

CITY OF GEARHART
Special Meeting of the City Council
Tuesday, June 8, 2021
6:00 pm On-site and Virtual via Zoom

The special meeting of the Gearhart City Council was held Tuesday, June 8, 2021. Council members and City staff were able to attend on-site and the public was able to attend online via Zoom, using an accessible electronic device. Individuals could also join the meeting by dialing in on a telephone.

Mayor Cockrum called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm. Present were Mayor Paulina Cockrum, Councilor Reita Fackerell, Councilor Dan Jesse, Councilor Kerry Smith, Councilor Brent Warren, City Attorney Peter Watts, City Administrator Chad Sweet, Executive Assistant Krysti Ficker and City Treasurer Justine Hill. A quorum of the Council was present.

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

Ordinance/Resolutions.

- A synopsis for Resolution 962 Budget Category Transfer - General Fund Appropriations was in the Council members' materials. Administrator Sweet went over the synopsis and Councilor options. When budget changes of this type are required, City staff must follow the process as per ORS.294.463. There was discussion on the appropriation changes, upcoming census data, shared revenue, fire department distribution, COVID relief, and the draft audit.
 - ON MOTION by Councilor Warren, 2nd by Councilor Jesse to approve Resolution 962 Budget Category Transfer - General Fund Appropriations, MOTION was approved 5-0.

Visitors. Mayor Cockrum gave a welcome and went over visitor instructions. Mayor Cockrum individually asked participants if they had any comments. At this time, none requested to speak.

New Business.

- A synopsis for a Request for Funds - Highlands Lane Fire / Police Station Relocation Investigation and Due Diligence was in the Council members' materials. Administrator Sweet reviewed the timeline and categories where the funds will be used (planning, engineering and geotechnical). Objectives are to review the new site, evaluate the size requirements, start laying out the physical

structure, and analyze access in order to make a final decision on whether or not to move forward with pursuing a bond in the November 2021 election.

A graphic representation of the timeline was presented. There was clarification that the single red "X" on the timeline represents meetings.

There was discussion on the years of work already put into the project and whether it was prudent to move forward in November or delay. Administrative Sweet pointed out that there already has been a lot of work done on the project and that it is prudent to move forward with due diligence on the relocation. He also went over projected budgetary costs during this investigative process (architect; geotech; planning). Attorney Watts mentioned that the request to voters could be pushed to a later election; however, bond rates are very favorable right now. He mentioned that the City will be financially gaining by not having to purchase property and potentially simplifying the project by not having to deal with eminent domain. Administrator Sweet stressed to the Council that during this process if the budget was going to go over the approved amount, he would come back to the Council.

There was discussion on the land swap portion of the process and timeline. Attorney Watts said that the agreement can be entered into without being put before voters. The City anticipates receiving two (2) parcels and the agreement is not contingent on any outcome of the November general obligation bond request. Councilor Jesse inquired about the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and any potential urban growth boundary (UGB) issues. Attorney Watts explained that the City already has positive connections with DLCD. He acknowledged that Oregon has complex land use requirements, but the City's pathway looks very favorable. There have been continued relationships with both State and County officials. Attorney Watts said that the agreement will be ready to finalize once the City has a legal description and an official survey, which are both in process. The agreement has already been reviewed and vetted by the property owners. Councilor Smith feels an agreement should be in place before moving forward. He also expressed interest in viewing the property. Administrator Sweet said that City staff and Councilors are able to view the property.

Mayor Cockrum wanted clarification on the community engagement component of the timeline. Councilor Warren felt that the City should get a preliminary pulse of the people. There was discussion on a survey and a potential town hall.

Attorney Watts discussed benefits to the City in terms of housing. In order to attract and retain firefighters, there must be adequate and affordable housing. It is a benefit to the City if they are able to provide living quarters in the new facility. It was clarified that this would likely be a dormitory style living arrangement. There was discussion on workforce housing and the ability to attract and retain firefighters.

Councilor Warren felt that terminology within the land swap agreement was critical. He felt that it was important to understand the difference between the terms “donor” and “beneficiary.” There was discussion on terminology, the recital section of the agreement, and the mutual benefits to both the developers and the City. Attorney Watts clarified that the agreement was written intentionally to be simple and easy to understand. He stressed that this property agreement will mutually benefit both parties involved.

Attorney Watts let the Council know that there are legal requirements for filing to be on the November ballot; however, it is easy to withdraw the request with the County through September if investigative and due diligence expose any issues that require more time before a request goes to the voters. Mayor Cockrum thought this project could follow a process modeled on the parks plan. She felt that having a clear, documented process would assist in City Council having confidence in moving forward with the project. Attorney Watts said that there is a strong message and that there really are “wins” for the community in this project. It is a public safety issue and the property does provide a safe place for staff and residents.

Administrator Sweet stressed that public input needed to be done immediately based on the current timeline. Councilors were interested in being part of the process. There was discussion on a potential work session; however, the June work session scheduled may already have a full agenda.

Administrator Sweet went over the request for funds and Councilor options. There was discussion. Councilor Fackerell requested clarification on the process of selecting an architect. Attorney Watts said that it will be a bid process and that they would be evaluated and awarded. Mayor Cockrum asked for clarification on if the City is bearing the full cost of the UGB process. Both Administrator Sweet and Attorney Watts clarified that the City would be responsible for all the related costs. It makes the process cleaner and more transparent.

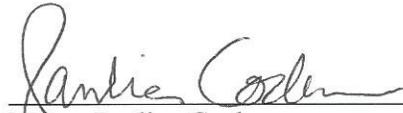
- ON MOTION by Councilor Jesse, 2nd by Councilor Fackerell to approve the Request for Funds - Highlands Lane Fire / Police Station Relocation Investigation and Due Diligence, MOTION was approved 5-0.
- A synopsis for Request for Hazard Mitigation Funds - Backup Batteries was in the Council members' materials. There was discussion on the request. There have been issues with the HAM radio batteries that are up at the reservoir site. There was discussion on the battery life and type.
 - ON MOTION by Councilor Fackerell, 2nd by Councilor Smith to approve Request for Hazard Mitigation Funds - Backup Batteries, MOTION was approved 5-0.

Mayor Cockrum requested adjournment.

ON MOTION by Councilor Smith, 2nd by Councilor Fackerell to adjourn the meeting, MOTION was approved 5-0. Mayor Cockrum, with no further business, adjourned the regular Council meeting at 7:30 pm.



Chad Sweet, City Administrator



Mayor Paulina Cockrum