



Staff Report

For City Council Meeting - 5/1/2024

Subject - Old Business - Post Office / Zip Code Update

Synopsis: The City last gave an update on the post office / zip code situation via the city blog on April 10th. We thanked everyone who took the time to write to our state and federal elected officials about the post office closure, and shared that State Representative Javadi was working very hard with Senator Merkley and the USPS to ensure Gearhart residents would not have to go to Seaside to pick up mail after April 30th. More recently, Javadi replied to citizen inquiries stating his attempts to put pressure on the USPS seemed to be unsuccessful.

However, as of the afternoon of April 26th, Representative Javadi shared that Gearhart's Post Office officially has a signed contract on file! Therefore, mail service should continue for box holders beyond Tuesday. If that changes, we will help inform the public.

Regarding the zip code, as of an April 19th update from Senator Wyden's office, the (USPS) manager of Operations Integration is working with the Address Management department to determine if a new zip code can be assigned. We should have an answer in about 30 days.

Also attached is a letter the City received from Congresswoman Bonamici addressing both issues, and requesting responses from USPS by stated timelines.

Recommendation: N/A

Legal Analysis: N/A

Financial Analysis: N/A

Respectfully Submitted,


Chad

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 22, 2024

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

We write with significant concerns about the current operations of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) in the city of Gearhart on Oregon's North Coast. This rural community relies on USPS for essential services, including medication delivery and banking, and to support Oregon's all Vote By Mail election system. USPS has advanced a series of actions that have dramatically reduced the reliability of services and resulted in an untenable situation for Gearhart residents, many of whom are senior citizens.

Several years ago, we requested that USPS initiate a review process to assign Gearhart its own zip code. This is a necessary step because Gearhart currently shares a zip code and several street names with neighboring Seaside, OR, leading to correctly addressed mail repeatedly being delivered to the wrong city. After years of chronically misdelivered mail, it is past time to move forward and provide results from the USPS review process to the people of Gearhart.

Additionally, our offices have recently learned that the USPS contract office in Gearhart will close this month and residents will need to pick up their mail in Seaside. We have heard from many concerned Gearhart community members who are and will be unable to travel to Seaside to pick up their mail and packages and have been told that the Seaside Post Office does not have enough mailboxes to accommodate the influx of new customers. Combining these offices is not an effective or acceptable long-term solution.


We ask that you respond to us in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter outlining why the Gearhart office plans to close and how you will restore reliable service to the area in a timely manner. We also ask for a status update on a unique zip code for Gearhart. Finally, we request that within 60 days of receipt, U.S. Postal Service representatives hold an in-person community meeting in Gearhart to provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions directly to USPS staff and collaborate on a workable solution that meets the USPS's mission of universal mail service.

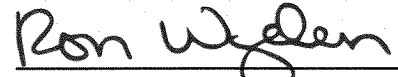
Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

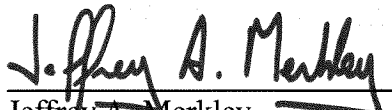
Your agency's work is vital, and we are grateful for the dedicated postal workers and letter carriers who help to maintain critical connections between communities across Oregon and our country. Immediate action is necessary to restore consistent and reliable Post Office access to Gearhart residents.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of our requests. If you have any questions, please contact Espen Swanson in Congresswoman Bonamici's Oregon office at Espen.Swanson@mail.house.gov or (202) 941-8585.

Sincerely,


Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator