

Katherine Lacaze

Patrons shop for local hand-crafted goods at the Seaside Farmers Market.

## Seaside Farmers Market to open season

Seaside Signal

Now in its ninth year, the Seaside Farmers Market has become a staple of summer in Seaside, drawing a multitude of locals and tourists. The Seaside Farmers Market offers fresh produce from farmers as well as artisan goods.

Gourmet foods, hummus, nuts, honey, tea, spices and kettle corn are some of the artisan foods offered at the market. Patrons can grab lunch from several

food trucks. Other vendors include wineries and spirits, health and wellness products, handcrafted art and jewelry, and educational organizations and services. As patrons shop, they are treated to music, featuring a different local act each week. This year's market is sponsored by Providence Seaside Hospital.

Another feature of the market is an effort to stretch patron dollars through partnerships with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Double Up Food Bucks Program. When patrons charge money on their EBT cards, they are given tokens to use for food. The SNAP program gives patrons an additional \$10 for food, and the DUFB program provides another \$20 that patrons can use for produce.

Located at 1120 Broadway, the market is open every Wednesday from 2 to 6 p.m. from June 15 to Sept. 28 this season. For more information, visit the market's website at seasidemar-

## Cockrum: Mayor finished parks plan, amended downtown zoning, developed kids' park

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The resignation comes after the failure of a contentious \$14.5 million bond measure to fund a new firehouse and police station on land north of the city.

"Some Gearhart residents have argued that this isn't a good time to ask the voters for a bond to build a new fire-police station," she said in presenting plans to voters. "I say, 'If not now, when?"

Originally from Seattle, Cockrum was a nurse at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria and selected by the governor to serve on a work group for criteria for coordinated care organizations.

The former planning commissioner was appointed by Mayor Dianne Widdop

to fill the unexpired term of City Councilor John Duncan in District 3 after Duncan's death in 2015.

She serves on the city's Community Emergency Response Team.

Cockrum ran unopposed for mayor in 2020 after Matt Brown announced he would not seek reelection. She received 96% of votes cast, winning nearly 950 votes out of the city's 1,500 registered

After the election she said her goals included "getting past the COVID-19 pandemic and the turmoil of the national election and look forward to the future."

At the time said she hoped to prioritize the needs of firefighters and implement the appointment and continues city's hazard mitigation plan.

"There is no shortage of

great things we can work on for all of our residents to preserve the Gearhart we love," Cockrum said.

During her time as mayor, Gearhart finished its parks master plan, began development of a children's play area at Centennial Park, limited contractor working hours, endorsed a Gearhart ZIP code and passed zoning amendments designed to assist downtown businesses.

As council president, Kerry Smith will serve as interim mayor.

Vacant seats are filled by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the council. The appointee's term of office begins immediately on through the unexpired term of their predecessor.

## Harsh reception for Gearhart council after firehouse bond defeat

By R.J. MARX Seaside Signal

The \$14.5 million question after the defeat of the May firehouse bond: What

For the City Council, it could be a town hall, a new firehouse survey or a recall election, vote of no confidence and legal action.

Last Thursday, Mayor Paulina Cockrum resigned, citing personal reasons.

Kerry Smith, the City Council's president, will serve as interim mayor. A majority of the remaining councilors will appoint a replacement to serve the unexpired portion of Smith's Position 1 term.

Jack Zimmerman, an outspoken critic of the bond measure, said councilors failed individually and as a collective body.

"We need an admission from you folks," he said. "On May 17, your six years of effort failed. You failed as individual counselors and you failed as a collective body. Gearhart voters did the right thing for Gearhart. You failed not Gearhart."

Gearhart resident and co-owner of the former Gearhart Elementary School Bob Morey blasted Cockrum and councilors for what he called "the \$10 million giveaway" the land exchange agreement enabling developers to build homes at city zoning levels rather than more restrictive 2-acre county zoning. "It is hard to imagine a more poorly negotiated and crafted agreement if the objective was to optimize the value the city brings to the transaction."

The contingent land transfer agreement with the Cottages at Gearhart LLC is up for reconsideration on Aug. 23. In the event that the city is unable to bring the property into the urban growth boundary by that date, the agreement will terminate unless both parties agree to extend the term.

The proposed swap as structured would lose millions of dollars of potential value to Gearhart taxpayers, Morey said.

"Now that the fire station bond has been soundly

defeated it's time for the city to provide fully supported financial information regarding the multiyear fire station effort and the UGB land swap," Morey said. "I have retained counsel and directed counsel to file appropriate actions with the court if compliance is lacking."

July "would be a great time to begin a recall election," he added.

Last month, two-thirds of voters said "no" to the \$14.5 million bond to build a firehouse and a police station on property off Highlands Lane north of the city.

Of 1,562 registered voters, the Oregon Elections Division reported 931 votes, with 615 against the measure, with 316 in

A citywide town hall could take place within the next two-and-a-half months, to determine next steps, Cockrum said. "I feel like the longer it's put off the more it will cost. If we go for a November ballot, we need to decide by mid-August."Smith proposed live or virtual town halls. "We've got to find a place to move forward," Smith said. "I'd like to know what they're willing to do and how much they're willing to spend."

A survey may be useful, Beth Cameron, a resident, said in public comment Wednesday, but falls far short of what bond critics are seeking. "As to surveys, you all

seem to think that surveys are easy to write and they are not," she said. "The bond failed because you guys failed to listen to and include Gearhart taxpayers. You thought you knew best and all you needed to do was tell us what to think and we would fall in line. Instead, people started doing their own research and began asking questions that you couldn't or wouldn't answer and lost confidence in your words and your actions."

Cameron proposed a citizens' advisory committee "representative of all sides of the issue, not just ing to go for another vote cherry-picked people that in November is too soon. only support one side of I think this community the argument, whether it's needs time to heal."

for or against."

"We heard that you need more surveys," Zimmerman said. "We participated in those surveys. We saw those surveys and how biased they were. What I heard is that we need experts. We need more education. That implies that the people voting who don't have the capability of critical thinking. I assure you, based on the turnout the voters thought long and hard."

Morey said he wanted Cockrum and the entire council replaced. The vote of no confidence will be targeted to nonresident property owners who will be able to voice their dissatisfaction with the performance of the entire council.

In other business, Gearhart's final 2022-23 budget passed without an appropriation for debt service to create a fund for a future firehouse bond measure. The \$14.5 million fund had been placed in the proposed budget in order to establish appropriations for the objective of constructing a new fire/police station. The fund was contingent on a successful measure being passed by taxpayers.

City staff recommended two different options for specific funds, debt service and fire/police general obligation bond, city treasurer Justine Hill said.

Because the bond measure did not pass, the council decided to adopt option one, which reduced debt service by almost \$700,000 and removed all appropriations for the bond project fund of \$14.5 million, Hill said.

The budget committee approved \$23.5 million, but without the debt service and appropriations included, the City Council adopted a final 2022-23 budget of a little over \$8.27 million.

For now, a new firehouse bond vote in the foreseeable future appears to be off the table.

"I would like to move it out," City Councilor Reita Fackerell said. "I think try-

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