

CITY OF GEARHART  
Worksession of the City Council  
Tuesday, October 14, 2025  
4:07 pm On-site and Virtual/Telephonic

A worksession of the Gearhart City Council was held Tuesday, October 14, 2025. Council members, City staff, and the public were able to attend on-site, virtually, or by dialing in on a telephone.

Present were Mayor Kerry Smith, Councilor Paulina Cockrum, Councilor Preston Devereaux, Councilor Dana Gould, Councilor Sharon Kloepper, City Administrator Chad Sweet, Fire Chief Josh Como, Executive Assistant Krysti Ficker, and City Treasurer Justine Hill. A quorum of the Council was present.

Mayor Smith opened the worksession and turned the meeting over to Councilor Cockrum. Councilor Cockrum noted the worksession documents (Agenda & Discussion Notes; Survey) and clarified that they should be draft 4. She went over the purpose of the meeting, which was to review, discuss, gather feedback, and identify revisions on the Public Safety Building (PSB) survey before finalizing and releasing it to the public. She also went over the meeting's objectives, which was to confirm proposed content and structure; discuss suggested revisions; and decide on final layout, sequencing, and terminology before the survey was released to the public.

Councilor Cockrum requested that Administrator Sweet go over the first item for discussion (Cost Clarity). He explained that having cost clarification seemed to be a priority to Councilors, which was added to the survey in each option with an estimated cost-per-thousand of annual property tax impacts by assessed property value with the estimated length of the bond term. Councilor Cockrum clarified that the example on the agenda (breakdown of actual property owner tax amount owed) was not the same as the survey's approximate tax impact (cost-per-thousand). Administrator Sweet agreed and would investigate a way to incorporate the agenda information into the survey. There was continued discussion on how to give actual estimated annual cost amounts to citizens, which included examples on the City Blog, short statement on survey, and/or a FAQ document. Administrator Sweet went over two documents that he distributed to the City Council, which was a statement on who would be receiving the survey and a draft explanatory letter requesting citizens to take the survey. There was discussion on the importance of citizens understanding assessed value versus real market value in terms of any property tax calculation imposed for the PSB. Councilor Kloepper would like to make the survey process as simple as possible for citizens.

Administrator Sweet noted there were several other revisions that had been made since the last draft survey. He noted that one of the changes was in the Option D Highland Site section, which included adding narrative on a Public Works rebuild and a City Hall remodel in the downtown core. Councilor Kloepper indicated that the Public

Works rebuild was not showing on Option D, in which Administrator Sweet acknowledged and noted that language under Option B could be used in Option D (“*Construct a new Public Works Building on current site*”). Councilor Cockrum wanted clarification on the feasibility of Public Works using the old, vacated fire station as their facility. Administrator Sweet acknowledged that was something that had not been discussed or vetted; however, Public Works could use the old fire station with limited renovation (e.g., electrical, roofing). There was discussion on clarifying that detail, which Administrator Sweet was going to work on. Councilor Gould requested clarification on the pricing amounts quoted in the survey on Options C and D. Administrator Sweet said that the numbers were rough estimates; however, he was going to be meeting with the architects to get their input. Councilor Gould did not want numbers quoted that were not vetted. Councilor Kloepper requested clarification on terminology used in Option A of “highest resiliency?” Administrator Sweet felt that highest resiliency would mean the facility was built to critical infrastructure standards; however, he noted it would be placed in a tsunami impact zone. Councilor Kloepper felt that the use of inconsistent terminology in all the sections of the survey Options was confusing (e.g., highest resiliency, higher ground, resiliency). She felt that Option D should be rated the highest resiliency because it should withstand everything (e.g., earthquake and tsunami). Councilor Cockrum suggested using “earthquake resilient” for Option A and “earthquake/tsunami resilient” for Option D. There was continued discussion on resiliency factors (e.g., water table, flow through) and determining the longevity of an Option. Administrator Sweet moved on to Option C and clarified that Lesley Miller Dunes Meadow Park was not donated by Lesley Miller, but acquired from Clatsop County. Councilor Cockrum also noted that this Option would also need to be built to critical infrastructure standards, which the terminology “earthquake/tsunami resilient” would apply. There was continued discussion on Option C and using the same terminology to outline the scope for Public Works. It was important to the City Council that terminology be consistent throughout Options.

Administrator Sweet transitioned to the next agenda topic, “Survey Structure & Sequencing.” Councilor Cockrum explained that in earlier survey drafts, the section “Rank Your Preferences” was first; however, in the latest draft it has been moved to the end. She felt this was important so that individuals could gather information about each Option while they took the survey before ranking them. Administrator Sweet also mentioned that the demographic question had been moved from the end of the survey to the beginning. Councilor Gould inquired why the selection of homeowner (property owner) was not listed as a separate question. Councilor Devereaux felt it was important to have input from all property owners, not just voters, because they will also be paying for the project. Councilor Cockrum agreed that it was important to have all property owners involved in the survey process; however, she did not feel it was necessary to ask them if they owned a home in Gearhart. There was continued discussion on the need for the additional demographic question. Administrator Sweet indicated another question would be added asking whether or not the individual was a property owner in Gearhart.

Administrator Sweet opened the discussion about adding an additional question to the survey, "Additional Feedback - What factors matter most to you when choosing an option." There was discussion, which included why the data would be relevant or why the data would be redundant. Councilor Kloepper indicated she would like to see a place where individuals could write a comment. There was discussion, which included setting character limits and providing a comment area for narrative. Administrator Sweet clarified there would be two questions added to the survey: 1) what factor matters most to you when choosing an option, and 2) and any additional comments. There was discussion, which included changing the selection choice from "cost" to "cost of project;" pros/cons of adding feedback section; only allowing one factor to be selected; relevance of information; importance of the location; clarifying the cost of the project; and ability to analyze data. Administrator Sweet added that some of the reasons for not including the additional questions may be: longer survey, overlapping with ranking questions, and data analysis complexity. Councilor Gould felt that it would be more beneficial to ask too many questions and receive more information than was actually needed rather than doing another survey. The Council agreed to add the questions to the survey.

Councilor Kloepper had some survey formatting and clarity comments. There was also a request to add and align assessed property value and real market value acronyms to the survey to align with property owners' Clatsop County tax statements. Councilor Cockrum also pointed out that the survey's appearance will look different in electronic form.

Councilor Kloepper inquired if the survey was going to be anonymous how would City staff be able to recognize if an individual may have filled out multiple surveys. Administrator Sweet clarified that based on the survey being anonymous, there would be no way to determine if an individual filled out multiple surveys. There was continued discussion on having an anonymous survey. Executive Assistant Ficker, as the keeper of the survey, requested clarification on why this particular survey did not ask for a first and last name. She indicated that in the last two surveys that information was requested. Councilor Cockrum felt that most important demographic information was whether or not the individual was a voter. She stressed that everyone's opinion is important; however, City Council needs to focus on the voters who will get the PBS vote passed. Executive Assistant Ficker confirmed that the electronic software allows the field setting to be flagged as not required, which would allow the individual to proceed with the survey without entering anything in that field. Council agreed that a name section could be added to the survey; however it would be an optional data request.

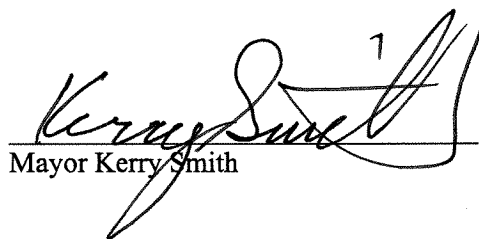
Councilor Cockrum went over the distribution methods (e.g., link to SurveyMonkey, link in water bills; post on blog, and USPS mail out). Administrator Sweet clarified that because of the timeline, there may need to be modifications to methods. Councilor Gould requested that the fire department post the request on their small, reader board in front of the Fire Station. Administrator Sweet noted that the survey would be mailed USPS

(registered voters/property owners), sent in water bills, and placed on the website/Blog. Executive Assistant Ficker mentioned that she would contact Clatsop County for mailing information to find out their turnaround time. Councilor Cockrum asked if there were confirmed survey open and closed dates. Administrator Sweet indicated no. Ideally the survey data would be available by the City Council worksession on November 24, 2025. Administrator Sweet felt that the survey could be revised and ready to go out with the October water bills.

Councilor Gould thanked everyone who has worked so hard on the survey process.

Councilor Cockrum inquired if there was an agenda for the October 30 worksession. Administrator Sweet said that the agenda needs to be set; he needs to verify the City Attorney applicant is available; and he needs to send out tentative questions for City Council input.

By consensus City Council agreed to allow City Staff to revise the content of the survey as discussed in the worksession and send it out. The Mayor adjourned the worksession at 5:26 pm.



Mayor Kerry Smith



Chad Sweet, City Administrator