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we must prepare for the unthinkable. There's a way out of this if we're bold enough to meet the challenge.

As a former volunteer firefighter and rescue worker, I'm intimately aware of the sacrifices that our safety workers make daily to ensure that our visitors and residents are protected. I encourage you to give them your full support by taking the high ground and voting yes for Measure 4-213 on the upcoming ballot.

**Jay Speakman  
Gearhart**

## New location offers safety, protects equipment

While I have all due respect for Chief Preston Devereaux and the years he volunteered with Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department and the months he served as chief, I need to respond to his April 14 letter.

In 2006 retired Devereaux co-wrote a letter saying the proposed \$3.75 million bond measure for a municipal had to many bells a whistles and was unnecessary. The bond failed.

Almost five years ago, the city proposed a station at the park which included extending it into the dunes to make it bigger. Opposition caused bond failure.

The city tried to keep it close to town at Marion and 13th, the High Point location. After months of due diligence, opposition worked behind the scenes and the owners decided not to sell.

The new owners of the Highland property offered to transfer ownership of five acres to the city for a new fire/police station at a 65-foot elevation. The Highland location protects the equipment necessary to begin recovery. A tsunami will restrict responsiveness until water levels recede. Once volunteers have taken care of their families, they will proceed to the station to help our community.

The current location is not large enough for a new station and Ordinance 924 doesn't allow it. Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department responds to significantly more calls, has higher training and regulatory requirements. The Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department of 2022 is not the same as the fire department of the 1990s.

Now is the time! Vote yes on Measure 4-213.

**Randall C Como  
Present assistant chief  
Gearhart Volunteer Fire  
Department**

## Our future safety depends on 'yes' vote

For good reasons, the city of Gearhart asks voters for a "yes" vote on Measure 4-213, a bond for a resilient fire and police station.

The highly dedicated and well-trained men and women of the Gearhart Fire Department responded to more than 660 emergency calls last year in their service to our community. We must all agree that citizens' safety and property are the top priorities of any local government.

I know the firefighters' conditions they operate in and have talked to the firefighters about the struggles they endure every day.

Please vote yes for the bond that will replace a below-standard and non-code compliant station and build a resilient facility. I clearly understand that this request does not come from what is wanted but rather a need for our community.

Gearhart has spent decades reviewing the information, consulting with the experts, and making the best choice now available given the previous compromises. And, too, all four of the past mayors of Gearhart support this bond.

Passage of this bond will allow Gearhart fire and police departments to have a facility to operate at a level of safety for the foreseeable future.

A "yes" vote on Measure 4-213 equals 84 cents per day or an additional \$307 annually on my home. Indeed, just pennies per day for the future safety of my hometown.

**Denise Fairweather  
Gearhart**

## Jerome Kersey a worthy subject

I within the last year or so relocated to Seaside with my wife. I pick up a copy of the Signal at Safeway when I can.

I have been some what a follower of the Los Angeles Lakers over the years. I opened my copy of the Signal this past week and saw an article that, an author who wrote a book on former Blazer Jerome Kersey is coming to Seaside. I am looking forward to buying a copy and meeting this author. Kersey was always a Laker killer over the years the Blazers played them. I always dreaded it when, Kersey, Drexler and those guys were up next on the schedule. Mr. Kersey actually played for the Lakers for a season and I liked that. Which also meant he had to take on his former Portland team a few times.

As a newcomer to the area I am finding I should be a fan of the Blazers now.

Purchasing this book and hearing from the author should give me a good insight to the team back then and quite possibly even now. Thank you Seaside Signal for that wonderful article and I am looking forward to meeting the author. I hope you can provide more for me on my new team I find myself following into the future.

**Tom Jenkins  
Gearhart**

## Firehouse plan will attract firefighting volunteers

I honestly respect the right of those folks who say no to the Gearhart Resiliency Station bond measure. But why vote no?

Maybe they're stuck on the blueprint concept scope studied and recommended by the National Fire Protection Association. The plan is designed to attract and maintain certified firefighting volunteers, not a paid team. Is it really an overwhelming footprint vision for this growing town? Is the cost of the bond the real reason for shouting "no"?

Or is it the powerful nostalgic heart tug of that old cinderblock green engine garage? Sorry but it is outdated and inadequate in every respect. One small bathroom. They make coffee and clean up their toxic gear in the same stained sink. There's no exhaust system to clear engine fumes. Understandably change is hard but let's get smart and rip off the Band-Aid.

A new higher ground home for our fire and police is critically important to provide the civic services we all demand and depend on. Gearhart is unbelievably blessed to have 27 volunteer firefighters who have the very same level of certifications — yes, same level — as Portland and Seattle paid responders. Our volunteers are professional in every way. There for us 24/7/365.

Please give them the respect they give us with your vote yes. The beautiful Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department traditions are here to stay. Neon engines will still lead the Fourth of July parade, there's still going to be an Easter egg hunt and a giant Christmas tree lighting Pacific Way.

Please give them the respect they give us with your vote yes on Measure 4-213.

**Vickie Abrahamson  
Gearhart**

## We cannot afford to wait

The citizens of Gearhart will be voting in less than a month on the future of our Gearhart current fire station. The "no" voters have made their campaign about the cost of \$14.5 million and taxes. If you

have been following the correspondence of letters to the paper, or in mailings, it has been shown how minimal the tax impact will really be.

What the "no" voters have not addressed is how the cost to build a new fire station has consistently increased. In just two years the cost has gone from a \$10.5 million bond proposed in 2020 to a \$13 million bond in 2021!

The 2021 \$13.5 million bond was challenged by the "no" voters and caused the city to miss a ballot deadline. The city of Gearhart won the challenge on all counts. However, due to that challenge we now are looking at a \$14.5 million bond.

So if not now when?

Every year we delay, we all know what is inevitable. The cost to replace our current fire station, which was built by volunteers on concrete blocks in 1958, will only continue to increase.

By the way, in 2006 a \$3.75 million bond to rebuild on the current site failed.

Vote yes on Measure 4-213.

**Betty Smith  
Gearhart**

## If not now, when?

Gearhart is not as divisive as you might think. Most of us who live in Gearhart agree that our volunteer firefighters are an amazing asset to our community. We also agree that our current fire station is old, inadequate and literally crumbling down, and that we need a new station.

We all agree that if the fire station bond passes, our taxes will go up. Well, yes they will. So there, most of us agree on something. So, this is good.

The issue that causes a division among us is the construction of a new fire station and the cost of such a structure. Our mayor, Paulina Cockrum, recently asked the question, "If not now, when?"

If we wait another year, five years or more, the price of a new station will only go up, and our taxes will only increase. Meanwhile, our firefighters will still be in an inadequate, cramped facility that is literally disintegrating around them. So, this is not good.

As an aside, I know that a new station is being called a "resiliency station," as it would also house our police department, but, hey, I live in Gearhart and, to me, it will always be a fire station. Maybe I will change my mind. Maybe not.

Our community needs a new station, whatever it's called. I encourage the passing of our bond, for the good of Gearhart. If not now, when?

Think about it. This is good.

**Reita Fackerell  
Gearhart**

2021 Sisters Folk Festival, Photo Credit: Rob Kerr

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