



## **Staff Report**

For City Council Meeting - 11/3/2021

### ***Subject - Ordinances/Resolutions - Resolution #965 Gearhart Zip Code Request***

**Synopsis:** City staff has researched the possibility of a new zip code many times resulting in various reasons of why the City is ineligible and/or would be denied after USPS' lengthy process. After Councilor Warren's recent conversation with a representative from Suzanne Bonamici's office, support from her office was given along with a regional USPS contact name. Councilor Warren therefore brought a draft resolution to the October City Council meeting for discussion with the recommendation Council pursue the assignment of a new zip code. On approved motion by Council, City staff prepared the draft and applied some changes in verbiage at the request of Councilor Warren. Attached is final version Resolution #965, ready for consideration at Council's request. Also attached is an example from Gearhart's Post Mistress, Karynn, explaining the kind of confusion sharing a zip code creates daily.

#### ***Council Options:***

- 1) Resolve to pursue an individual zip code with USPS via the attached resolution;
- 2) Make changes, resolving to approve the attached resolution as amended;
- 3) Do nothing. (table for further discussion)

**Recommended Motion:** Staff has no recommendation regarding Resolution #965.

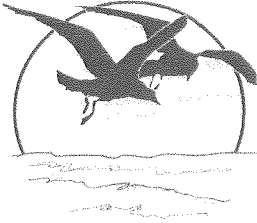
**Legal Analysis:** The last attachment outlines USPS' process to request a zip code.

**Financial Analysis:** There will be a financial impact due to staff time changing water account mailing addresses and the City's mailing address with all applicable vendors and organizations.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Chad Sweet", written in a cursive style.

Chad Sweet



# CITY OF GEARHART

## RESOLUTION NO. 965

### **THE CITY OF GEARHART MAKES THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Gearhart is a growing independent municipality in Clatsop County Oregon, with an estimated population of 1,800;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Gearhart has its own US Postal Service (USPS) Contract Office, it shares its 97138 zip code with the City of Seaside, its neighbor to the south containing a population of approximately 6,700;

**WHEREAS**, many online sites utilize the USPS national zip code database and do not allow overriding the default city name based on the zip code;

**WHEREAS**, Gearhart and Seaside have many street names that are identical or similar, mail is frequently misdirected to the wrong city, requiring costly research, redirection, and delays. Some of these delays could impact mail-order prescriptions and other necessary medical supplies;

**WHEREAS**, some delivery companies such as Fed Ex and Amazon incorrectly notify purchasers that their package may be picked up at the Seaside Post Office, causing needless trips and phone calls;

**WHEREAS**, some of the more economical insurance companies use zip code as part of their underwriting process, some Gearhart homeowners have been denied homeowners insurance or may have paid higher premiums because the distance to Seaside was mistakenly considered too far from their residence;

**WHEREAS**, many nearby coastal cities and communities have populations considerably smaller than Gearhart, they have been assigned their own unique and individual zip code (See attached Exhibit A);

**NOW, THEREFORE** the City of Gearhart requests the United States Postal Service (USPS) to assign zip code 97139 or another unique zip code to our city.

This Resolution was passed by the City Council of the City of Gearhart this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021.

YEAS: \_\_\_\_\_ NAYS: \_\_\_\_\_ ABSENT: \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed and approved by the Mayor of the City of Gearhart this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paulina Cockrum, Mayor

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chad Sweet, City Administrator

# EXHIBIT A

Coastal Cities within 25 miles of Seaside

Zip	City	County	St	Population
97016	CLATSKANIE	COLUMBIA	OR	1,750
97064	VERNONIA	COLUMBIA	OR	1,850
97102	ARCH CAPE	CLATSOP	OR	205
97103	ASTORIA	CLATSOP	OR	9,900
97110	CANNON BEACH	CLATSOP	OR	1,500
97121	HAMMOND	CLATSOP	OR	1,400
97130	MANZANITA	TILLAMOOK	OR	393
97131	NEHALEM	TILLAMOOK	OR	355
97138	SEASIDE	CLATSOP	OR	6,700
97144	TIMBER	WASHINGTON	OR	131
97145	TOLOVANA PARK	CLATSOP	OR	1,490
97146	WARRENTON	CLATSOP	OR	5,000
97147	WHEELER	TILLAMOOK	OR	357
98643	ROSBURG	WAHKIAKUM	WA	320

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**Fwd: Where's My Package?**

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**Brent Warren** <warrenpdx@gmail.com>  
To: Krysti Ficker <krysti@cityofgearhart.com>

Fri, Oct 29, 2021 at 2:25 PM

**From:** Karynn Kozij <karynnk@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** October 29, 2021 at 1:18:01 PM PDT  
**To:** Brent Warren <warrenpdx@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Where's My Package?

Where's My Package?

Real Life example: Amazon package addressed to xxx # Street, Seaside 97138 came to Gearhart PO because Gearhart has numbered Streets and Seaside has numbered Avenues.

As that area of Gearhart has many part timers and vacationers who wouldn't know that USPS carries many Amazon packages and that there is NO street delivery offered by USPS in that part of Gearhart, Gearhart PO held onto the package hoping the customer would track it to Gearhart PO, even though it was scanned as 'Available for Pick up at Seaside, 97138'. We have no other option.

One week later, an identical package arrived from Amazon to same customer this time address included a Unit #. A clue! Likely customer complained to Amazon and Amazon sent a replacement.

Calls made to City Hall, Seaside Post Office Supervisor and a carrier. Photocopies made for Address Management contact for updating.

Research through online mapping showed that as an Avenue in Seaside, and yes, unit number needed according to Carrier at Seaside PO. Gearhart has only EVEN house numbers on that Street, this address is an ODD number. Another clue!

So, the package is indeed for a Seaside customer, on # Avenue.

This case is actually beyond Gearhart needing a unique zip code. It's that some Seaside customers would want Gearhart to not share theirs! Numbered Streets in Gearhart and Numbered Avenues in Seaside. Lettered Streets in Gearhart, Lettered Avenues in Seaside.

Unique Zip Code of 97120, 97138 or 97139 would have been easier for PO to distribute and deliver and if not, at least for customer to locate the package.

Sure, the PO could just returned it to Sender as Insufficient address.

Certainly most issues do not involve as much effort as this example, but something like this happens EVERY DAY!

Letters addressed to Customer xxx 4<sup>th</sup>, 97138. Is that 4<sup>th</sup> Street or 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue? A unique zip code makes sense!

How much time and effort spent not just at PO but by customer and Amazon in just this one instance? Hours, likely.

It's our job to get the customers their mail and packages! A unique zip code would be helpful.

That would be priceless!

## USPS Zip Code Request Process

### Conduct "ZIP Code Boundary Review"

Submit rationale and justification in writing to our USPS District Manager to identify reasonable accommodation for our own "unique" zip code exists.

Steps during the approval process include: evaluate all costs, benefits, issues with potential solutions, "quantify specific operational impacts and feasibility"; meet with proponents to discuss issues/alternatives → 60 days for DM final decision

APPROVAL = continue up "the chain"...

\*Additional steps include a formal survey of all customers affected by proposed change; Simple Majority = approval [some conduct this survey FIRST via petition so data is ready]

REJECTION = written notification with specific justification based on analysis results; advised of appeal process

→ Appeal to Manager of Delivery at USPS Headquarters

Operations Specialist will determine; "Was reasonable accommodation made?" → 60 days for final appeal decision

APPROVAL = up the chain/50% survey majority needed

REJECTION = request assistance from Congress; need the petition and/or survey majority for consideration

### What is "The Chain"?

The chain of command for new zip code approval is as follows:

START - District Manager approval

→ Manager of Operations Programs approval

→ Manager of Processing and Distribution approval

→ District Manager of Customer Service and Sales approval

→ Area (Regional) Office approval

→ Headquarters' Address Management System (AMS) approval

FINISH - New ZIP Code!