

Bluff Town Council Regular Meeting Approved Minutes

March 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.

4:01pm Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call: Mayor Josh Ewing, Jennifer Davila, Gary Haws, Britt Hornsby, Spencer Wade & Erin Nelson, Town Manager

Public Comment (4:02pm): None

(4:02pm) Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 17th Regular Town Council Meeting & Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 19th Planning and Zoning/Town Council Joint Work Session: No edits by Council, Ewing calls a vote for both February 17 and February 19 Meeting Minutes. Wade, Hornsby, Davila, Haws and Ewing voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

1. Review, discussion, and vote to adopt Bluff Speed Limit Ordinance 2026-01 (4:03pm): Ewing thanks Nelson for assembling a draft speed limit ordinance which was drafted with language from other ordinances around the state. Based on last Council discussion, set speed limit in town to 20mph unless otherwise posted. Council discussed specific roads that make sense to have a different speed limit: 3rd West from 191 past the school (15mph vs the set 20mph) and Bluff Bench Road (keep at 50mph). Utah Code was referenced stating that typical school speed limits are 20mph and must have a start and stop point. Ultimately, the only road determined to set differently is the Bluff Bench Road. Ewing calls for a roll call vote: Haws – aye, Davila – aye, Wade – aye, Hornsby - aye, Ewing – aye. Ordinance passes unanimously.
2. Set a public hearing date for proposed FY2025-2026 Amended Budget (4:11pm): 10-day notice required. April 7 at 4:00pm set. This will allow time for Residents, Administration and Council to work through the amendment.

New Business

3. Review and discuss Boundary Line Adjustment Petition from James “Jim” Sayers (4:13pm): Sayers presented the boundary line adjustment petition. Sayers is currently pursuing purchase of ½ acre from neighbors, Zak and Amanda Podmore that is adjacent to a current .10 acre parcel. Requesting to move the hypotenuse of the existing .10 acre and swing it out to include the ½ acre of formerly Podmore property. Two ordinances that apply: boundary line and alleys. Sayers main goal is for existing structures to meet setbacks and has no current intention to sell this lot. Since this is the first Boundary Line Adjustment, Nelson created a staff report outlining the requirements, documentation and the like, including a written and signed statement from both property owners to verify the alley will stay open for access. No official noticing is required due to the two landowners impacted have signed off. Acknowledgement

that this adjustment will take a former nonconforming lot and make it a legal lot size that meets the minimum requirement of ½ acre for the residential zone. Nelson encourages the Council to address alleys and access in general and recommends a written and signed statement from both property owners to verify the alley will stay open for access. Council discussion: Confirmation that the adjustment doesn't affect the alley with inquiry of the gates that have been installed at alley's ends. Sayers reported the gates were installed this spring due to the feral horse issue and the consistency they disturbed Sayers' space. Sayers assured Council that the gates are not locked and still allow all uses of an alley to occur. Agreement that many alleys in Town have utilities, buildings, brush inhibiting the alley from use, although it has not been vacated by Bluff and needs to be addressed later. Davila confirmed that this adjustment will not affect the 6th W boundary and future alley discussions. No vote today, discussion only. Will be on next regular meeting agenda for vote.

4. [Discuss the creation of a Secondary Water Working Group \(4:34pm\)](#): Ewing and Haws have attended multiple meetings to advance protecting secondary water rights and invited Patrick McDermott to attend today's meeting. Ewing introduced 3 things to advance this priority: 1. Working Group (McDermott willing to lead) with members from USU Extension, Town Council Liaison (Gary Haws) and Bluff Water Works (BWW). 2. Budget Amendment to allocate funds to support the Working Group. Many feasibility studies have been conducted to reference. 3. Discussion with State of the Secondary Water Right and what it takes to activate. McDermott presented ideas: Recommends initial concept with a low point of entry to initially show proof of use. Start with few residential 'test runs' by installing low pressure systems that are filled by water trucks. As it develops, create more established and sustainable system with pipes and pulling water from the river. Ultimately, a tree nursery and group that assists homeowners with low pressure systems installation and tree planting. Many grants and programs available for partnership: funding, source protection, wildlife riparian areas, etc. Council spoke in favor of this step, showing intent to use the rights is the right step toward retaining these rights.

5. [Discuss participation and involvement on the Bluff River Trail Committee \(4:43pm\)](#): Bluff River Trail Committee took a break after completing the River Trail and is ready to reactivate to maintain and potentially build additional trails. Hook has requested a town liaison to coordinate efforts with town. This would involve attending meetings, participating and report back. Council inquired how much this complements the Active Transportation Committee. River trail is a smaller committee, specifically for the bluff river trail. Hornsby and Wade both willing to take this on, Wade chosen to serve as Town Liaison.

6. [Discuss Bluff's Community Impact Board \(CIB\) prioritization list \(4:47pm\)](#): This board oversees and allocates funds (via application) that support rural communities impacted by oil and gas development. Town of Bluff maintains our project priority list, most recently approved in 2024. Todd Thorne of SERDA has reached out to meet, scheduled next week. Nelson and Council revised based on 2026 goals (in order of priority): Cooperative Cultural Center, Secondary Water, Repave Bluff Old Highway, Airport Runway, Wildland Fire Truck. Town prioritizes and then the County does. Emphasis on creation of Town Water Department, hoping that the Secondary Water cooperation will continue building trust. Recommendation to discuss Wildland Fire plan presented in 2025 by Gary Lichtenstein and its future.

7. [Review Check Register and February 2026 Financial Report \(5:00pm\)](#): Nelson mentioned the large purchases for Roads, as discussed in previous meetings. Presented is year to date but

will be monthly in the future. As policies and procedures continue to be written down, it is important to let Nelson know what they see missing from the Financial Reports. Reviewing the February financial report will prepare council members for the work session proposed budget for FY2027.

Property Taxes: Municipalities in UT work off a certified tax rate (unless Council chooses to increase, a certain dollar amount is received annually) Tax Rate given to County and they ensure it is received. Bluff's Annual Amount: \$33,186, determined at incorporation. There was a bit more reported due to diverted property taxes and misallocation on the January statement. Changes in property tax amounts may have been higher due to other entities (County, State, etc) increasing their rate.

8. [Public invitation to participate in 2026 Utah Wellbeing Survey from March 1st – 20th \(5:06pm\)](#): USU has invited Bluff to complete their annual anonymous wellbeing survey. Bluff participated in 2022 and 2024 and had a high participation rate. It takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and will be available for 3 weeks. Survey results can inform Town, County and State Government and other entities.

9. [Public reminder to participate in the fuels reduction/fire mitigation event March 27th & 28th \(5:09pm\)](#): Collins reminded all of the need for participation and volunteers for the Fuels Reduction Event Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28, 8a-12p at the Cooperative Cultural Center. Collecting bagged leaves, brush and cut logs curbside or personal delivery. Contact Malia Collins (malia@townofbluffutah.gov) to volunteers at the CCC to direct drop offs, drive personal truck (and driver) for curbside pickup, and/or to have items picked up curbside. Reminder to have items to be picked up on the curb. Thank you to partners, Bluff Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) and Bears Ears Partnership.

10. [Other / Adjourn](#): Davila inquired where the Copper Cliffs Rd transfer currently is, Nelson and Ewing assured it is being researched administratively and Nelson will notify when time. Nelson noted the SERDA Training was cancelled yesterday but a ULCT training has been scheduled for April 13 at 5:00pm in Monticello at The Hideout, dinner provided. Elected and Appointed officials are invited.

[5:13pm meeting adjourned](#)

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