

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE TOWN OF CAREFREE PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2021

WHERE: ZOOM ONLINE*

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 10-822, notice is hereby given of the time, place and purposes of a meeting of the Public Safety Advisory Committee.

Members of the Committee are participating by technological means or methods pursuant to A.R.S. §10-708.

CALL TO ORDER

SILENT ROLL CALL

AGENDA

ITEM #1 Approval of minutes for AUGUST 25, 2021

ITEM #2 Discussion and consideration of report and recommendations for fire and emergency services.

ITEM #3 Discussion, consideration and timing of evaluation of MCSO services.

ITEM #4 Adjournment

DATED this 7th day of September, 2021.

By: Kandace French Contreras

Kandace French Contreras, Secretary

Items may be taken out of order

*Due to the risks to public health caused by the possible spread of the COVID-19 virus at public gatherings, it has determined that public meetings will be indefinitely held through technological

means. Meetings will be also open to the public through technological means. In reliance on, and compliance with, the March 13, 2020 Opinion issued by Attorney General Mark Brnovich, the Town of Carefree provides this special advance notice of the technological means through which public meetings may be accessed. While this special notice is in effect, public comment at meetings will only be accepted through written submissions, which may or may not be read aloud during meetings.

Join Zoom Meeting:

Click on the following link or cut and paste it into your browser:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3229729660>

Or go to <https://www.zoom.us/join> Meeting ID: 322 972 9660

A password is not required.

By phone:

Please call 1-253-215-8782



FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Please contact the Town Clerk, 8 Sundial Circle (PO Box 740), Carefree, AZ 85377; (480) 488-3686, at least three working days prior to the meeting if you require special accommodations due to a disability.



DRAFT

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE TOWN OF CAREFREE
PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, JULY 28th, 2021
WHERE: VIA ZOOM *
TIME: 1:30 P.M.

Members of the Public Safety Advisory Committee participated by technological or methods pursuant to §A.R.S. 38-431(4).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairperson - Leslie Hine
Vice Chairperson - Philip Henn
Sheila Amoroso
Peter Burns
Scott Peterson
Kim Taha
Jerry Wetta

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Anton Wilke

Chairperson Hine opened the meeting at 1:32 pm.

Agenda Item #1: Approval of the minutes of the Public Safety Advisory Committee dated July 28, 2021.

Committee Member Wetta **MOVED TO APPROVE** the July 28, 2021 minutes, as corrected. **SECONDED** by Committee Member Burns. **CARRIED** unanimously.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of the minutes of the Public Safety Advisory Committee dated August 11, 2021.

Committee Taha **MOVED TO APPROVE** the August 11th, 2021 minutes. **SECONDED** by Vice Chairperson Henn. **CARRIED** unanimously.

Chairperson Hine asked the attendees to share their experiences of the Rural Metro tour of the Carefree Fire Station. Committee Members Burns, Peterson, Taha and Wetta toured the local fire station. All participants acknowledged the fire stations had an impressive collection of fire equipment and it was clear to them that the equipment was well maintained and the overall operation of the fire house was well managed.

Committee member Peterson asked those who attended the tour, if they received insight pertaining to the replacement of the fire truck or an indication of a fire truck upgrade.

Town Administrator Neiss explained that Carefree's fire truck was a product of the American La France Company. This company went out of business, making it challenging to locate the necessary parts to repair which is the primary motivation to acquire a new fire truck.

Chairperson Hine asked Mr. Neiss to provide an overview of his recent dialogues with Rural Metro, Daisy Mountain and the City of Scottsdale.

Mr. Neiss began by highlighting his discussions with the Town of Cave Creek. He explained that Cave Creek is interested in joining Automatic Aid. Similar to Carefree, Cave Creek has expressed interest in owning their assets, with the possibility of contracting out the labor. In addition, Cave Creek is in the process of executing a lease/ purchase agreement to acquire the Cave Creek Rural Metro Fire Station.

Mr. Neiss also provided an overview of his encounters with Rural Metro. Rural Metro remains interested in maintaining a fire house on the west side. As a short term solution, Rural Metro will need to relocate their current operations to the Carefree Fire Station. Rural Metro has asked to enter a short term lease with the Town of Carefree to relocate the Cave Creek engine company to the Carefree Fire Station. In general, Rural Metro will pay Carefree a monthly rent in the amount of \$5000.00. Additionally, Rural Metro is also looking to maintain an ambulance on the West side of Black Mountain. An agenda item to authorize the Mayor to enter into a short term lease will be presented in next Town Council meeting.

Mr. Neiss then continued to provide an update on the Request for Proposals (RFP) from the various providers.

- The City of Phoenix explained that they are not interested in entering contract negotiations with either Town of Carefree or Cave Creek.
- Chief Shannon (Scottsdale) and Chief Tobin (Daisy Mountain) explained that they are not interested in responding to a RFP process.

Both entities feel that they have provided Carefree a cost overview, which outlines the startup costs and future costs. They determined, should Carefree enter into an Automatic Aid agreement, Scottsdale and Daisy Mountain may revisit negotiation options.

Mr. Neiss shared results of Carefree's 2020 revenue stream. He explained, due the shutdowns caused by COVID, Mr. Neiss originally projected up to a 20% loss in sales tax revenue. Fortunately, Carefree encountered a nearly 36% increase in sales tax revenue (equating to an approximate, \$4.87 million).

Mr. Neiss also explained, when reviewing potential revenue streams for the Town of Carefree, it is necessary for the committee to take into account the State Shares Funds (which amounts

to 25% of Carefree's annual revenue). The State Shared funds are impacted by constant changes in legislation which may impact reallocation of the state shared funds. Additionally, state shared funds are impacted by the per capita statistics (which will reduce over time) resulting in an unreliable source of revenue.

Agenda Item #3: Discussion regarding committee member's thoughts and recommendations on level of service and funding options to offset increasing costs and emergency services.

Chairperson Hine presented a rough draft of a summary to guide discussion points, organize material and begin structuring a fire solution proposal for Town Council. The first item on this draft summary focuses on the positives and negatives Automatic Aid vs. Mutual Aid. The second portion breaks down funding options available to the Town of Carefree to support the fire and emergency service program.

Chairperson Hine invited committee members to discuss the pros and cons of automatic aid vs mutual aid.

Cons of Mutual Aid (presented by the committee) include:

- Uncertainty of service levels; service deficits to the west side of Carefree; emergency response time due to Carefree's geographic landscape, response agreements from Daisy Mountain and Scottsdale.
- Committee Member Burns noted, Daisy Mountain does not have a Mutual Aid Agreement with Rural Metro. Additionally, the City of Scottsdale's mutual aid agreement between Carefree and Scottsdale has expired. Committee Member Amoroso explained that there is verbiage in the City of Scottsdale Agreement (from May 2005), which recognizes a licensing agreement with Rural Metro that represents the Town of Carefree.
- The cost of Automatic Aid was unnecessary expense that under current revenue structure Carefree may not be able to afford the financial burden this program will have on the Town.
- Currently the Certificate of Necessity (CON) for ambulance service in Carefree as well as Cave Creek is controlled by Rural Metro.

Pros for Mutual Aid include:

- Regional response due to Mutual Aid Packs
- Access to the Department of Forestry equipment (such as tanks)
- Long standing relationships with neighboring communities who have historically assisted Carefree in times of need.
- Most cost effective option.

Town Administrator Neiss explained if Carefree decides to enter into an Automatic Aid contract with Scottsdale or Daisy Mountain, timing is an element to consider. Currently, there are multiple scenarios at play. For instance, if Daisy Mountain decides to serve the Town of Cave Creek, is there a possibility to Daisy Mountain would consider servicing Carefree? Will Cave Creek build multiple fire stations? If so, how will the locations of the fire houses impact Carefree?

Committee Member Peterson asked Mr. Neiss when the committee will need to present a proposal to the Town Council.

The Committee discussed the timeline needed to implement a potential property tax. It was explained that a potential property tax initiative will need to be on the ballot in May. In order to meet this timeline, the question to consider a property tax would have to be decided by the Town Council by mid-December. Ballot language then would be needed to be presented to the County in early January. Most importantly the Town will need to invest a significant amount of time educating the community on the structural deficit, as well the difference between automatic aid vs mutual aid.

The group discussed PROS and CONS of the sales tax and revenue funding options for the fire program.

Committee member Amoroso provided a high level overview of the options to fund a fire program:

1. Complete funding through a sales tax – has to potential to alter consumer spending habits and adversely impacting businesses.
2. Implementing a property tax will be more complex but benefits and cost are aligned.
3. Combination of a property tax and a sales tax- maybe a more stable option and can enhance the fiscal position of the Town.

Chairperson Hine and the group discussed the table on page six of the draft summary, which depicts a comparative analysis of Rural Metro, Daisy Mountain and the Scottsdale Fire Department. Committee members collectively reviewed the chart and expressed their insights, suggested revisions and recommended criteria.

The Committee concluded by discussing, language, potential motions and recommendations the Committee will want to use in the presentation to Town Council. Based on feedback presented by the Committee, Chairperson Hine suggested that part of the recommendations to the Council can be the option to proceed with a short term solution (anywhere between 1 to 4 years). In the meantime, the committee can review additional options as a long term solution.

Chairperson Hine plans to create a second version of the report.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.