cancellation of Town of Bluff 2025 General Election as Resolution #91, Davila seconded. Leppanen, Sosa, Hook, Hornsby and Davila voted in favor.

Hook explained her rescind from candidacy is due to two very qualified individuals running for council and while she has served for 7 years, she is ready to pass the responsibility on, while remaining on the Active Transportation Committee. Hook plans for October 21 as her last meeting. She is hoping to make the transition from this council to the next smoother and would like to see the current council appoint one of the council candidates running to finish her term. As a result, this would require only two new council members (1 Mayor and 1 Council) starting in January. Many 'thank you' to Hook for all her commitment and hard work. Details around appointing for Hook's remainder term: according to Utah Code, Town of Bluff is required to advertise, interview and vote on someone to fill the vacated seat. McAnany is researching into if Town Council can run on a 4-member council until January and other alternatives. Although all three future council members are not sworn in, they can participate in conversations about the future. Succession Planning scheduled for October 6.

13. Other/Adjourn

Reminder to "Learn about the Lower San Juan Watershed Plan" at the BCC on September 17, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Reminder to "Septic Smart Week" by Dennis Shumway, Environmental Health Director, San Juan County Public Health, at the BCC on September 22, 2025, 5:30-7:30 pm.

Hornsby motions to adjourn (6:10pm), Davila seconded, Leppanen, Hook, Hornsby, Sosa and Davila voted in favor.

For requests to receive emails/meeting invitations, email linda@townofbluffutah.gov