



Pivot Architecture

Drawing of proposed Gearhart police and fire station in the Highlands.

## Bond: Voters to consider \$14.5M firehouse levy

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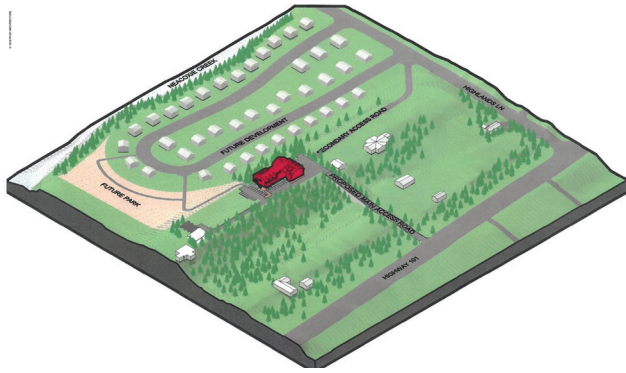
If the bond measure is approved, the money would be used for capital construction costs to build, equip and furnish the 13,000-square-foot station. While financing scenarios have not been decided, the city estimates the bonds would cost property owners \$1.213 per \$1,000 assessed value per year for up to 20 years. On a home with an assessed value of \$100,000, the levy for the fire and police station would be \$121 a per year. On a property with an assessed value of \$388,000, the levy would be \$470 per year; with an assessed value of \$500,000, slightly more than \$600 per year.

City Councilor Brent Warren said he is confident the majority of residents appreciate the dedication of emergency responders and their families. “We cannot afford any further delays in providing them with a modern and safe fire/police station,” he said. “The longer we delay, the more it is going to cost all of us.”

Opponents say the location is wrong, the site is oversized and, in any case, would fail to protect against the largest tsunamis.

Joy Sigler, a resident and business owner, asked residents to prioritize community needs.

“Voting ‘no’ will alert this council and city man-



Site overview of the proposed new fire and police station.

ager that they are squandering an excellent opportunity to be a self-sufficient city,” she said. “They must do better for its citizens and we must be deliberate in educating them to have a vision that creates community for both sides of the highway while enabling the Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department to perform efficiently.”

The city’s fire department has two full-time employees, one intern and 27 volunteer firefighters. The firehouse on Pacific Way, constructed in 1958 and expanded in 1966, is considered at risk in a significant earthquake and tsunami. The new station, which would be on land considered more resilient in a tsunami, would include storage, a day room, kitchen, restrooms, showers and an office for the police department.

The vote will come after a protracted debate in the community.

Voters rejected a mea-

sure to fund a new firehouse and City Hall in 2006. Since then, city staff, firefighters and residents have continued to recognize the urgency.

In 2018, after considering nine locations, the fire station committee recommended three concepts and locations to guide the decision-making process. When a public survey eliminated the committee’s first choice at Gearhart Park, the city pursued High Point, a location on N. Marion Avenue near the Palisades.

That site was dropped after potential right-of-way conflicts with neighboring homeowners and the high cost of the land purchase.

With the possibility of the land swap and negotiations with The Cottages at Gearhart LLC, the City Council approved bringing the Highlands Lane site to voters.

The bond measure was headed to ballot last November, but was postponed after a legal challenge that was

later rejected by a Circuit Court judge.

Jack Zimmerman, a resident who was involved with the unsuccessful legal challenge, said the Highlands Lane site is too far from downtown to meet city needs. He said facilities at Camp Rilea already meet fire department training needs.

“Gearhart will build a new fire station when they know their money will be well spent, and not wasted on something that they do not want, need or understand,” he said. “The taxpayers who will have to tighten their belts to fund this project in this shaky economy deserve consideration, transparency and respect.”

Mayor Paulina Cockrum said the bond measure is an important way of showing respect for firefighters and volunteers while protecting the community.

“As a caregiver for the past 45 years, I can attest that people who work to serve others, like our police, firefighters, nurses, doctors, waitstaff are subject to harassment and bullying,” the mayor said. “No matter which side of the fire/police station bond you are on, while a protected right, this type of discourse is still bullying, downright uncivil behavior and I cannot condone it.”

“This is so unfortunate for our community.”

### PUBLIC SAFETY LOG

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#### Vehicle, elk crash

Troopers responded to a crash April 10 at 11:32 a.m. on U.S. Highway 101 near milepost 17. A Toyota Scion operated by a 30-year-old Seaside man struck an elk on the roadway. The northbound lane was blocked until ODOT cleared the road. Gearhart police and firefighters were on scene. A 36-year-old female passenger, also from Seaside, was transported by Medix to the hospital. Tow was coordinated by the driver.

#### Smashed window at state park

A Portland woman reported theft from her vehicle April 10 at 3:10 p.m., while it was parked at the Indian Beach parking lot within Ecola State Park. She said she and her friends were hiking and when they returned both passenger side windows were smashed and items were taken. Police reported two other locations in the area had similar incidents that day.

#### Rollover crash

A rollover crash was reported April 12 at 8:16 a.m. on U.S. Highway 26 at milepost 14.5. A blue Subaru Outback hit a patch of snow and ice, left the roadway and rolled down an embankment. Hamlet, Seaside and Cannon Beach first responders were on scene to assist the driver up the embankment. She was transported to Seaside Providence Hospital by Medix and Gary’s Towing removed the vehicle which was damaged.

#### Driving under the influence

Brandon Alan Clippinger, 34, from Lake Tapps, Washington, was arrested April 14 at 6:27 p.m., on U.S. Highway 101 at milepost 18 charged with driving while under the influence. He refused field sobriety tests at first but then later submitted. He and his dog were taken to Seaside police headquarters for processing. After providing breath samples and given tickets for DWI and reckless driving, he was released with his dog. He returns to court June 7.

#### Driving charge

Timothy Joseph Anderton, 78, of Hunterville, North Carolina, was arrested April 16 at 9:46 p.m. in Seaside at

Avenue F and Lincoln, charged with driving while under the influence and reckless driving. He was originally pulled over for a safety check. He refused all tests and was transported to Seaside police headquarters for processing. A woman with him was given a courtesy ride to a hotel by another trooper. The car was parked on Lincoln and secured. No court date was given.



#### March 16

**7:37 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

**8:26 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

**9:41 p.m.**, hazardous condition, Dellmoor, Warrenton.

#### March 20

**12:09 a.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, Malarkey, Warrenton.

#### March 21

**12:34 p.m.**, smoke detective activation, no fire, unintentional, G Street.

#### March 23

**10:42 a.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, Par, Sunset Beach.

**4:40 p.m.**, motor vehicle accident with injuries, Lewis and Clark, Astoria.

#### March 24

**2:42 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, Sandy Ridge.

**9:59 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, North Marion.

#### March 27

**2:51 a.m.**, carbon monoxide incident, Creekside.

**7:36 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton.

#### March 28

**1:14 p.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, N. Marion.

#### March 29

**11:11 a.m.**, motor vehicle accident with no injuries, U.S. Highway 101.

#### March 30

**9:12 a.m.**, medical assist, assist EMS crew, Park.



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