MEETING MINUTES
ALTA CAPITAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, July 15, 2026, 11:00 AM
Alta Post Office Building
10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

ALTA CAPITAL COMMITTEE MEETING – 11:00 AM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	Scott Briggs (virtual) James Crosby Murray Danforth (virtual) – joined at 11:08 AM Lindsey DeOllos (virtual) Steve Levy (virtual) Paul Maeder (virtual) Liz Rocco (virtual)
STAFF PRESENT:	Chris Cawley, Town Manager Molly Austin, Assistant Town Manager Jen Clancy, Town Clerk
ALSO PRESENT:	Craig Heimark, Town Council Liaison (virtual) Roger Bourke, Mayor
NOT PRESENT:	Rosie O'Grady

1) INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Alta Town Manager Chris Cawley called the July 15, 2026 meeting to order at 11:03 AM and noted James Crosby was attending the meeting in person, but all other committee members were expected to join the meeting virtually, noting the absence of committee member Rosie O'Grady who was unable to attend.

2) DISCUSSION AND ACTION: CAPITAL COMMITTEE CHARTER and ACTION TO APPOINT COMMITTEE CHAIR and SELECT MEMBER TERMS

Cawley introduced the CAPTIAL Committee Charter that was adopted by the Town Council on July 8, 2026, and reviewed the key components:

- Designate a committee chair and vice chair.
- Members to serve staggered terms of either 1 or 2 years.
- Establishes the committee authority and basic ground rules for conducting meetings.
- A quorum is required to conduct a meeting and take formal action, which will be mostly limited to approving meeting minutes and providing recommendations to the Town Council.
- The purpose statement – the purpose of the committee is to review proposals for major capital improvements by the Town of Alta (Town) to ensure proposals meet the needs of Alta's residents, businesses, taxpayers, and other community members. The committee will specifically review proposals developed by Town of Alta staff to improve or replace the Town's buildings, culinary water system, and wastewater collection system. The committee will also review various options to fund capital improvements and may provide recommendations to the Town Council regarding project scope, budgets, and funding options.

Cawley highlighted that this committee was created in conjunction with the Town's long-range planning efforts. Maeder noted that the committee is primarily advisory and expressed his appreciation for the clarity of that in the Charter.

Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair:

Motion: Murray Danforth nominated Paul Maeder as Committee Chair. Lindsey DeOllos seconded.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Result: Approved

Motion: Paul Maeder motioned to nominate Scott Briggs as Committee Vice Chair. Murray Danforth seconded the motion.

Vote: All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Result: Approved

Selecting Member Terms:

Scott Briggs suggested the Chair and the Vice-Chair each serve two-year terms to allow for continuity. A brief discussion followed with committee members volunteering themselves for 1- or 2-year terms. Member terms were agreed to as follows:

Steve Levy – 1 Year

Paul Maeder – 2 Years
Scott Briggs – 2 Years
Lindsey DeOllos – 2 Years
James Crosby – 2 Years
Liz Rocco – 1 Year
Rosie O'Grady– 1 Year
Murray Danforth – 2 Years

Discussion of Public Comment in Meetings:

Cawley described how public comments are addressed in Town Council meetings, with each comment generally limited to 3 minutes. He suggested this body includes a public comment period as a standing agenda item as well, with the idea that this committee may provide more opportunities to include public discourse. The committee members generally agreed to include a public comments opportunity as a standard element of committee meetings.

3) OPEN AND PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT OVERVIEW

Cawley introduced the Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA"), which governs how formal public bodies conduct meetings and business. Cawley described that the primary purpose of OPMA is to ensure that public business is conducted in public. Cawley clarified that this committee is a public body under the state code, as it is an advisory body of a public body to the Town of Alta, so these meetings will abide by the requirements described in OPMA. Cawley described the annual OPMA training requirements for committee members and provided a link to an online course to complete the requisite training.

Cawley explained that Town staff will be responsible for the meeting notice requirements, audio/video recordings, and minute-taking requirements outlined in OPMA.

Cawley emphasized that committee members should avoid discussing business outside of a public meeting, detailing that an email between a quorum of a public body is a meeting under Utah law. Chance social encounters are allowed, as long as no committee business is deliberated.

Briggs asked about any limitations to communication between the Chair and Vice-Chair outside of a public meeting. Cawley stated that discussions are okay if there isn't a quorum present. Town Clerk, Jen Clancy, reiterated that one-one-one conversations are allowed and also discouraged members from texting each other during the meetings.

4) PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Haik introduced himself as an Alta property taxpayer since the 1990s with regular attendance at public meetings in Alta. He expressed his personal and professional interest in municipal affairs in Alta and the wider tri-canyon area and described his familiarity with local public records. Haik reiterated his interest from a previous Town Council meeting to join or be appointed to the Committee.

Christopher Barnes introduced himself as an Alta resident and shared his support for the creation and endeavors of the Committee.

5) TOWN of ALTA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING REFRESHER

Cawley prefaced this portion of the meeting by acknowledging prior efforts to replace the Post Office Building with a "community center" concept. He described that during Mayor Bourke's first term the council prioritized long-range financial planning with recognition of the need to invest in our existing facilities to support long-term sustainability of existing municipal services. This focus shift from a larger scale "community center" concept to investing in current infrastructure, especially utility systems, was the impetus for our current capital planning efforts.

Cawley provided an overview of the Facilities Master Plan ("FMP") that was initiated two years ago. The FMP assessed current conditions and future operational needs of the Post Office Building (Community Center), Alta Central (Alta Marshal's Office headquarters), and the Town Office. The FMP did not account for Our Lady of the Snows Center ("OLS") because it was not under Town ownership at that time. The FMP included a facility condition assessment conducted by teams of architects and engineers that assessed the needs for repairs and provided a cost comparison between repair and replacement costs. As-built floor plans for existing facilities were also included. Finally, the FMP provided concepts for "test-fit" space plans to account for current functions and identified operational deficiencies, along with associated cost estimates. Cawley clarified the distinction between test-fits and a design process, reiterating that the test-fits are *not* design documents and they don't represent any decisions, they are merely conceptual as a guide to aid decision making.

Cawley gave a brief overview of findings of each of the three buildings included in the FMP:

- Post Office Building ("POB") – urgent structural problems identified, needs to be torn down and replaced. This site is recommended for a new building due to the roadside location and reduced exposure to avalanches.

- Alta Central – structural problems, poor accessibility, and avalanche-exposed. It served as administrative office before the Town Office was built in 1993, now it houses the police and dispatch functions of the Alta Marshal's Office. Due to wildfire risk, avalanche exposure, and lack of seismic reinforcement, this building can't be used as a public safety facility. Recommended decommissioning for public safety functions.

- Town Office – In good shape, most recently built. Designed for avalanche impacts but has significant accessibility challenges year-round. Recommendation to keep as the administrative office or remodel/renovate as a dispatch center.

Maeder asked about when Americans with Disability Act ("ADA") requirements would come into play. Cawley noted that any new building would have to be ADA compliant and the Town should retrofit current buildings to be ADA compliant, but there is no definitive timeline to do so. He described the first decision is to figure out what is going in the new building (which will be ADA compliant) and then determine the use and functionality of the Town Office, noting vehicle access is a primary issue. Maeder inquired if any staff require ADA accessibility and asked if there have been complaints about the accessibility of the Town Office. Cawley suggested that visitors inform the town they are unable to access the Town Office for various reasons at a rate of about twice a year. Cawley described ADA compliance as an operational issue in the short-term and a sustainability issue in the long-term. Briggs asked about the threshold for necessitating ADA compliance. Cawley explained that the Town cannot issue a building permit for improvements that don't comply with the ADA. Cawley stated that he cannot site the specifics but described the threshold as being low and said he would follow up with the committee.

Cawley described additional functional deficiencies identified in the FMP, primarily for the Alta Marshal's Office ("AMO"), highlighting how difficult it is to access Alta Central and police vehicles in the wintertime with no covered parking available, resulting in significant delays to response times. He continued to describe a lack of secure spaces for various law enforcement needs, such as space for detention, an armory, and evidence storage. At times, the lack of available on-site resources requires deputies to leave the canyon and a heavier dependence on outside agencies for support. Cawley noted that the test-fit space configurations provided in the FMP were intended to resolve many of these deficiencies by including additional functional spaces for the AMO. One desired outcome is to have sufficient indoor parking and employee quarters in one building. Cawley noted that minor improvements have been made over the last few years, such as a new interview room and additional deputy quarters, but that unmet needs remain. Cawley explained that the real benefit of adding additional functional spaces is to support long-term sustainability, describing current shortcomings as a risk to the Town, regardless of growth in demand for law enforcement services.

Crosby inquired if there are height restrictions on buildings in Alta. Cawley explained that the zoning ordinance does include height restrictions but noted that as part of this process we may have to create a new zoning ordinance for Town properties. Crosby then asked if purchasing the Shallow Shaft property is a possibility. Cawley responded that current owners are working on a proposal to redevelop it.

Levy asked if cost comparisons for repairs versus reconstruction have been conducted. Cawley described that the FMP does include cost estimates for structural repairs versus replacement, which determined that it is more expensive to simply do repairs. Levy recommended that cost analysis be more front and center moving forward.

Cawley described that the Town wants to build a new building on the site of the current POB to replace current functionality and at least the law enforcement function of the AMO to address some of the deficiencies described. The future of the Town Office building has yet to be decided: it may remain as-is or may be renovated into the dispatch center if all administrative functions move to the new building site. Cawley emphasized that these proposed test-fits are not designs, rather they are concepts that represent ideal future conditions as articulated by Town staff to include existing functional spaces and additional space needs. Cawley reviewed current square footage of existing buildings and described each test fit.

Test-Fit 1 – Demolish the Post Office Building. Decommission or demolish Alta Central. Construct a new building on the Post Office site to maintain all existing functions of the building, all existing AMO functions (including dispatch), as well as additional AMO space. Minor improvements to Town Office to improve accessibility. Total estimated square footage of 16,683 square feet and estimated cost of $14.6 million.

Test-Fit 2 – Demolish the Post Office Building. Decommission or demolish Alta Central. Construct a new building on the Post Office site to maintain all existing functions of the building, all existing *police* functions of the AMO, add additional AMO space, and move administrative services to the new building. Renovate the current Town Office into the Dispatch Center. This would move all public-facing Town functions to one roadside location, improving accessibility. Total estimated square footage of 17,656 square feet and estimated cost of $16.6 million.

Cawley reiterated that test-fits are *concepts* for two ways the town can reach future goals but may not be representative of a final building and do not represent any decisions.

Cawley then reviewed some caveats about the Master Planning Process and proposed test-fits:

- The cost estimate of $1,100/square foot is from last year; costs are only going up.
- Neither the FMP nor the test-fit scenarios account for OLS, which provides multi-purpose space.
- Possible UDOT participation. UDOT has stored equipment at the Post Office Building for decades and would like to continue to do so, which may encourage participation in the design process and funding.
- The FMP is a snapshot from a moment in time that has passed. Modest improvements which satisfy some of the additional space needs outlined have already been implemented.
- TEST FITS ARE NOT DESIGN.
- The Town Office is in good shape but should be renovated to improve accessibility.

Cawley stated that the bare minimum project is for a new building to replace all existing functions of the POB and Alta Central, which is 7,750 square feet, resulting in a roughly $9 million project. On the other end of the spectrum, the highest estimated cost is $18 million for an expanded new building and complete renovation of the Town Office.

Cawley described the next step as an architectural and feasibility study, which is set to be accomplished during this fiscal year with a budget of $100,000. He stated the goals of this study would be to determine the program for a new building, understand what changes would be proposed for the Town Office, and develop a construction budget estimate.

Heimark commented that his understanding of the next step is a site study of the site of the current Post Office Building and inquired if UDOT provided a timeline to determine if they would consider partnership on the project. Cawley shared that site analysis including avalanche hazard analysis is part of the upcoming feasibility and programming project. To address Heimark's second question, Cawley stated that he does not know about the window of opportunity with UDOT for cooperation, explaining that UDOT has a handful of other options to consider between both Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons. Cawley stated that the Town still plans to meet with UDOT on the Request for Proposals to gauge their interest in participating. Cawley shared a proposed project timeline that targets construction to begin in the spring of 2028.

Cawley provided a brief overview of Town utility system needs, with approximately $2.7 million identified in short-medium term projects to address deficiencies in water system and $1.3 million for the sewer system. Additionally, the Town needs to save money to fund pipeline replacement over time, but the current budgets are really lean, and rates are already quite high.

Cawley then reviewed what decisions need to be made regarding Town buildings; determining what is going to go into a new building and how big it will be, identifying the future use and function of the Town Office building, and determining a budget and how the project will be financed, which was emphasized as being the priority of the CAPITAL committee. Cawley presented similar decisions to be made on the Town's water and sewer systems, reviewing some funding options like debt financing, grants, or utilizing the State of Utah revolving loan program, which may be cost-effective versus saving money to "pay as we go" given future inflation. Cawley described that all property owners in Alta pay into the General Fund, but not all property owners pay into the Water and Sewer Funds due to different utility district boundaries within the town boundary. This discrepancy would complicate a decision to pay for any improvements from the General Fund.

Briggs asked about a scenario in which a bond is used to pay for improvements to the sewer system and if all Alta residents would be obligated to help pay it back. Cawley stated that it would depend on what the bond is held against, sharing that it is common to bond against utility revenues, which would only apply to customers of that utility. Cawley described that governments can issue debt against a variety of revenues including sales tax revenue.

6) <u>FULFILLING the COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE</u>

CAPITAL Committee = **C**itizen's **A**dvisory **P**anel to **I**mprove the **T**own of **AL**ta. Cawley summarized the purpose of the committee is to review proposals for capital improvements, project budgets, and funding sources, and to provide recommendations to the Town Council for the same. He highlighted that despite the variety of specific options for funding strategies, all will most likely be supported either by taxes or utility rates. Clancy commented that philanthropy is another option as well. Cawley described that the Town long assumed philanthropic donations would help fund a new community center building, and support may vary depending on details of the project.

Cawley stated that there may be opportunities for grant funding to support a project, although he was not immediately aware of any that would fit the bill for this particular project. Cawley gave an overview of general obligation ("GO") bonds. On the one hand, general obligation bonds are lower risk as they are least subject to volatility and can offer lower rates. On the other hand, they can be challenging to plan around as they must be voter-approved: if passed, a GO bond would raise property taxes on all Alta properties during the term of the loan. Cawley explained that there are other types of bonds to consider and also noted that there is currently about $1 million set aside in the Capital Projects Fund to help offset funding.

Crosby asked if there is a system in place for the Town to accept tax deductible donations. Clancy noted this idea had been contemplated previously, and that she would have to look into it to be able to provide a definitive answer.

7) NEXT STEPS and GUIDANCE to STAFF

Cawley presented a series of questions to the committee that would help guide staff through the planning process. On the subject of philanthropy, Cawley shared a recent story of the City of Ivins, in southern Utah, receiving a $2 million donation to expand a local fire department building, demonstrating precedent for such a donation. Cawley emphasized that community support is critical, especially if the Town were to issue a GO bond and encouraged the Committee to share feedback on whether the Town is making the right case to harness community support. Additionally, staff will lean on the committee to offer guidance on what amount of debt financing taxpayers are likely to support. Cawley described that water and sewer projects may be easier to get off the ground as the projects are well defined.

Maeder encouraged staff to learn more about how the donation in Ivins came about and to investigate grant opportunities more strategically. In terms of community support, Maeder expressed some skepticism about philanthropic donations, stating that the only way to understand how much money people are willing to spend is to ask for it directly. Briggs emphasized that openness and transparency in communication is key, highlighting the importance of the frequency, quality, and completeness of communication. Danforth said that eventually these buildings are going to fall apart and the Council will have to decide to do something about it, and he inquired how taxpayers could influence the outcome. Danforth shared that from a funding point of view, data is going to be crucial to take into consideration to justify funding plans. He cited the difference in water use amongst user groups (single family homes, condominiums, businesses) as an example to consider the fairness of cost sharing across the community. Regarding the Marshal's Department, Danforth also questioned how much of those services goes to residents versus transient visitors.

Clancy explained that water and sewer usage is based on equivalent capacity unit ("ECU") values. She detailed that commercial properties have much higher ECU values than single-family homes, so everyone already pays their fair share to fund the system. Clancy also stated that the Town recently began a business license study that may answer some questions about Marshal's Department services. Danforth asked for clarification on water rates and minimum charges, regardless of how much water is used. Clancy confirmed the system was designed this way to provide a reliable revenue source, given the transient nature of Alta's single-family homes.

Bourke explained that in terms of fire protection, it has been recognized that much of their EMT services go to visitors rather than residents and to compensate for that, the county has been contributing money to supplement that EMT service. Bourke wondered if something similar could be initiated for police services. Danforth reiterated that having data to understand what percentage of services go to residents versus transient visitors would be helpful to justify the expense and funding considerations. Maeder encouraged committee members to review the recent budget presentation available on the website as it may help answer some of the questions posed. To give a bigger picture perspective, Maeder noted that it is a Town's responsibility to serve everyone, regardless of how often they may use public safety services, yet he still encouraged a balanced and defensible approach to solicit support from the community.

Cawley summarized the Committee's desire for more information about general consumption of services between different user groups and indicated that some answers are expected from the upcoming business license study while data about water and sewer usage is already readily available. He also reiterated that staff would take a due diligence approach to understanding grants and philanthropic opportunities. Maeder added that information regarding revenue as well as expenses would be beneficial. Cawley stated that roughly 60% of the Town's revenue comes from sales tax or similar revenues paid by visitors, which more than cover the police budget.

8) DATE of NEXT MEETING and MEETING SCHEDULE

Cawley recommended the next meeting take place in early October to allow for more forward progress on the architecture project as well as engagement with a Municipal Advisor. Maeder suggested more frequent and shorter meetings versus longer meetings that are more spread out, targeting an hour and a half as a maximum meeting time. With that in mind, Maeder requested staff poll the Committee for availability in late August as well as October.

9) OTHER BUSINESS or OPEN DISCUSSION

Heimark inquired if the Town had cost estimates to bring the Town Office building into ADA compliance. Cawley responded that ADA compliance is considered and built-in to the test-fit price estimates.

10) MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion: CAPITAL Committee member Scott Briggs motioned to adjourn the meeting. CAPITAL Committee member James Crosby seconded.

Vote: All in favor and the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Result: Approved

Minutes Approved on September 2, 2026

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Chris Cawley, Town Manager