

CITY OF GEARHART  
Special Meeting of the City Council  
Wednesday, August 14, 2024  
7:30 pm On-site and Virtual/Telephonic

A special meeting of the Gearhart City Council was held Wednesday, August 14, 2024. 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 Preston Devereaux, Councilor Reita Fackerell, Councilor Dana Gould, Councilor Sharon Kloepfer, City Administrator Chad Sweet, City Attorney Peter Watts, Executive Assistant Krysti Ficker, and City Treasurer Justine Hill. A quorum of the Council was present.

Mayor Smith called the special meeting of the City Council to order at 7:30 pm.

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

New Business. Mayor Smith invited the public to comment on the new business items.

Discussion - Public Safety Building Location. Mayor Smith made a motion for the City Council to remove Lesley Miller Park from consideration as a Public Safety Building location. He feels it is an open space park and that most people want to keep it that way. Mayor Smith responded that it would no longer be considered as a viable option. There was discussion on the RFP for Architecture & Engineering Services and the impacts of eliminating and/or adding an additional site. Mayor Smith said he had talked with Jessie (Klosh Group) and that the RFP could be easily modified to accommodate this type of change. Administrator Sweet reiterated this type of modification would be possible with the way the current RFP was written. Mayor Smith said that the RFP would not need to be pulled, but modified by addendum. Councilor Gould expressed concerns over the modification. She is concerned about the public process, community engagement, and limiting options. Mayor Smith agrees with Councilor Gould; however, he has taken a look back at actions he has voted on over the last 10 years and he feels that the park should be taken off as a potential site. Councilor Gould understands that people can change their mind; she does, however, feel that it is important that the Council realize that they have committed to involving the public in their decision making process (referenced City's Comprehensive Plan). Councilor Kloepfer reiterated that having another location would be beneficial; however, the angst caused by selecting the park site is not worth it. Mayor Smith feels that based on the majority of people he has talked with, coupled with the community outcry, the park should be removed as a buildable option. He feels that removing the park will positively assist in the goal of getting a new Public Safety Building. Councilor Gould agrees there is a lot of noise from the community

regarding the park, but she would have liked to see a public hearing about the decision to remove the park as a comparison site. Mayor Smith wants to end the turmoil and move forward. He believes the decision is being made as part of a public engagement process and does not need a public hearing. Attorney Watts confirmed the RFP could easily be amended.

- ON MOTION by Mayor Smith, 2nd by Councilor Kloepfer to approve the removal of Lesley Miller Park as a consideration for a Public Safety Building location, MOTION was approved 4 yeas (Devereaux, Fackerell, Kloepfer, Smith) - 0 nays - 1 abstain (Gould).

Discussion - Potential Property Acquisition for Public Safety Building and/or Public Works Facility. Mayor Smith opened the discussion item and invited the public to comment.

- Deb Papadopoulos (1978 Ocean Ave) inquired about the Highlands property as a potential site. She understands it was turned down due to expense. She mentioned that it is higher in elevation and the structural cost may be less than the existing location. She would like to have it put back on the table as a comparison location. She also mentioned the potential of having a split service location design to allow for a smaller footprint. Mayor Smith said that to his knowledge the City does not have any verbal or written agreement regarding the Highlands property. Attorney Watts clarified that conversations had stopped on that property while the City was waiting for additional information from the Governor's housing bill (urban growth boundary swaps) and the process of expanding additional City water rights.
- Deanna Mancill (2945 Hwy 101) feels that the Highlands site is not going to be a viable option for the next few years. She talked with the Water Resources Board and inquired about the process Gearhart is faced with in expanding their water rights. She talked about the review process, which could take up to 2-3 years. She does not want the Highlands property put on the table.
- Attorney Watts clarified that the Highlands property is already in the City's water services area. If there are dwellings placed on the property, per the City's adopted water services agreement, the City is required to provide water services. The relevant issue with the Highlands property would be at what level of density is the property being developed at (County zoning vs City zoning).
- Councilor Devereaux feels very strongly that he will not support a UGB expansion until the City has secured more water rights. There was continued discussion between Councilor Devereaux and Attorney Watts regarding the City's obligation to provide water to the Highlands area property.

Mayor Smith mentioned that a property owner reached out regarding a piece of property that may be a potential location for the proposed Public Service Building. The property is approximately one acre, 2 parcels, on Highway 101 with a house. Mayor Smith feels that it would be a good location for public works. Public works could be moved and a temporary storage/staging area could be created for the fire department. He agreed that Bob Morey's past offer of providing a temporary staging area on the old school site for the fire department was generous; he has concerns that whatever the City would have to construct would then become the original property owner's asset. He feels it would behoove the City to acquire a piece of property where the assets remain the City's. Bob Morey indicated that it comes down to price because he may have three acres available versus the one. Bob Morey requested additional information so that he may be able to offer another option.

Mayor Smith requested permission from the Council to proceed with due diligence on investigating the new potential property. He stressed this was not approval to negotiate a property purchase. He mentioned looking at the house to evaluate the viability of having summer interim firefighters use it as a temporary residence. He would like to investigate if the location is adequate in size and has the ability to be secured. He would suggest giving Administrator Sweet approval to do due diligence on the property to evaluate if a potential purchase inquiry is viable. Councilor Kloepfer asked if it may be an option for Bob Morey to review the potential site.

Administrator Sweet went over the potential property. He distributed a map and a property report to the City Council. He referenced the property as the "Ordway Property." There are two parcels, 1.05 acres, or 45,700 square feet. The property is zoned class C-2. He covered property details (lots, current usage), zoning information (zoning classification, permitted uses, additional conditional uses), and site details (lots available, elevation, wetlands, flood zone, highway access, tsunami zone, septic system).

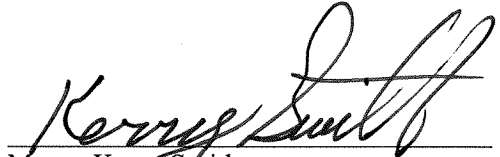
- ON MOTION by Councilor Gould, 2nd by Councilor Kloepfer to approve Administrator Sweet to do due diligence on the feasibility of purchasing the Highway 101 property, which will be inclusive of public engagement, MOTION was approved 5 yeas (Devereaux, Fackerell, Gould, Kloepfer, Smith) - 0 nays.

#### Council Concerns.

- Councilor Kloepfer suggested that it may be helpful if the architects/engineers present data in a tiered cost option. She thought providing estimates for a basic facility, a medium facility, and a full amenity facility would be beneficial. Councilor Devereaux agreed.
- There were no other concerns.

Mayor Smith requested adjournment.

- ON MOTION by Councilor Gould, 2nd by Councilor Fackerell to adjourn the meeting, MOTION was approved 5 yeas (Devereaux, Fackerell, Gould, Kloepfer, Smith) - 0 nays. Mayor Smith adjourned the special Council meeting at 8:16 pm.



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Mayor Kerry Smith



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Chad Sweet, City Administrator