MINUTES
ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 4:00 PM
Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

PRESENT:	Mayor Roger Bourke Councilmember Carolyn Anctil Councilmember John Byrne Councilmember Elise Morgan Councilmember Dan Schilling
STAFF PRESENT:	Chris Cawley, Town Manager Jen Clancy, Town Clerk Molly Austin, Assistant Town Manager Craig Heimark, Treasurer
ALSO PRESENT:	Polly McLean, Legal Counsel
NOT PRESENT:	Mike Morey, Town Marshal Brooke Boone, Deputy Town Clerk

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

00:00:00

Mayor Bourke called the September 10, 2025 Alta Town Council meeting to order.

2. **CITIZEN INPUT**

00:00:30

Mark Haik addressed the council with concerns regarding the analysis of public infrastructure, specifically the Albion Basin road right-of-way. Haik referenced a 1990 letter from District Ranger Seig to Shrontz, which he said stated that the Forest Service lacked authority to issue a driveway permit for the road since Salt Lake County had transferred right-of-way responsibilities to the Town of Alta after its incorporation. Haik noted that the letter directed coordination with county officials and other agencies and questioned what public records or documents the town relied on in its assessment of the road right-of-way. Haik stated this issue had been raised as early as 2010 with then Planning Commission member Bourke present and emphasized that multiple public records existed from various agencies, suggesting the town had not sufficiently analyzed the matter. Haik concluded by urging the town to clarify and produce the records supporting its assessment.

Margaret Bourke commended the council and staff for progress on the Tom Moore restoration project, noting appreciation for the inclusion of a toilet to preserve historical significance and recommending the addition of trash facilities in partnership with the ski area to address year-round waste issues.

Bourke requested that exterior lighting for the project comply with dark sky standards to preserve night sky visibility. Bourke also expressed support for the staff's project tracker chart and the financial fund balance chart provided in reports. Bourke highlighted concerns that the Shrontz Estate's proposed condo development's elevation exceeded the height of surrounding trees and recommended that any revised development agreement include participation from all stakeholders, including the Estate, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, the lift company, the Planning Commission, the Town Council, and the U.S. Forest Service. Bourke further cautioned that the proposed conservation easement for a portion of Lot 1 could create a nonconforming use, which might pose future difficulties for the town.

3. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE SHRONTZ ESTATE'S PROPOSAL TO REZONE A PORTION OF THE PATSEY MARLEY HILL PROPERTY AND AMEND THE 2014 DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

00:09:45

Chris Cawley provided background and context on the Patsey Marley Hill property, noting that development discussions had occurred since the early 2000s. Cawley explained that the Estate recently petitioned to rezone part of the property to FM-20, which the Planning Commission reviewed at its July 15, 2025 meeting. The commission held a public hearing and voted 4–1 to give a neutral recommendation to the council, suggesting 11 conditions of approval for the rezone. Cawley clarified that no action was scheduled for today's council meeting and the discussion would serve as a work session.

Cawley outlined the pros and cons of the two development alternatives: a 33-unit condominium building proposed under the rezone request and the 10-lot subdivision allowed under the existing 2014 development agreement. The condominium proposal was noted to have a smaller overall footprint, consolidated infrastructure, potential for a less disruptive access route, the inclusion of workforce housing, and the possibility of generating sales and lodging tax revenue. It also included a conservation easement and trailhead restroom proposal. Concerns identified included the size of the building, potential impacts on Alta's character, and the precedent it might set for future condominium approvals. The subdivision alternative avoided a large building and maintained current zoning, but would spread development across the parcel, require multiple utilities and driveways, and potentially disrupt use of the Albion Basin summer road. Rentals would be prohibited for the 10 homes under subdivision zoning, eliminating tax revenue opportunities.

Cawley concluded by recommending that the council focus on the fundamental land use question of whether condominiums were preferable to single-family lots, weighing the benefits of preserved open space against the impacts of permitting a large building and potential future zoning implications.

Doug Ogilvy introduced himself as a representative of the Shrontz Estate regarding the Patsey Marley parcel, a 25-acre property on Albion Basin Road. Ogilvy explained that the Estate's objective is to monetize the property following the 2014 settlement and development agreement, which originally approved a 10-lot subdivision. Acknowledging that this plan was not widely popular in the community, Ogilvy described how, beginning in 2019, the Estate engaged consultants to explore alternative development options that might better align with community preferences. Over the past several years, these efforts included multiple consultations with town representatives, Salt Lake City public utilities, and public outreach, culminating in a public open house in March 2025 where Ogilvy reported that attendees favored the 33-unit condominium proposal over the previously approved 10-lot plan.

Ogilvy outlined the evolution of the development concept, noting that the Estate initially considered a condo-hotel alternative, but ultimately shifted to a pure condominium model. Ogilvy explained that the proposed rezoning to FM-20 would allow the development to move forward, provided the building height remained within 25 feet above the summer road, which had been identified as a critical parameter by the town. Ogilvy stressed that the project's feasibility depends on coordination between the Estate, the town, and Salt Lake City public utilities, and that nothing would move forward without agreement from all parties.

Water availability was identified as a key constraint, with up to 8,000 gallons per day available under a 2014 settlement agreement. Ogilvy emphasized that the zoning request before the town council is solely for rezoning approval, not a conditional use permit, and that the final number of units could be adjusted if the Department of Water Quality determines there is insufficient water. Ogilvy clarified that the risk of conditional use approval rests entirely with the Estate: if the conditional use permit is denied or if the water supply proves insufficient, the project would revert to the original 10-lot plan approved in 2014. Consequently, Ogilvy stated the Estate would bear the financial and logistical consequences of the project not proceeding as planned. Ogilvy concluded by stressing that the Estate has already invested significant resources over more than a decade and that the rezoning request represents a calculated step forward, with the fallback option of the 10-lot subdivision ensuring that the town's prior settlement agreement remains intact if the condominium project cannot be successfully realized.

John Byrne encouraged the group to consider water availability for the condo project and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the condo proposal versus ten single-family homes. Carolyn Anctil focused on the housing and employment implications, noting that the ten-home scenario would likely require a caretaker at each property due to the challenges of managing dispersed homes, thereby creating more year-round employment opportunities than a condominium setup. Byrne emphasized that maintaining employment is closely tied to fostering community in Alta, highlighting the town's prior value-based decisions to accommodate summer activities and noise ordinances to support community cohesion. Mayor Bourke sought clarification that the Shrontz Estate was seeking flexibility with the rezone of the parcel, in that they wanted the option to proceed with a condo project while retaining the right to revert back to the ten-lot plan if the condo approach proved unworkable. Zach Hartman confirmed this, emphasizing the financial risks of proceeding with condos and the need to maintain a fallback plan in case the condo development failed.

Byrne, Anctil, and other council members then raised the ski area as a critical partner, Byrne stressed that any conservation agreement not impede the ski area's operations or long-term expansion goals. Hartman acknowledged the importance of partnerships but described the approval process as complex and sequential, requiring coordination with the town, the Estate, and Salt Lake City public utilities. Morgan expressed frustration that the developers were seeking council opinions before presenting complete information. Morgan expressed she had expected a structured presentation responding to the planning commission's conditions, followed by an opportunity for questions. Hartman clarified that the purpose of this visit was to confirm whether the council could tolerate the proposed condo size while acknowledging that issues such as building access, water, and other operational requirements would continue to be worked on.

Discussion then turned to building height and mass, identified as one of the project's critical concerns. Byrne noted that the Planning Commission did not support the original 28-foot height above the road, and that height, access, water, and the condo versus single-family question were the linchpin issues. Hartman indicated that access and water requirements could be met, but reducing building height would compromise the project's financial viability by reducing sellable square footage. Dan Schilling and other council members expressed concern about preserving the town's visual character, referencing previous developments that were visually intrusive despite modest square footage. Anctil, Byrne, and Morgan, all raised concerns about the proposed building's height and mass referring to it as massive and significantly bigger than any other building in town. It was also noted that due to the location of the building on the Patsey Marley hillside it would be visible by the majority of residents and guests in town. Hartman explained that the building's walls included step backs to reduce visual impact while balancing financial feasibility.

Ogilvy outlined the economic rationale for the condo plan. Ogilvy said it allowed for faster sales, reduced financing risk, and market alignment, with units sold individually rather than as part of a rental pool, though he supposed that approximately half of owners might choose to rent their units. Byrne and Morgan recognized that the condo plan still created employment through caretaker units and operational needs, though likely fewer than with the ten-home plan.

The council clarified that the town could not mandate condo units be placed in a rental pool, leaving the decision to the Homeowners Association. Morgan highlighted that some residents assumed the condos would automatically be part of a rental pool, and this clarification helped manage community expectations.

Toward the end of the discussion, Hartman reiterated the developers' objective: they sought guidance on whether the council could accept the condo project as proposed, while reserving the right to revert to ten single-family homes if necessary. The council acknowledged that this was the beginning of a detailed review process with them should the Estate want to proceed. The council also indicated they would need more time and/or information to resolve issues related to building height, access, water, and community character before making a decision about rezoning the Patsey Marley Hill Property.

4. **ALTA SKI AREA UPDATE, MIKE MAUGHAN**

01:48:50

Mike Maughan began by thanking the town staff for their support and collaboration over the summer, noting that the construction and maintenance projects had been very dynamic, with conditions changing almost daily. Maughan specifically recognized Chris Cawley for stepping up and assisting with project coordination, as well as the Marshal's Office for their help with various operational challenges in Alta. Maughan then provided an update on multiple ski area projects. For the Supreme Lift, all towers had been installed and aligned, with plans to install the haul rope, communication lines, and chairs in the coming weeks. Maughan projected a load test for October 6, which would put the lift ahead of schedule and ready for operations roughly a month early.

Maughan noted that the precast portion of the Albion Day Lodge expansion had been completed and erected, and steel erection was underway, expected to take about a month. Changes in engineering sequencing, however, meant that repaving the day lodge lot wouldn't be possible until next year, though backfilling and road base would allow functional access this winter. Maughan also addressed work restrictions during the winter, specifying that indoor work could proceed on days without parking reservations and with minimal vehicle use.

For the equipment cold storage building, Maughan said wall pours were ongoing, with steel erection and roofing anticipated within a month, and rough finishes projected for mid-December. Sewer line work, which involves coordination with the town, was scheduled to start the following week with some temporary inconvenience expected in the parking lot.

Maughan also discussed the Crosstow Utilities project, which was about a month behind schedule. To stay on track for snowmaking operations, crews might work some Fridays and Saturdays, particularly at the Albion Day Lodge site. Maughan highlighted that part of the delay was due to archeological discoveries at the historic town site, which were documented with the Forest Service, SHPO, and SWCA archaeologists. Maughan suggested that some of these artifacts could be displayed in the remodeled second level of the Albion Day Lodge to share the town's history.

Additional updates included the Alta Lodge tow conversion to a repositionable tow for improved snow removal and grooming, completion of Sugar Loaf lift upgrades, and the High Traverse project.

Maughan noted that unit sales were flat year over year, with some growth in more affordable products, and that hiring efforts had been highly successful, with over 404 applicants in the first two weeks.

Finally, Maughan addressed the Shrontz Estate development proposal, stating that the ski area had generally supported the idea of condos over single-family homes. However, Maughan emphasized that water and access issues, including existing easements and proposed dual access roads, had not yet been fully addressed. Maughan recommended that these issues be resolved with the Estate before any zoning changes occurred to ensure clarity and avoid complications.

5. <u>QUESTIONS REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS</u>

01:56:50

Mayor Bourke asked about the wildfire risk ratings for the town, and Jay Torgersen explained that the state provided an interactive map to determine risk levels, which generally placed the community in a high-risk area. Torgersen then introduced Assistant Chief Dusty Dern, who outlined recent changes to the liaison program, noting that each assistant chief was assigned to multiple municipalities and confirming Alta was among those he supported. Chief Dern emphasized that the Unified Fire Authority (UFA) aimed to provide assistance as needed and be an active part of the community. Discussion followed regarding a recent plane crash in the area. Torgersen explained that such incidents trigger a large, pre-planned emergency response, though most resources were not needed in this case. Officials expressed relief that the crash did not cause a wildfire given current dry conditions, while acknowledging the tragedy of the fatality. Anctil shared observations about the coordinated response and noted how the event highlighted the community's strong connections and support. Participants agreed on the importance of lessons learned from such emergencies and the town's reliance on both professional and community collaboration.

6. **<u>APPROVAL OF AUGUST 13, 2025 ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, SEPTEMBER STAFF AND FINANCE REPORTS</u>**

02:03:00

MOTION: John Byrne motioned to approve the August 13, 2025 town council meeting minutes, and September staff and finance reports. Dan Schilling seconded.

VOTE: All were in favor. The August 13, 2025 town council meeting minutes, and September staff and finance reports were approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

7. **<u>MAYORS REPORT</u>**

02:03:30

Mayor Bourke reported that on August 21, the town hosted the Salt Lake County Council of Mayors at the newly acquired Our Lady of the Snows (OLS) facility, where Bourke gave a presentation on living with avalanches and led a short hike to illustrate the town's history with avalanche impacts. On August 22, Mayor Bourke met with Utah Transit Authority (UTA) regarding ski season service and expressed frustration over their unwillingness to be able to make changes for the upcoming season, even to bus route names, noting that planning must begin far in advance for future seasons. On August 24, a celebration was held for Junior Bounous's 100th birthday, where Mayor Bourke presented him with a symbolic key to the town in recognition of his contributions to skiing. On August 31, a memorial service was held for Mimi Levitt at the Alta Lodge, honoring her accomplishments, including co-founding the Alta Defense Fund, which evolved into Friends of Alta. That same day, a fatal plane crash occurred near the summer road, and the town's police responded immediately. Bourke noted that today's agenda included a resolution to cancel the upcoming municipal election due to candidate withdrawals, saving election costs.

On September 4, the town held a strategic planning retreat, where participants discussed the need to replace the town office building, the high cost of such a project, and uncertainty about funding. Council members commented that the retreat was effective and well-organized. Mayor Bourke also highlighted that excavation work by Alta Ski Lifts unearthed 19th-century artifacts, which were displayed by state archivists on September 6.

Mayor Bourke shared an astronomy update regarding the James Webb Space Telescope's detection of a planet in the Alpha Centauri system. The report concluded with a reminder that the next council meeting would be on October 8 at 4pm.

8. **<u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROCLAIM AUGUST 24, 2025 AS "JUNIOR BOUNOUS DAY"</u>**

02:12:15

Mayor Bourke presented a proclamation to recognize August 24, 2025, as Junior Bounous Day in honor of his 100th birthday and lifelong contributions to skiing. Mayor Bourke read the draft resolution, which highlighted Bounous's pioneering work in powder skiing, ski instruction, adaptive programs, and leadership as one of the first American-born ski school directors. The proclamation also acknowledged his decades of influence on generations of skiers and his continued presence in Alta.

MOTION: Mayor Bourke motioned to proclaim August 24, 2025 as "Junior Bounous Day". John Byrne seconded.

VOTE: All were in favor. August 24, 2025 was proclaimed "Junior Bounous Day".

RESULT: APPROVED

9. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-R-26 CANCELLING THE 2025 MUNICIPAL ELECTION**

02:15:00

Mayor Bourke reported that due to candidates withdrawing from the election the number of candidates matched the number of races and holding the election costs money. Mayor Bourke commented that a new larger ballot box had recently been installed in the post office lobby. Morgan added that ACE was still going to host the "Meet the Candidates" event regardless of the election cancellation.

MOTION: Mayor Bourke motioned to approve Resolution 2025-R-26. John Byrne seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilmember Anctil – yes, Councilmember Byrne – yes, Councilmember Morgan – yes, Councilmember Schilling – yes, Mayor Bourke – yes. Resolution 2025-R-26 cancelling the 2025 Municipal Election was unanimously approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

Clancy then added that canceling the election did not relieve candidates of their statutory obligations to submit financial disclosure reports. Clancy explained that all candidates were still required to complete these filings to qualify for office and be sworn in on January 5 at noon, the first Monday of the month as required by state law. Morgan asked if there would be a formal canvas, and Clancy confirmed that an administrative process would be followed instead. Anctil publicly thanked Clancy for her guidance in ensuring candidates understood and complied with the required procedures.

10. **REPORT ON THE COUNCIL RETREAT**

02:16:25

Chris Cawley thanked the staff for organizing the retreat and highlighted the progress made in understanding public financing and funding strategies for municipal projects, including water, sewer, and facilities improvements. Cawley reported that Alta's taxable property values are between $485 million and $495 million, which is greater than $350 million amount used in the recent Town of Alta facilities planning project and could either increase the Town's potential to issue debt or reduce the burden on taxpayers. The council agreed on the necessity of a resilient and accessible facility to maintain police department operations, likely at the existing community center site (post office facility) due to its relative safety from avalanches and accessibility. Cawley outlined next steps, proposing a future special meeting or work session to address broader financial planning topics, including ~$12 million in planned water and sewer system improvements, long-term funding considerations, and continued planning for the facilities project. Cawley also noted that phase two of facilities planning, already budgeted, would include as-built surveys, geotechnical analysis, and further planning work.

Council members emphasized the retreats value in understanding building needs, accessibility, and long-term financial planning. Morgan noted that the retreat expanded her awareness of accessibility concerns and appreciated the discussion of multiple options before making decisions. Byrne and Cawley discussed next steps for the facilities project, agreeing that a 10% preliminary design could help establish building footprint, usable space, and cost benchmarks before seeking funding or advancing to more detailed design phases. The council also considered site limitations, potential expansion, and the integration of Alta Marshal's office and dispatch functions. Members discussed scheduling future work sessions or retreats to continue planning, balancing availability with seasonal demands and council transitions, and agreed on the importance of iterative, collaborative meetings to maintain progress. The retreat was widely praised for being organized yet flexible, allowing productive discussion beyond a strict script.

11. **DISCUSSION OF THE NEED TO ADOPT THE WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE CODE UNDER HB48**

02:33:25

Chris Cawley informed the council that the state legislature passed legislation requiring municipalities and counties to adopt the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code by January 1. Cawley explained that the code, derived from the International Fire Code, regulates defensible space, ignition-resistant construction, fire department access, and fire flows, amongst other things. The town would need to reconcile any conflicts between existing ordinances and the WUI code, notably the town's preservation of vegetation requirements, which mandate tree replacement when clearing for development. Schilling and Byrne raised questions regarding tree replacement logistics, while Polly McLean noted plans to amend the town's provision to align with WUI requirements while preserving local objectives. Cawley indicated the planning commission would conduct a public hearing and anticipated bringing an action item to the council in November or December. Council members acknowledged the challenges of implementing these requirements while maintaining community goals.

12. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE RECOMMENDED NEW IT SERVICE VENDOR**

02:39:00

The council discussed selecting a new IT service provider to replace Executech, whose evolving service model was no longer meeting the town's needs. Molly Austin explained that a RFP in July yielded 14 responses, of which five met minimum technical requirements. After evaluation by a review committee including Brooke Boone, Mike Morey, and Molly Austin a local vendor, Tech Legion, was identified as the clear choice. Key advantages included a smaller, local team of 25 employees, experience with 14 other Utah municipalities, and the ability to meet security requirements for the police department and Justice Court. Costs were expected to be near the $25,000 threshold. Elise Morgan noted the RFP had broad reach, even being reviewed by a Canadian tech company.

MOTION: Mayor Bourke motioned to approve Tech Legion as the new IT service vendor for the Town. John Byrne seconded.

VOTE: All were in favor.

RESULT: APPROVED

13. **NEW BUSINESS**

02:42:00

The council discussed the Shrontz Estate's request regarding a potential rezoning for a condo project versus a 10-lot subdivision. Anctil and Morgan expressed some uncertainty about the next steps and whether a work session would be productive, noting the Estate's expectations appeared to differ from what the council was expecting at this phase. Byrne and Schilling emphasized that the Planning Commission had already set clear conditions, particularly regarding the building height restriction, which the council supported. Cawley noted that his guidance to the council was to address the fundamental zoning question before moving on to consider other details that would need to be addressed in order for the Estate's proposal to be approved.

The consensus was that the Estate needed to determine their next steps, and the council would not preemptively provide guidance or commitments. McLean and others confirmed that if the developers choose to return, a work session could be scheduled to explore options further. Council members reiterated respect for the Planning Commission's professional recommendations and acknowledged the historical context, particularly the 2014 agreement, as important for framing any future discussions. Overall, the discussion centered on letting the Estate determine their next moves while maintaining council alignment with the Planning Commission's prior guidance.

14. **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

02:52:50

MOTION: Elise Morgan motioned to adjourn, and Carolyn Anctil seconded.

VOTE: All in favor. The meeting was unanimously adjourned.

RESULT: APPROVED

Passed this 12th day of November, 2025

J Clancy

Jen Clancy, Town Clerk