

MINUTES
TOWN OF ALTA, COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, July 8, 2026, 4:00 PM
Alta Post Office Building, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Roger Bourke
Councilmember Carolyn Anctil
Councilmember Craig Heimark (Virtual)
Councilmember Elise Morgan
Councilmember Dan Schilling

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Cawley, Town Manager (Virtual)
Mike Morey, Town Marshal
Jen Clancy, Town Clerk (Virtual)
Molly Austin, Assistant Town Manager
Brooke Boone, Deputy Town Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: Cameron Platt, Legal Counsel

NOT PRESENT:

1. Call the meeting to order

00:00:00

Mayor Bourke called the July 8, 2026 Alta Town Council meeting to order.

2. Citizen input

00:00:40

Holly Pearson, Director of Regional Planning and Transportation for Salt Lake County (SLCo), presented information regarding a vacancy on the Mountainous Planning District Planning Commission and encouraged interested residents to apply. Pearson explained that the commission, established in 2015, serves the central Wasatch canyons and is responsible for recommending policies to preserve the mountain environment, enhance quality of life, and manage land use in the unincorporated canyon areas. Pearson noted that the commission also serves as the decision-making authority for certain administrative land use applications, including conditional use permits and subdivisions on privately owned land within the unincorporated canyons. Pearson explained that the commission consists of nine members and two alternates with geographic representation requirements, and that the vacant seat could be filled by a resident of the unincorporated SLCo, the Town of Alta, or the Town of Brighton. Pearson described the time commitment as generally one monthly hybrid meeting, with occasional cancellations due to a lack of agenda items, and highlighted the upcoming comprehensive

update to SLCo's zoning ordinance as a significant project for the commission. Pearson invited interested individuals to contact SLCo Planning and Transportation staff for additional information and encouraged councilmembers to share the opportunity with eligible residents.

Mark Haik provided comment regarding the Town's anticipated engagement of a financial advisor and potential future bond issuance. Haik encouraged Mr. Cawley to request sample bond covenants and representations from the financial advisor early in the process so that elected officials, staff, and members of the CAPITAL Committee could better understand the obligations and representations required of the Town. Haik also recommended reviewing the representations and covenants from the Town's previous bond issuance to provide additional context and avoid potential issues during a future financing process. In addition, Haik reiterated a prior recommendation that the Town petition the State to have property assessments within Alta conducted by the State, stating that doing so could improve the Town's future budget outlook.

3. Introduction to Representative John Arthur

00:07:30

Mayor Bourke invited Representative John Arthur to introduce himself. Representative Arthur described how they came to serve in the Utah Legislature after succeeding Gay Lynn Bennion when Bennion was elected mayor of Cottonwood Heights. Representative Arthur discussed balancing legislative service with their career as a public school teacher, explaining that serving in the Legislature required taking unpaid leave during the legislative session. Representative Arthur expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve and stated that they were preparing legislation for the upcoming session, and invited councilmembers to share policy concerns or ideas for potential legislative action. Representative Arthur noted service on the Legislature's Natural Resources, Environment, and Agriculture Committee and indicated a willingness to assist with issues related to natural resources, water, air quality, and local government. Representative Arthur also shared that draft legislation was being developed to establish a dedicated funding source for enhanced bus service in Little Cottonwood Canyon to support long-term transit operations and help address canyon congestion. Representative Arthur provided contact information and encouraged councilmembers to reach out regarding legislative matters.

4. Presentation from US Forest Service regarding the Albion Basin Ranger Program

00:16:30

Chelsea Phillippe, representing the U.S. Forest Service, provided an overview of the Albion Basin summer ranger program, explaining that seasonal rangers were assigned to Alta on weekends and holidays to promote responsible recreation through visitor education. Phillippe stated that the program focused on educating visitors about watershed protection, wildflowers, wildlife, trail etiquette, and respectful recreation, with an emphasis on high-use areas such as Albion Basin and other popular trails. Phillippe noted that while some rangers had law enforcement authority, the program prioritized education and outreach, including efforts to reduce impacts from photography during peak wildflower season.

Chris Cawley thanked the Forest Service for its partnership and provided historical context, noting that approximately 10 years had passed since the Town operated Alta's summer information booth and shuttle operations to Albion Basin. Cawley explained that since that time Alta Ski Area had implemented a fee program to drive up the summer road, operated the campground, and partnered with the Forest Service and other organizations like the Town to support seasonal ranger staffing. Dan Schilling asked whether similar educational efforts were provided at other high-use areas in Little Cottonwood Canyon, such as the White Pine trailhead. Phillippe responded that rangers also staffed those locations, as well as Lisa Falls and other popular destinations, providing educational materials, visitor contacts, and cleanup efforts before traveling to Alta later in the day.

Cawley and Jen Clancy informed the council that the Town, Friends of Alta, and the ski area contributed \$4,000 each (total of \$12,000) to fund the program, with additional program contributions coming directly from Salt Lake City Public Utilities. Phillippe explained that a team of six to seven seasonal rangers rotated among Little Cottonwood Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon, with one to two typically assigned to Alta and Albion Basin. Phillippe added that trail crew members also conducted outreach on more remote trails while rangers concentrated on high-traffic areas to maximize visitor education. Mayor Bourke expressed appreciation for the partnership, particularly efforts to address user-created trails through collaboration with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation.

5. Alta Ski Area update, Mike Maughan

00:26:00

Mike Maughan was not present, so no report was provided.

6. Discussion and possible action to adopt Ordinance 2026-O-12 regarding stage 2 fire restrictions

00:26:15

Cawley explained that the proposed ordinance was intended to implement the maximum fire restrictions available to the Town under state law. Cawley noted that fire restrictions were complicated due to the division of jurisdiction between the Town, SLCo, the State, and the Forest Service, as much of the surrounding land was federally managed. Cawley explained that SLCo had already implemented Stage Two restrictions on private lands within its jurisdiction, including areas near Snowbird, and that similar restrictions had been adopted in Brighton. Cawley stated that although Forest Service restrictions had not yet been implemented, the timing of the ordinance was intended to ensure the Town could respond before conditions potentially required additional action.

Mayor Bourke raised concerns that requiring Town Council action each time fire restriction levels needed to change was not sufficiently responsive during changing fire conditions. Mayor Bourke suggested developing a process allowing a designated Town representative to modify restrictions without requiring a full Council meeting. Cameron Platt explained that staff and legal counsel were researching a process used by other municipalities that would allow the Council to establish criteria and conditions through ordinance, after which the Mayor or Town Manager, in consultation with the Unified Fire Authority, could implement restrictions when those conditions were met. Platt clarified

one of the challenges was that the executive branch could not independently create new laws but could act under authority already established by Council. Platt stated that a proposed framework was expected to be presented at a future meeting.

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to approve Ordinance 2026-O-12. Elise Morgan seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilmember Anctil – yes, Councilmember Heimark – yes, Councilmember Morgan – yes, Councilmember Schillig – yes, Mayor Bourke – yes, Ordinance 2026-O-12 was unanimously approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

7. **Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution 2026-R-25 adopting a CAPITAL Committee Charter**

00:35:45

Cawley explained that no substantial changes had been made to the charter since the last council meeting and presentation. Cawley called attention to the purpose statement as the primary component of the Charter. Cawley reported that the CAPITAL Committee's first regular meeting was scheduled for the following week and explained that the initial meeting would focus on administrative items, including adoption of the charter, selection of a chair, discussion of procedures, and providing committee members with background information needed to advise the Council.

Carolyn Anctil reported that after reviewing the prior meeting discussion, they appreciated the work and consideration that had gone into establishing the committee and expressed support for Councilmember Heimark serving as the Council liaison.

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to approve Resolution 2026-R-25. Carolyn Anctil seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilmember Anctil – yes, Councilmember Heimark – yes, Councilmember Morgan – yes, Councilmember Schillig – yes, Mayor Bourke – yes, Resolution 2026-R-25 was unanimously approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

Cawley informed the Council that a Capital Committee webpage had been added to the Town website under the government section and would serve as a central location for committee information, including member listings and links to agendas and minutes.

8. **Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution 2026-R-26 adopting an Amended Property Tax Impact Schedule**

00:40:40

Clancy explained that the amended property tax impact schedule incorporated revised information to ensure consistency with SLCo's consolidated advertisement and other publicly available property tax documents. Clancy stated that the consolidated advertisement, which included all entities proposing property tax increases in the County, had been posted on the Town website and was made available at the meeting to document compliance with state requirements. Clancy explained that the amended schedule reflected updated valuation information and adjusted the proposed property tax increase to \$92,820, representing a 22.56% change. Clancy further noted that for a primary residence valued at \$1.785 million with the applicable exemption, the estimated increase would be \$176, while a similarly valued property without the exemption or a business property would see an estimated increase of \$321. Clancy stated that the schedule also outlined potential budget reductions if the proposed property tax increase was not adopted.

Anctil questioned the source of the average property valuation used in the schedule, noting that the listed average of \$1.7 million appeared inconsistent with local property values. Clancy clarified that the valuation information was provided by the SLCo Assessor's Office.

MOTION: Elise Morgan motioned to approve Resolution 2026-R-26. Carolyn Anctil seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilmember Anctil – yes, Councilmember Heimark – yes, Councilmember Morgan – yes, Councilmember Schillig – yes, Mayor Bourke – yes, Resolution 2026-R-26 was unanimously approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

9. Mayors report

00:46:00

Mayor Bourke reported that the Town experienced a power outage beginning June 26 that lasted approximately 23 hours and explained the Town's electrical supply system, including the primary feed to Alta from the Brighton substation and the feed to Snowbird from the Temple Quarry feed. Mayor Bourke noted that the Brighton feed is not sufficient to serve both Alta and Snowbird simultaneously. Mayor Bourke explained that the outage resulted from a failure on the Bypass Road and caused significant disruption for residents and businesses, particularly those without backup generators or with limited generator capacity. Mayor Bourke stated that the Town was seeking additional information from the power company regarding the failure and planned to continue discussions with utility representatives.

Mayor Bourke provided an update on the trailhead restroom project, expressing appreciation to Mike Maughan and Big-D Construction and noting that the project was progressing toward completion.

Mayor Bourke then presented an astronomy report focused on the historical development of understanding planetary motion.

Mayor Bourke reminded the Council that the next Town Council meeting was scheduled for August 12 and that a Truth in Taxation public hearing regarding property taxes would be held on August 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town meeting location.

10. Approval of consent agenda:

- June 17, 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes
- April Staff and Finance Reports (*Typo should have read June*)
- Discussion and possible action authorizing the Town Manager to enter into an Agreement with a municipal advisor in a form approved by the Town Attorney
- Discussion and possible action authorizing the Town Manager to enter into an Agreement for planner services in a form approved by the Town Attorney

00:56:30

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to approve the consent agenda for July 8, 2026. Elise Morgan seconded.

VOTE: All were in favor. The July 8, 2026 consent agenda was approved.

RESULT: APPROVED

11. Questions regarding department reports

00:57:20

Mayor Bourke asked Mike Morey for an update regarding a recent incident in Alta. Morey provided a summary of the incident while noting that it remained an active investigation. Morey explained that law enforcement responded to multiple related locations after a vehicle entered the Albion Basin Summer Road at a high rate of speed, failed to stop at the information booth, and continued up the road without paying the required fee. Morey stated that the vehicle was later involved in a single-vehicle accident in Little Cottonwood Canyon and that witnesses reported statements from the driver alleging a serious incident at an Alta residence. Councilmembers expressed appreciation for the response efforts and noted that the situation could have resulted in a more serious outcome.

Elise Morgan asked Morey about safety concerns with roadside parking at the White Pine trailhead, specifically regarding the previous practice of placing cones along a narrow section of roadway to prevent hazardous roadside parking. Morey stated they would follow up with UDOT.

Mayor Bourke asked Jay Torgersen and Dusty Dern for additional information regarding wildfire conditions and response resources. Torgersen reported that Utah was experiencing a significant wildfire season, with more acres burned statewide than in the previous five years combined and stated that fire activity was expected to continue. Torgersen noted that conditions in Little Cottonwood Canyon remained relatively favorable due to higher fuel moisture but emphasized the importance of continued preparedness and coordination. Torgersen explained that Unified Fire Authority maintained

a 24-hour duty officer during the summer and had access to cooperative agencies and rapid response resources for wildland fire incidents.

12. New business

01:12:00

No new business.

13. Discussion and possible action to commence a closed meeting to discuss a matter authorized by Utah Code section 52-4-205

01:13:00

Mayor Bourke said he didn't believe there was any need for a closed meeting.

14. Motion to adjourn

01:14:30

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to adjourn, and Elise Morgan seconded.

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

RESULT: APPROVED

Passed this 12th day of August, 2026


Jen Clancy, Town Clerk