

CITY OF GEARHART  
Regular Meeting of the City Council  
Wednesday, July 5, 2023  
7:00 pm On-site and Virtual/Telephonic

A regular meeting of the Gearhart City Council was held Wednesday, July 5, 2023. 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 Reita Fackerell, Councilor Dana Gould, Councilor Preston Devereaux, Councilor Sharon Kloepfer, City Administrator Chad Sweet, City Attorney Peter Watts, Police Chief Joshua Gregory, Fire Chief Josh Como, Executive Assistant Krysti Ficker, and City Treasurer Justine Hill. A quorum of the Council was present.

Mayor Smith called the regular meeting of the City Council to order at 7:00 pm.

There were no conflicts of interest declared by any member of the Council.

There was a swearing in of the new Police Chief, Joshua Gregory, who accepted the oath.

Approve Minutes.

- ON MOTION by Councilor Gould, 2nd by Councilor Kloepfer to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2023 regular meeting with public hearings of the City Council, MOTION was approved 5 yeas (Devereaux, Fackerell, Gould, Kloepfer, Smith) - 0 nays.

There was no Planning Commission report in the Councilors' packets.

Mayor's Report. Mayor Smith participated in the 4th of July parade and met with Administrator Sweet.

Councilor's Reports. Mayor Smith opened discussion for each Council member's report.

- Councilor Devereaux heard the street dance and the 4th of July parade had a great turnout.
- Councilor Fackerell attended the Clatsop Regional Housing Taskforce. They are pursuing an intergovernmental agreement between the Cities and County to seek grant funding for housing production and opportunities for publicly owned properties. She is continuing to work on the memorial bench project. She will work with Administrator Sweet on parameters. She has been working with Councilor Kloepfer and Community Member Zimmerman.
- Councilor Kloepfer thanked Administrator Sweet and the public works crew for repairing a section of Ridge Road. She also expressed appreciation for the work that the police department (Gregory/Brown) did on the 4th of July and Councilor Gould's efforts with the beach clean-up.

- Councilor Gould expressed numerous shout-outs. She appreciated the effort Melissa Eddy put into the Street Dance. She loves the “Americana feel” of Gearhart’s celebrations. She thanked the volunteers, fire department, public works, Gearhart Association, Tina Popke, City Council, and Susan Eddy for all of their efforts. She also gave accolades to all the beach clean-up captains and participants.

#### City Officer Reports.

- Chief of Police. Police Chief Gregory thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve the community. He felt that the week of the 4th of July was a great time to get introduced to Gearhart. He was able to meet people at the street dance and work during a busy, but smooth, 4th of July celebration. He has enjoyed working with Sergeant Brown. Councilor Kloefer was interested in the status of continuing with Clatsop County Sheriff’s Office. Police Chief Gregory indicated they were working on a proposal, trying to minimize the number of hours needed, and hoped to have a renewed agreement.
- Fire Chief. Fire Chief Como gave a June data report, including a call breakdown, mutual aid, and grant awards. He talked about aid provided to structure and brush fires. He touched on the 4th of July events.
- City Treasurer. Financial reports were submitted in the Councilors’ packets. Treasurer Hill mentioned efforts to pay all expenditures in the correct fiscal year, transactions not being finalized until the auditors complete their work, revenue from the Gearhart Rural Fire District, budgeted transfers, ending fund balance amounts, notable expenditures, and continued work on a project that includes reviewing job descriptions, salary schedules, the employee handbook and employee evaluations.
- City Attorney. Attorney Watts has heard positive feedback on the new Police Chief. He has worked with Steve Donovan, who will be presenting water rate information. He felt there has been successful progress made on the Warrenton water agreement. He does feel the City needs to pursue additional water rights.
- City Administrator. Administrator Sweet’s report was sent to the Councilors in their packets. He briefly discussed staff having an “after action” meeting regarding the street dance and 4th of July celebration; people putting in lots of volunteer hours; the water agreement with Warrenton; and the ending fund balance.

Visitors. Steve Donovan, President, Donovan Enterprises, Inc introduced himself and presented a water rate study for the City of Gearhart. He went over financial trends, current financial status, neighboring communities’ water rates, phased water rate increases, and five-year financial projections. He discussed fiscal 2017 to 2022 trends, which shows increases in personal services and materials/services, with no increase in revenue. He also went over a graph of the water funds ending fund balance, which shows a steady decline. His recommendations include making the budgeted transfer from the water reserve fund to the water operating fund; increasing rates; maintaining manageable future reserve fund transfers; and working towards a 90 day operating ending fund balance. There was discussion on water rights, purchasing water from Warrenton, conservation pricing options, scheduling a worksession, having a Town Hall meeting, and timelines.

Public Communications - Written & Oral. Mayor Smith read the oral public comment statement on the agenda. There was written correspondence submitted by: Robin Lane (Trees) and Dodi Baker (4th of July signage).

- Eric Halperin (661 10th Street) was appreciative of the City's approach to trying to manage 4th of July in Gearhart. He and his wife felt there was good governance, proactive messaging, and an overall good campaign.
- Jack Zimmerman (408 W Kershul) referenced an article in the Astorian where he felt statements made were contentions towards the City of Warrenton in terms of negotiating a water agreement. He felt that a longer term agreement would be more beneficial. He referenced the 1974 Comprehensive Plan. He also mentioned the integrity of the pipeline system.

Ordinances/Resolutions. None.

Old Business. None.


New Business. None.

Council Concerns.

- Councilor Gould reported no concerns.
- Councilor Kloepfer reported no concerns.
- Councilor Fackerell reported no concerns.
- Councilor Devereaux would like the general public involved in the water rate increase process.
- Mayor Smith reported no concerns, but mentioned that there will be a worksession and Town Hall regarding water rates.

Mayor Smith requested adjournment.

- ON MOTION by Councilor Fackerell, 2nd by Councilor Gould to adjourn the meeting, MOTION was approved 5 yeas (Devereaux, Fackerell, Gould, Kloepfer, Smith) - 0 nays. Mayor Smith adjourned the regular Council meeting at 8:21 pm.

  
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Mayor Kerry Smith

  
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Chad Sweet, City Administrator