

JANUARY 8, 2020

The regular meeting of the Gearhart City Council was called to order on Wednesday Jan. 8, 2020 at 7:02 p.m. by Mayor Brown. Present were Councilor Fackerell, Councilor Jesse, Councilor Smith, Mayor Brown, Councilor Cockrum, City Attorney Peter Watts, City Administrator Chad Sweet and Executive Assistant Krysti Ficker (for City Treasurer Gail Como).

Mayor Brown opened the meeting with announcing an agenda change; the Building Fees discussion was tabled to the February Council Meeting. Staff would further clarify and provide new packet materials next month. No one objected to the change.

There was no conflict of interest declared by any member of council.

ON MOTION by Councilor Cockrum to approve the minutes, Councilor Smith asked for a correction (principals vs. superintendents). Mayor Brown clarified superintendents was correct because there was a superintendent present at the CEDR board meeting from each of the school districts – Astoria, Warrenton, and Seaside. Correction to name the multiple districts was noted. ON MOTION by Councilor Cockrum, 2nd by Councilor Jesse to approve the City Council meeting minutes for Dec. 4, 2019 as amended, MOTION was approved 5-0.

No Planning Commission report – November and December meetings were cancelled.

Mayor Brown deferred to City Administrator Chad Sweet's upcoming report, but also asked everyone resolve to work well together for the New Year, treating each other with respect online and in person in order to accomplish great things for Gearhart.

Councilor Cockrum reported progress in working with Chad Sweet on an updated Employee Handbook for City staff, including personnel policies, hiring practices, job descriptions and evaluation tools. It was noted Mr. Sweet is due for an evaluation this year. CERT is continuing to hone HAM radio skills. CERT would like to be involved with the City's Emergency Cache Container Program first drop-off this spring.

Each member of Council was given a report from the Police, Fire Dept. and City Treasurer.

City Attorney Peter Watts advised of a letter the City received from an attorney regarding maintenance of a pedestrian path in-between two streets (Fifer and Summit). The City insurance carrier is in possession of the letter and will write up a report after analysis. Councilor Smith asked Mr. Watts for clarification between Oregon Statute (ORS) and Administrative Rule (OAR). He confirmed an Oregon statute is a law and a revised statute is a revision of that existing law where the most current revision date will apply. He explained OARs exist to provide more detail at administrative discretion where the relating ORS had a broader purpose to start. Councilor Cockrum suggested researching both ORS and OAR on topics.

City Administrator Chad Sweet began his report with a *Duncan's Crossing* update; all permits approved! Archaeological subsurface testing found nothing. Materials have been priced and construction to begin in the spring. The hope is to use a contractor and volunteers where able as a community activity. *Emergency Cache Container Program* semi-launched (sign-up's now, site opens spring). Brochures with sample 30-gallon barrel in lobby. MOU being finalized. Interior floor plan design (stacking) being finalized. It was noted firearms are ok, flammable liquids are not. The City is currently purchasing mass care supplies with awarded SHSP *grant funding*. The City has just applied for an additional \$20k in funds for more mass care supplies via the same SHSP. FEMA AFG awarded funds of \$100k+ are being utilized for the SCBAs, which are being manufactured now. *Fire Station* \$25k DLCD grant paperwork has been submitted and we're waiting to sign off. Funds would be used for foundation design. Still waiting for final geotech report to generate design options with costs to present to the Council. Once in hand, an Executive Session will be scheduled to discuss the design options and property purchase. At almost a year in working with *Oregon Solutions* on the elk issue, the project team met last month and the Human Behavior subcommittee met yesterday. Final reports will be used to develop an agreement for all involved communities to sign. An elk incident occurred at Bob McEwan's where Poncho was attacked by a cow; no injuries. Furthering *Digital*

Water Meter reading process, a crew is arriving for another mass meter change-out. After, close to 70% of Gearhart will be on the new style meter. A reminder for the next *Council Work Session* Tuesday, March 31st at 6:30 p.m. C-1 zone is the only topic on the agenda so far. *City Budget* is looking good halfway through the year; income up (about) \$55k and expenses down (about) \$65k. Gearhart set a record with \$249k revenue carry-forward to this year. The City is operating in a budget surplus, even with adding \$75k to reserve funds.

It was clarified that: Cash carry-forward is how the City pays monthly bills; The water meter budget will be spent as stocked meters are installed and back-stock replenished; Police reported “security checks” account for each time an officer has to physically respond, “theft” counts are charged based on item value (with Theft I higher than II), and “disturbance” has a broad categorization.

Councilor Smith questioned a letter of correspondence from the State to Windward Condos regarding ordered dune restoration. Mr. Sweet advised a State investigation concluded [their] dune grading for septic access wasn’t justified. The Condos are working with Tom Horning to restore the dune’s location and vegetation. Councilor Cockrum requested Census correspondence materials be put on the Blog to help spread the word of self-response starting in March.

No visitors spoke. No ordinances or resolutions were presented. There was no old business.

City Administrator Chad Sweet opened the new business discussion on Land-Use Fees. Fees haven’t been changed in 20 years. City staff will be examining land fees and numbers City Planner Carole Connell and Planning Assistant Cheryl Lund put together based on staff wages/benefits/time and all other associated costs. The City will next address Building Fees, and in the future, all administrative permits and fees. Packet pages include current costs compared to other jurisdictions. Staff is proposing the Council consider a fee structure with the ability to recoup all City costs; a basic fee would be set and any additional costs incurred (for various reasons including complexity, attorneys, extra work/lack of response, etc.) would be the responsibility of the applicant. Customer

transparency and avoiding the taxpayers footing the bill for the cost of these endeavors is the purpose. The proposed increases are not a profit-making endeavor; they would ensure City costs are covered. Examples from easy to worst-case will be considered as staff time and the staff involved are both variable to the situation. The final proposed increases will be presented to the Council as a range the applicant can expect if the process is simple (“goes well”) vs. complicated (“taking the long road”). The City also has a policy to refund a portion of what the applicant has paid if they stop the process; only costs the City has incurred are charged.

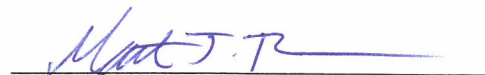
Councilor Jesse likened the fee structure proposal to a car service estimate where there is an expectation of what you will be billed and the understanding of the possibility of additional costs based on what happens. Mayor Brown suggested providing staff hourly wages up front to help applicants estimate their costs and understand what the process really costs the City, citing the Palmberg property as an example. City Attorney Peter Watts recommended naming a realistic starting range and ending with a worst-case range. Councilor Cockrum suggested not weighting staff daily land-use work time into fees. Mr. Sweet clarified project-based staff time is the factor and also advised no decisions would be made tonight. Mayor Brown appreciated mapping out what [these things] cost the City and the comparison to other cities. Councilor Jesse, Mayor Brown, and Mr. Sweet all stated the importance of adjusting fees appropriately where appeals are concerned to keep the appeal process accessible. Mr. Watts advised fees are restricted on where/how they can be spent. The two affordable housing variables are: 1) land acquisition costs; and, 2) system development charges and permit fees. While building cost/sqft can vary based on finishes, the only real way to offer affordable housing is through less expensive dirt and fees. He cautioned making sure City costs are covered, taxpayers aren't paying for a development, and that every dollar added for the end-purchaser to pay is as accurate as possible. Councilor Cockrum requested proposed form revisions be stamped with “draft” until approved to avoid confusion. Councilor Smith suggested changing the phrase “proposed fee” to “total cost”. Councilor Fackerell stated the comparison sheet was very

informative and eye-opening to how little we charge. Councilor Jesse stated he built a \$600k in Manzanita in 2015 and wrote a \$24k+ check for the permits whereas in Gearhart the permits would have totaled \$7k-\$8k.

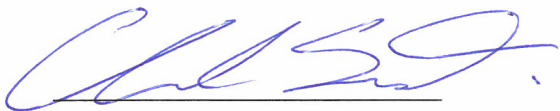
To close, Mr. Sweet acknowledged the lack of improvement with the housing crisis and the need for small government efficiency. He reiterated taking a good look at the proposed dollar ranges to make sure the City will at least get what [we] spend. He stated, if the Council agreed, he would bring a resolution of proposed land-use fees to next month's meeting for potential adoption. ALL AGREED.

Councilor Fackerell inquired on the final resolution for the high water bill presented to the Council back in October. (783 Nita – water leak) Mr. Sweet advised he is still working with the homeowners and will likely approach the Council again soon with a revised report. The question segued into a brief discussion regarding the new water meters – what they look like, if boxes or lids are changed too, and how digital/wireless reading will work once it's implemented.

ON MOTION by Councilor Smith, 2nd by Councilor Jesse to adjourn the meeting. MOTION was approved 5-0. Mayor Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.



Mayor Matt Brown



Chad Sweet City Administrator