Bluff Town Council Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at 4:00 pm MDT

4:01pm Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call

Town Council: Mayor Josh Ewing, Jennifer Davila (4:02pm), Gary Haws, Britt Hornsby, Spencer Wade
Staff: Erin Nelson, Malia Collins

Public Comment Period: None.

1. Discussion Regarding Bluff Cemetery Board Recommended Cemetery Ordinance Changes: Cemetery Board Members, Carolyn Harmon and Tom Hiserodt presented the updated ordinance explaining that many updates were language-related to match the board's current recommendations. Discussion: Balloon launching prohibited in Cemetery proper, not including the turn-around as the turn-about is shared by SW Heritage Foundation and Hole in the Rock Foundation; Animals permitted and prohibited; Home Burial, Board recommending to discourage, while State law allows language included that all laws must be followed; ordering a grave opening; plot abandonment, Council recommends longer than 60 years and to add reapplication at 60 years (Utah Code Title 8 Chapter 5 Section 3 states 60 years).
Request from Cemetery Board to: 1. Purchase signs announcing Bluff Cemetery in the amount of ~$317, 2. For placement of unknown burial markers, request to purchase sand ~$100. FY Cemetery budget is $1500 with ~$200 of that for mowing maintenance. Board is researching fencing to delineate grave sites with a long term request for a road expansion along the S side of the future plot, ~$10,000. Board requests that Council discusses their vision amongst themselves and Community and determine the resources they are willing to put into the Cemetery. Council agrees that signs and sand may be purchased and future purchase requests to be brought before Council.

2. Budget and Revenues Discussion Including County Tourism Tax Advisory Board Outlook: Nelson and Davila attended the Tourism Tax Advisory Board meeting yesterday, August 10. Visa credit card numbers that are typically shared, were not reflecting accurately, Tourism will work on the report and share as soon as possible. Reported that while revenues through May 2026 were good, consensus is that July, month 1 of 26/27 Fiscal Year, numbers have been down. Bluff is not currently the highest earner of Transient Room Tax, Blanding City has this. Thanks to business owners in bluff for completing Nelson's survey.

3. Discussion Regarding Employee Benefits Policy including Health Insurance, Retirement, Leave (PTO, Health, Parental), and Employee Eligibility: During the budgeting process, funds were set aside for employee benefits, but a benefits policy did not yet exist. This is a draft of the benefits policy with many decision points for Council to make along the way. Emphasis on the Strategic Plan Goal of retention of employees and their well-being. Nelson reviewed benefit policy reviewing the employee classifications (full time, part time, limited part time). To participate in URS (Retirement) the employee must work at least 20 hours per week and have a paid benefit (ex: health insurance). Wade announced his Conflict of Interest that his spouse is a full-time employee.
Health Care Premium: can a part-time employee have the option to pay for health insurance completely out of pocket, Nelson will check with PEHP (current quoted healthcare). PEHP requires the employer to pay 100% of the employee's premium, benefit policy has this benefit for Full-time employees - Haws requested a review of the 100% portion of this quote, as San Juan School District has PEHP and requires employee to pay a portion. Future discussion requested for the amount Council is interested in covering by percentage (100%, 80%, etc).

Paid Time Off: Currently operating on an 'unlimited PTO' policy. By creating a maternity leave policy and others, the proposal is to move from the current policy to an accrual basis. Current employees would start at the amount of time they have currently been employed (example: 4 years Full-time with Town would equal the accrued rate by 4 years). Accrual rate discussed at length.
Health Leave: Proposal of separate 15 days that does not roll over. May be used for health-related time off: doctors visits, etc.
Post-Partum Recovery (Maternity) Leave: Bluff is matching UT State at 6 weeks of 100% pay. Nelson to check UT eligibility requirements (start immediately or a period of time must have worked prior and after).
Parental Leave: 3 weeks for either parent, Nelson checking if it may be stacked on post-partum leave.
Bereavement Leave: 5 days for immediate family member, 3 days for extended family member. Discussion: option available to take additional unpaid time or use vacation leave.
Discussion and vote at next meeting for entire policy. Request for anyone with different options than presented, have them turned into Nelson by Friday.

4. 2026 Bluff Wellbeing Survey Results (if time allows):
Bluff is the most connected community of all surveyed. Many priorities listed are those Council has chosen to pursue this year. Option to have results presented, results will be published on Town website. Participation decreased this year by approx. 30 participants.

5. Other:
ULCT Annual Conference: October 27-28, 2026 in SLC, Utah – Contact Nelson if interested in attending.
ULCT Webinar Training: Wednesday August 26 @ 12:00pm - Leading Together in a 5 and 6 Person Council
SERDA Regional Summit: September 9 @ 5:30pm in Price, Utah
Proposed Planning & Zoning (P&Z) and Town Council (TC) Joint Work Session prior to P&Z open house (September 17) so that both can discuss priorities for code, potentially scheduled for September 8 or 15.
Clarification that the Google well-being study referenced during benefits discussion states that allowing engineers to spend 20% of their time on side projects increased productivity.
Council group photo for Town Website scheduled after next week's meeting, August 20.

6. Adjourn at 5:57pm.

For requests to receive emails/meeting invitations, email office@townofbluffutah.gov
Minute Taker: Malia Collins
Minutes Approved: August 18, 2026