

MINUTES
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
April 16, 2026, 3:00 PM

Alta Post Office Building, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Jen Clancy, Chair
Roger Bourke (attended virtually)
Chris Cawley
Craig Heimark (attended virtually)
Dan Schilling

ALSO PRESENT: Mike Morey, Town Marshal

NOT PRESENT: N/A

1. **Call the meeting to order**

Jen Clancy called the April 16, 2026 Budget Committee Meeting to order.

2. **Discussion and possible action to adopt the minutes of the March 12, 2026 Budget Committee Meeting**

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to adopt the budget committee meeting minutes of March 12, 2026, and Chris Cawley seconded.

VOTE: All in favor. The meeting minutes of March 12, 2026 were unanimously approved.

3. **Review of the draft FY 2027 Budget Concepts**

Clancy explained that staff had reorganized the presentation format to focus first on expenses and then revenues. Clancy said they would not be going into depth on every slide in the presentation, that some slides had been retained in the presentation as reference materials for the public.

Cawley introduced a slide highlighting new and ongoing expenses, noting the need for committee input on maintaining certain recurring costs. They also discussed proposed revenue measures, including a property tax revenue increase of \$100,000 and the potential implementation of a 1% transient room tax, for which \$200,000 in estimated new revenue had been incorporated into sales tax projections. Cawley stated that the draft budget still required use of cash reserves to balance.

Clancy presented an overview of total expenditures across all funds, indicating that overall expenses had only modestly increased compared to the prior year amended budgets due to conservative budgeting practices. During the discussion, Roger Bourke asked for clarification on a chart item that was missing its label, which Cawley identified as sewer-related expenses.

Cawley reviewed key expense changes, including an annual 8% increase in Town Shuttle contract costs. They proposed continuing funding for a contract land-use planner, explaining that this role provided cost-effective support for code updates and complex applications. The plan included transitioning away from the contract with John Guldner which had been in the works for some time. It was noted that

Guldner's experience with the Shrontz Estate could continue to prove beneficial. Craig Heimark and Dan Schilling expressed support for a gradual reduction in reliance.

Additional expenses noted included a required WFRC grant match for \$20k, a proposed increase in contributions to the Central Wasatch Commission (CWC), and increase in maintenance funding for a couple of projects at Our Lady of the Snows. Bourke noted that the CWC contribution was discretionary and could be reconsidered if needed.

Clancy outlined workforce costs as the largest budget component, noting a 3% cost-of-living adjustment and improved budgeting accuracy, particularly regarding overtime. Clancy also explained a planned temporary increase in police staffing to allow for succession planning ahead of Marshal Morey's retirement, with costs partially reflected in the upcoming fiscal year. Committee members asked clarifying questions about how these costs were distributed across expense and capital categories.

On the revenue side, Clancy emphasized efforts to stabilize funding sources and reduce reliance on less predictable revenues. Clancy highlighted the projected increase in sales tax revenue tied to the proposed transient room tax but cautioned that her estimate was truly an estimate due to difficulties calculating additional tax revenue from this source.

Clancy introduced preliminary figures for a potential property tax increase and noted that a public "truth in taxation" hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, August 11, 2026 at 6pm. Clancy stated that staff was closely tracking procedural requirements due to code changes from the Utah State Legislature.

Cawley provided additional detail on the transient room tax proposal, explaining its application to lodging and its role in offsetting the elimination of voluntary shuttle contributions. Cawley noted that this change represented a significant shift in funding strategy and would require further discussion. Heimark asked about anticipated contributions from Utah Transit Authority, and Cawley indicated that future funding levels remained uncertain. There was more discussion of the proposed shift from voluntary shuttle contributions to funding supported in part by a transient room tax. Clancy explained that shuttle users include both lodging guests and short-term rental occupants, while Cawley noted that eliminating voluntary contributions could provide greater flexibility in managing shuttle services. Bourke raised concerns about fairness, observing that the change could shift costs toward lodging guests rather than all users. Clancy clarified that short-term rentals would also be subject to the tax. Clancy emphasized that the current voluntary contribution model was unreliable, as participants sometimes decline to contribute, requiring the town to cover funding gaps. Schilling characterized the transition as moving from voluntary to structured funding. Heimark expressed general support for the approach.

Cawley and Clancy clarified that the draft budget still relied on approximately \$240,000 in cash reserves to balance, even with projected transient room tax revenue. Cawley stated that without the new tax, reliance on reserves would increase and could require expense reductions. Heimark noted a reduced financial buffer compared to prior years and suggested more precise, potentially monthly, budgeting practices to maintain adequate reserves.

The committee discussed impact fees, with Clancy explaining that staff did not recommend pursuing them due to limited growth and the administrative burden relative to expected benefits. Cawley added

that current and anticipated development would not significantly impact service levels, reducing the need for such fees. Heimark asked about potential impacts from future development, and staff responded that infrastructure capacity was sufficient to accommodate anticipated projects.

Discussion shifted to capital projects. Cawley outlined a proposed \$100,000 allocation for a feasibility and design study related to potential town building improvements or replacement, including site analysis and cost estimation. Heimark emphasized the importance of adequate planning investment given the scale of future capital expenditures.

Cawley also reviewed additional capital items, including potential stabilization work for the Tom Moore historic structure, possible redesign and accessibility improvements at Our Lady of the Snows community center, and ongoing vehicle replacement planning. Clancy confirmed that older vehicles would be phased out according to existing replacement practices.

Water and sewer projects were discussed, including increased costs for a water line project due to archaeological findings and construction delays. Clancy reported ongoing efforts to complete remote water meter installations, noting continued complexity. Sewer capital planning included replacement of the line under the wildcat parking lot and consideration of a potential future sewer line extension from Alta's cold storage facility up towards West Grizzly Gulch, though no funding for that extension was currently included in the budget due to uncertainty in scope and cost.

Clancy reported that projected water rate increases had been reduced from an earlier estimate and explained that rates were calculated based on annual operating costs divided by the total Equivalent Capacity Unit (ECU) count. Cawley noted that recommended infrastructure replacement savings levels recommended by Hansen Allen and Luce would require significantly higher rate increases.

The committee reviewed long-term infrastructure funding strategies, with Heimark recommending continued use and updating of forecasting tools to guide planning. Cawley and Clancy emphasized the importance of public outreach regarding the transient room tax, including notifying lodging operators and encouraging feedback. Heimark supported direct communication and framing the tax in relation to shuttle funding needs, while Cawley noted the importance of accurately representing how revenues could be used.

Clancy outlined upcoming deadlines, including the next budget meeting on May 12, 2026 and the requirement for the Town Council to adopt a tentative budget on May 13, 2026. Clancy noted that public hearing notices and materials would be prepared in advance of these meetings to promote opportunities for public comment.

Committee members indicated general agreement with the proposed budget direction and did not raise major objections. Bourke and Schilling expressed support for staff's work and the overall budget approach.

4. MOTION TO ADJOURN

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to adjourn, and Roger Bourke seconded.

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

RESULT: APPROVED

Passed this 12th day of May, 2026

Jen Clancy, Town Clerk

DRAFT