

Bluff Town Council Work Session **DRAFT** Minutes  
Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 4:00 pm MDT

**In Person**

Bluff Community Center Building  
190 N 3rd E Street, Bluff, UT 84512

**Virtual Meeting**

via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/92499673928>  
via Phone: 7193594580, 92499673928#

4:02pm Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call

Town Council: Mayor Josh Ewing, Jennifer Davila, Gary Haws, Britt Hornsby, Spencer Wade

Staff: Erin Nelson, Malia Collins

1. Discussion regarding Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) legislative changes and recommendation options from Bluff Planning and Zoning Commission on Bluff WUI Zones, and next steps (4:02pm): Ewing opened the topic with a reminder of the law passed in 2024 – HB48. This bill did multiple things, with only some applying to Bluff. HB48 (1) created a fee system for people in Very High Risk Areas to pay into a system and have their properties assessed (does not apply to Bluff); (2) requires any municipality that participates in the Cooperative Wildfire System to adopt the WUI codes, which includes an overlay map (does apply to Bluff). Much thanks to Planning and Zoning Commissioner Hadenfeldt for the dozens of hours spent reviewing this state code and how it applies to Bluff. The WUI codes that apply to Bluff are 2-part: (1) New builds or major remodels must follow ‘fire-safe’ building code, scaled based on proximity to fire hydrant, etc. (2) Enforcing defensible space for all properties - determined by the amount of flammable material around the home and business (ties into proposal to hire part-time Emergency Manager). A map must be adopted defining our WUI and within this map the building and defensible space regulations apply. Planning and Zoning was tasked with proposing a map to Council. Smoothed Structure Exposure Score map reviewed and Bluff’s risk levels, out of 8. Anything at a 5 or over, must follow the New Build/remodel building code, which is most of Bluff. If anything less than a 5, a justification must be shared with the state if we want to include them into the 5. Collins presented Planning and Zoning’s discussion and rationales to either include the ‘blue blob’ of 4/8 Exposure Score into the 5/8 Exposure Score or not include. Council discussed including or not including all residential and commercial zones into the recommendation and how it will affect insurance rates, if at all. While this is not up for vote at this meeting an updated map will include all Residential & Commercially zoned properties for approval at the next meeting.

2. April 2026 Financial Reports and Check Register (4:34pm): Nelson stated the reports are as of April 30. \$206,752 in checks for signature today, all within the amended budget. Ewing is excited to spend this money, so by spending these funds we are showing granting agencies that the projects are moving forward. Good news from Senator Curtis’ Office that the money requested for the BRICC has been forwarded in the appropriations process.

3. Presentation of Proposed Property Tax Increase Impact Statement (4:38pm): Recommended by ULCT that at every meeting, the Proposed Property Tax Increase at \$50,000 is presented. Ewing reviewed the Impact Statement and reminded all that this information is available on ToB Website and posted around town. Discussion: Market Value determination when it comes to property tax increase, it is based on the amount the County Assessor has placed on the home, the value that the property tax statement says. If individuals want to bring their property tax statement, we can help determine the estimated amount of increase at next week’s open house.

4. Discuss Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Tentative Budget (4:45pm): Reemphasizing to Council the opportunity to provide feedback for budget items. Dark Sky budget increase and how it will benefit: Ewing reported on a

conversation with Sarah Burak; they spoke on continuing to move forward encouraging compliance for both residents and businesses. Options: Bring a consultant or trained students to town to provide technical assistance. Limited grant program for both homeowners and businesses, reimbursements for retrofits (example: up to \$250 for residents and \$500 for businesses, Bluff will reimburse half of your retrofit). Davila supports the consultant idea and spoke on the resentment forming for business owners, recommendation to start emphasizing residential compliance, more 'bang for our buck' and the following year focus on business reimbursements. In the meantime, hire a consultant to work with businesses to develop a plan for retrofitting. Burak to look into this further and Council will ultimately approve how the money is spent. Also, Nelson stated that Town is looking at a ~\$1500 increase in property insurance coverage which will be reflected in the budget.

5. [Update and discussion of Bluff Rural Innovation and Civic Center renovation budget including funds to be spent by end of Fiscal Year 2026 \(Collins, All\)](#): Collins presented that she has requested a membership with CES, the procurement company and has discussed the plan with Demolition Contractor about adding plywood to all wooden floors (workforce childcare, council chambers, town offices) to make them the level of the adjacent concrete floors, ~70 sheets of plywood. Collins to bring back the amount that needs to be spent prior to end of Fiscal Year and our options.

6. [Progress report on Bluff Community Center lighting retrofit project](#): Awarded to UltraLights Lighting in 2025, during contract negotiations UltraLights stated they would not be able to get UT License. Pivoted to next lowest bid, Lyle Northern Electric at \$24,984.04. Originally an incomplete bid due to not adhering to Build America, Buy America requirements. As we have learned with time, this project is Build America, Buy America exempt due to the total project cost. Fluorescent fixtures will be replaced with LED fixtures (E side of Auditorium, Closets, Restrooms, Stage & Senior Center).

7. [Discuss plan for respective councilmember's breakout sessions during Your Town Budget at Work Open House \(5:02pm\)](#): May 19, 2026 6-7:30pm. Nelson and Ewing are working on a 20-minute presentation prior to breakouts. First budget public hearing is June 2 at 4:00pm. Review and follow-up for assignments. Recap will be provided at first meeting in June.

- Emergency Services (Josh Ewing, Dawn DiLego)
- Bluff Rural Innovation and Civic Center Renovation Project (Malia Collins, Britt Hornsby)
- Secondary Water Project (Gary Haws, Patrick McDermott)
- Class C Roads Department (Michael Haviken, Spencer Wade)
- Dark Sky and Business Collaboration Efforts (Jennifer Davila, Diana Davidson, Sarah Burak): Diana is unavailable, she and Davila will collaborate on something to share.
- General Budget (Erin Nelson)

8. [Information and discussion of fire ban restrictions for Summer 2026 \(5:08pm\)](#): Fire Season is approaching, municipalities have the responsibility to set their fire restrictions, all public lands are separately managed. Starting June 1, all public lands require fires to be in established campgrounds. Ewing proposes Bluff mirror the public land restrictions, to include residential established fire containers/rings.

9. [Other](#): Saved for Special Meeting.

[Adjourned at 5:10pm](#)

For requests to receive emails/meeting invitations, email [office@townofbluffutah.gov](mailto:office@townofbluffutah.gov)

Minute Taker: Malia Collins

Draft Minutes Published: 5/14/2026