Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes

February 3, 2026

Bluff Community Center at 4:00 p.m.
190 N 3rd East P.O. Box 324
This meeting was in person and virtual.

4:00pm Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call: Mayor Josh Ewing, Jennifer Davila, Gary Haws, Britt Hornsby, Spencer Wade & Erin Nelson, Town Manager

Approval of January 20, 2026 Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes: Ewing questioned #4, bullet 1, which states 'SJC follows state code, as many counties and municipalities to, which states minimum lot sizes are 1 acre' while factually that is only for communities not on Culinary Water. Nelson clarified that the minutes must reflect what was stated in that meeting and today's meeting minutes will reflect the correct information, received after the meeting. Other grammatical errors corrected. Hornsby motions to approve the January 20, 2026 Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes with changes, Davila seconded, Ewing, Haws, Wade, Hornsby and Davila voted in favor.

Public Comment : None.

Unfinished Business

1. Update from the Building Department on wastewater coordination with San Juan County Health (Kristen)(4:06pm): Bushnell and Dennis Shumway provided an update on the Wastewater Coordination with SJC Health. Due to Bluff's unique situation of Culinary Water and Septic Tanks, State Code allows lot sizes as small as .275 acres when ideal soil conditions exist and all other code is met. Currently, Bluff Land Use Code states parcel minimums are .5 acres while State Code allows a smaller parcel (.275 acre). If Bluff P&Z and Town Council were to revise our Land Use Code to align with State Code, there is the opportunity for an increased number of affordable lots available. Bushnell also recommends decreasing some setbacks, excluding septic, to achieve this. Shumway reminded that soil samples are still required through SJC prior to the approval of subdividing a parcel. Ewing clarified the Ordinance presented last week is no longer necessary as State Code encompasses Bluff. Bushnell and Shumway have created a public-friendly resource detailing the required information.

2. Review of playground sidewalk project bids and vote to select vendor (Malia, All)(4:14pm): Collins presented the one bid received for the Sidewalk Perimeter portion of the Bluff Community Center Playground Project. Bid received from Pueblo Tierra Construction for $12,656.00 to include a sidewalk perimeter, retaining wall on N and E side and grading of playground footprint. Previously grading was an in-kind contribution, but once the extent of grading was understood it was added to the RFP. There is a possibility to utilize the in-kind grading for the Sport Court, to be completed after the new playground is completed.
Budget: Grant Amount with Cash Match: $178,000.00; Playground $167,535.00; Sidewalk Perimeter: $12,656.00. With a $2,191 out of pocket difference, Nelson confirmed we have

enough ‘wiggle room’ in Parks and Rec Budget to approve. Ewing called for a vote, Ewing, Wade, Hornsby and Haws voted in favor, Davila abstained. Motion passes.

New Business

3. Vote to approve Zions Bank Safe Deposit Box Resolution #98 (Erin, All)(4:18pm): The resolution passed January 6, 2026 removed signatories from the Zions Bank Safe Deposit Box, but forgot to add individuals to the Zions Bank Safe Deposit Box. Therefore, Resolution #98 allows Josh Ewing, Erin Nelson and Jennifer Davila access to Town of Bluff’s Zions Bank Safe Deposit Box. Roll Call Vote: Hornsby-yes, Davila-yes, Ewing-yes, Wade-yes, Haws-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and planning for ordinance and resident resources to comply with House Bill 48 Wildland Urban Interface (Josh)(4:20pm): Ewing presented HB48 from State Legislative Session 2025. This bill is the State’s attempt to recoup cost from wildfires as seen in other states. Two parts to the bill: Part 1- Maps created by the State which identify properties in the high risk wildfire area. Those identified must pay additional fees issued by the County and sent to the State’s ‘Wildfire Disaster Fund’. There are no properties or land within Bluff that falls into this category. Part 2- If an entity is part of the Cooperative Wildfire System (CWS), which Bluff is, they must adopt Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Building Codes through map creation identifying these areas. These codes should have been adopted by January 1, 2026. To align with the law, these codes must be adopted to maintain a good standing with CWS. To come into compliance, a Wildland Urban Interface Map must be adopted which Planning and Zoning will step in to help create, as it is a land use map, most likely encompassing the entire Town. Timeline: Ewing will present this to P&Z further in depth at their meeting on Thursday, Feb 5. At the Joint Work Session with P&Z on Feb 19, this map and ordinance to be discussed/reviewed, then passed off to Town Council at first meeting, March 5. Nelson inquired if this is a separate ordinance or adjustments to current code. Other municipalities have passed ordinances stating they are adopting the WUI building codes set by the State. Once passed, Building department will remind builders that they must adhere to these codes. Bushnell is currently editing zoning code, may be best to combine with current edits. State maps are located online, both public official and public version available online, to be presented to P&Z Thursday.

5. Discussion regarding agenda setting and rules of procedure for council meetings (Josh)(4:31pm): Town Council passed a resolution at incorporation outlining meeting procedures and in 2025 Council approved a policy for conducting meetings. Current policy does not tie two line items together, as may have been the goal: (1) when the mayor can call for a vote and (2) procedures for first and second motions. Ewing recommends combining the two with a clause clarifying this. Bluff Policy states that any councilmember may submit an item to be on the agenda as long as it is at least 36 hours’ notice while State Code states the Mayor sets the agenda and any two councilmembers can add an agenda item. Ewing recommends following State Code since the Mayor has a big picture of overall goals and will determine if an item is not suited for that agenda, with the safety in place that any Councilmember must lobby a second to place something on the agenda, if Mayor disagrees. Davila expressed frustration over the limited time to hear from experts and discuss openly with the council due to quorum restrictions. Since Davila values discussion with all of council, she suggested editing the clause to allow one councilmember to put an item on the agenda for discussion but requiring two

council people if an item is placed on the agenda for a vote. Haws apologized for requesting an item on the agenda calling for a vote while many council members did not feel comfortable voting so quickly. Due to its presentation to Planning and Zoning, it seemed urgent for Council to discuss. All agreed it was important to hear the information presented. Ewing will draft an ordinance, share it with Council and bring it to the Work Session next week.

6. Bluff letter and comment on Federal Customs & Border Protection (CBP) visitor social media monitoring (Josh, Jen)(4:46pm): Davila presented the proposal from US President and Administration to implement a regulation on Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) Visa Waiver Policy which is a list of 40-45 countries that may visit the US without a visa. This regulation states it has the option to require 5-years history of social media accounts and 10-years history of email accounts of potential visitors of the US. Davila is concerned that this is another blow to international travelers, which is a large revenue source for Bluff. Davila is requesting a signed letter from Bluff to UT legislature telling the US Administration that we do not support this. High percentages of Bluff's tourism is international travelers, many of which are from these ESTA countries. Prior to 2025, Bluff's tourism numbers were not trending down, but have since the beginning of 2025 due to restrictions on international travelers. Ewing's drafted letter is to Customs & Border Protection asking them to think about the economic impact on rural towns and Utah. With a Council consensus, Ewing will finalize tonight and share with Davila who will also distribute a copy to other tourism-based businesses to share with their representatives, public comment period ends Feb 9. Haws recommends citing the poll conducted by a national tourism group asking Europeans if they would visit with these restrictions, which ~25% stated they would not. Council agrees to the issuing of this signed letter from Town of Bluff.

7. Reminder of joint work session scheduled for February 19, 2026, at 6:00 pm with Planning and Zoning to discuss P&Z 2026 priorities (Josh)(5:00pm): Joint work session Feb 19 at 6pm with P&Z at Bluff Community Center to discuss 2026 priorities. Prior to this joint meeting, council will discuss 2026 priorities next week, Feb 10. Ewing requested that each councilmember come to next week's meeting with 2-3 topics they would like to address in 2026. Goal to narrow it down to 2-3 priorities for the Council. Davila stated that these have been aligned with Strategic Plan in the past.

8. Other

Collins announced the Fire Mitigation Weekend is March 27-28, 2026. Additional information to follow.

Ewing announced that Chief Lott is stepping down and will be slowly transitioning out. BVFD has a meeting tonight to discuss succession, Ewing to keep Council in the loop. Many thanks to Chief Lott for the years of service.

Adjourn(5:05pm)

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