

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

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 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

ROLL CALL

AGENDA

ITEM #1 Review and approval of the July 28, 2021 meeting minutes.

ITEM #2 Review and approval of the August 11, 2021 meeting minutes.

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

ITEM #3 Future items for consideration.

ITEM #4 Adjournment.

DATED this 22nd day of August, 2021.

By: Kandace French Contreras
Kandace French Contreras, Town Clerk/Treasurer

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>

A password is not required.

By phone:

Please call 1.669. 900. 6833 or 1.253.215.8782

Meeting ID: 322 972 9660



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).

SILENT ROLL CALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

None

Chairperson Hine welcomed the committee members and explained that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss means of funding Carefree's fire program. Additionally, to determine the direction in which the Committee members will present the frame work to the Carefree Town Council.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of minutes

Committee Member Taha **MOVED TO APPROVE** the Public Safety Advisory Committee minutes dated July 11, 2021 with changes. Committee Member Wetta **SECONDED** , the motion. **CARRIED** unanimously.

Agenda Item 2: Presentation to Committee

Chairperson Hine commended Committee Members Burns and Amoroso for their presentation.

Committee Member Amoroso stated that the current presentation is an outline which demonstrates Carefree's current revenue for fire services. The presentation will provide insight on revenue options for operations and capital costs. Noting, all reporting material was provided previously by Town Administrator Gary Neiss and demonstrating that the 1% sales tax has not been sufficient to cover the total cost of the master contract. For the previous 10 years, the average structural deficit for the contract was just over \$400,000 dollars. Furthermore, the Town of Carefree can expect the costs for the next contract to be higher than the current contract, automatic aid to be approximately \$3,000,000 for ongoing expenses and up to \$2,000,000 for initial capital cost. Adding, if the Town of Carefree chooses to maintain mutual aid, there will still be an increase in the annual cost of the master contract.

Committee Member Amoroso presented funding options.

Option 1:

If the Town of Carefree solely relied on a sales tax, it would mean a 1.4% increase in the 3% sales tax, with a total combined rate of 10.7%. One advantage associated with this option is that it would be the simplest option because Carefree already has a dedicated sales tax. Sales taxes grow over time and follow economic activity. However, the sales tax would be subject to decline or minimal growth during recessions, and it would not require the approval of Carefree voters. Some of the negative attributes of relying on the sales tax option is that it is not well aligned with the benefits received for fire protection and there would be an annual escalator in the contract. As the sales tax increases due to economic activity it may not be financially feasible to keep up with the escalator.

Committee Member Amoroso presented current sales tax for the jurisdictions of Carefree, Cave Creek, Phoenix and Scottsdale. Carefree and Cave Creek have comparable tax rates, both having a total 9.3% sales tax which includes a 3% municipal sales tax. Town of Carefree has a much higher tax rate than the City of Scottsdale with a total 8.05% sales tax which includes a 1.75% municipal sales tax and the City of Phoenix with a total sales tax of 8.6% sales tax which includes a 2.3% municipal sales tax.

Option 2:

Introducing a property tax for the residents of Carefree. Property taxes are a traditional source of revenue for local governments to pay for critical services. The advantages of a property tax are as follows:

1. It is directly aligned with the fire protection benefits. Each property owner would be responsible for their fire protection, for both full time and part time residents.
2. It is a stable revenue source and diversifies the Town revenue, which is important for the Town's stability and sustainability of the Town Revenue moving forward.
3. The Arizona legislator has placed several limits in transparency requirements that prevent runaway property tax bills.

Some of the drawbacks to a property tax are that property taxes are more complex.

Committee Member Amoroso explained that there are two types of property tax. A primary property tax which is used to support governmental operations and a secondary property tax which is used to support bonds and special districts.

Based on the \$.97 tax rate, the average home in the Town of Carefree would be responsible for approximately \$580.00 per year. The burden of tax for fire protection would equate to a property tax of 75% for residential properties, 12% for commercial properties and 8% of vacant land.

Currently, the Town of Carefree does not have a property tax. In comparison, Scottsdale has a property tax of 1.0316% and, Phoenix has a 2.12% property tax and the Daisy Mountain Fire District has a 3.428% property tax.

Option 3 – Capital Cost Option:

If Carefree decides to participate in the automatic aid program, the startup cost could be as high as \$2.2 million dollars.

Additional approaches to funding Automatic Aid would be:

1. To utilize Carefree's Reserve Fund. This would route funds to maintaining and updating capital needs away from other projects such as maintaining the roads.
2. To use the current sales tax with an added property tax for the full funding of the master contract of \$0.97. This option can provide a buffer for the cost coverage for the Town of Carefree.
3. Funding the initial capital cost by the issuance of bonds, which would be backed by property tax.
4. To utilize property tax solely for operations and capital expenditures. This would equate to an overall tax rate of \$1.66, this would provide room to accommodate the escalator in the contract.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss provided a breakdown of fire service estimates from Scottsdale Fire Department, Daisy Mountain and Rural Metro. The City of Scottsdale has estimated a one-time start up amount of \$683,915; Daisy Mountain Fire Department has estimated a cost of \$515,435; and Rural Metro will not require a startup cost. The ongoing estimates for the City of Scottsdale equate to \$2,870,617; Daisy Mountain Fire Department has an estimation of approximately \$2,474,232 and Rural Metro has estimated \$1,934,000. If the start up and initial year costs are added together the total first year estimates for these organizations equate to \$3,554,532 for the Scottsdale Fire Department, \$2,889,667 for Daisy Mountain and \$1,934,000 for Rural Metro (based on a three year contract). These estimates are subject to change and are approximations.

Committee Member Wilke projected that a contract extension with Rural Metro could have a financial deficit of three quarters of a million dollars each year. Stating, the Town of Carefree would need to quickly determine a solution to fund the deficit, by increasing the sales tax or introducing a property tax on the ballot. Adding, the Committee will need to determine whether or not the Town of Carefree purposes a property tax.

Chairperson Hine stated that she would like to see an all-in capital cost with the fire program.

Committee Member Henn shared insight to the potential property tax and the impact on the Town of Carefree's real estate market. Believing that adding a property tax will not deter future residents from purchasing in the Town of Carefree and properties within Carefree will continue to grow in value even with the addition of a property tax. Additionally, based on Mr. Henn's conversations with local business owners, he does not believe increasing the sales tax will drive away business. Committee Member Wilke concurs with Mr. Henn's recommendations to increase the sales tax and to impose a property tax to reduce the sales tax.

Committee Member Amoroso asked for clarification of Mr. Henn's and Mr. Wilke's recommendation to increase the sales tax to 11.5%. She explained that the current sales tax is 9.3%. Of that amount, the dedicated amount to fund the fire fund is 1.0%. She reiterated that sales tax have incentives and disincentives. Currently she does not believe that the sales tax is impacting shopping behaviors, although an increase to above 10%, the Town of Carefree would place a burden on the businesses and feels that should be the responsibility of a home owner. Ms. Amoroso concluded, she does not want to impose a sales tax increase on business owners for something all residents should have responsibility for.

Chairperson Hine reminded the group that there are logistics associated with presenting the information to Town Council, presenting the consideration to Town Council, approving a ballot measure in May 2022, getting the ballot measure passed and implementing the measure. She continued to emphasize that hypothetically, if the committee successfully completes all criteria to introduce a property tax, it will take a while before the Town of Carefree generates revenue to support the fire program.

Chairperson Hine asked the committee members for a raise of hands who is currently in favor of initiating a property tax?

Committee Member Wilke believes that Carefree will need to present a property tax to supplement some of the fire fund.

Committee Member Amoroso explained that expenses are increasing and the Town of Carefree needs to be prepared and believes the Town of Carefree will need to introduce a property tax in the future. In order for The Town of Carefree to have a sustainable future and/or budget Carefree will need to have a diversified source of revenue. The alignment of a property tax and fire protection are positioned well.

Committee Member Taha agreed with purposing a property tax. Based on Committee Member Amoroso's and Committee Member Burns recommendations, Ms. Ms. Taha believes the most reasonable scenario would be to leave the 1% sales tax in place (which is allocated for the fire fund), and then purpose the property tax.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss recommended that the Committee Members put together at least three fire fund solutions for Town Council to weigh options and have more fruitful conversations.

Chairperson Hine and the Committee discussed how to proceed with compiling language of the purposed options to present to Town Council.

Committee Member Amoroso suggested the committee begin with the 1% sales tax for the first year and then work from there.

Chairperson Hine, Committee Members Burns and Committee Member Taha requested having Committee Members split into teams of two to address additional questions and provide further research pertaining to the three service providers and Fire Safety Council's requirements for Carefree to join automatic aid program.

Committee Member Burns explained that there is value in having one to two more meetings to collect more detailed information and well as formal bids from the surrounding service providers. Committee Member Taha and Chairperson Hine agreed with Mr. Burns.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss explained based on prior experiences not all levels of service, policies and procedures are the same between the separate governing boards within the Daisy Mountain, Scottsdale and Rural Metro fire districts therefore, comparisons of the fire districts will not be the same.

Committee Member Wilke asked if the Life Safety program would require additional expenses for the Town of Carefree if they partnered with the City of Scottsdale's or Daisy Mountain's Automatic Aid program. Mr. Neiss responded, yes there may be additional fees, the amounts have not been identified until Carefree's assets are identified and evaluated.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss committed to begin working on a RFP.. He will send the RFP to each provider and will provide them with a timeline for response and schedule meetings to clarify questions.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss asked Rural Metro to provide additional statistics from the last two years. Specifically, the total amount of calls into the Town of Cave Creek as well as Carefree.

Chairperson Hine asked committee members to provide criteria for the RFP. Requesting that the RFP include a portion outlining how the City of Scottsdale, Daisy Mountain and Rural Metro will provide and manage ambulance and/or emergency services.

Committee Member Taha would like to incorporate a portion that highlights how emergency response and services are handled on the West side of town and would like Rural Metro to provided addition information pertaining to their level of service.

Committee Member Peterson would like to include quotes on obtaining a new fire truck and a time frame outlining when Carefree would need to acquire a new fire truck and equipment.

Committee Member Wilke would like to include a section that asks the various respondents if Carefree will require a brush truck. Adding a section on the Life Safety response.

Vice Chairperson Henn does not have a particular request for the RFP, but would like to get clarification pertaining to the cost of automatic aid.

Committee Member Amoroso asked, is there a true up? Will it cost Carefree to help a neighboring community?

According to Committee Member Burns, Carefree will be responsible for dispatch fees, equating to approximately \$28 per dispatch.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss concurred with Mr. Burn's statement, and continued to explain that the dispatch fees are projected annually. Based on projections there is a flat fee presented to the community. At the end of the year, if a community over pays, then the community will be presented with the difference. If the community under pays the amount will be increased for the upcoming year.

Vice Chairperson Henn would like Mutual Aid to explain what type of recourses will be available for deployment.

Committee Member Taha would like to know the requirements for the Life Safety Council such as personnel, capital costs and equipment needed.

Committee Member Wetta agrees with all the points presented and does not have additional recommendations for the RFP.

Committee Member Peterson would like to wait to see the results of the statistics.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss explained that the proposal for a property tax needs to be on the ballot in May 2022. The resolution will need to be adopted in December. Town Council also will require time to review the committee's recommendations.

Chairperson Hine suggested that Mr. Neiss continue to forward and assemble the RFP. Mr. Neiss will pass the results of the RFP's to the Public Safety Advisory Committee for their review.

Town Administrator Neiss explained that he will need approximately four weeks to generate the RFP, and send to the potential partners. Concluding, it will take an additional three to four weeks to collect the responses, mid-September time frame.

Chairperson Hine introduced a second discussion point, the revenue model. Committee Member Amoroso explained that the committee has a good foundation for the financial revenue options. Currently the committee needs the hard numbers. The first option is to increase the property tax to less than a dollar in combination with the sales tax. A second option would be to fund the fire program solely utilizing a property tax. This would equate to \$1.66-\$1.67 for the full assumed cost of \$3 million. Additionally, if the committee decides to fund the fire fund with the property tax of \$1.67 and discontinue the property tax after one year, the Town will raise \$1.2 million dollars in sales tax. Chairperson Hine added we can explain three revenue proposals with an assumed cost of \$3 million dollars.

Town Administrator Neiss encouraged committee members to tour the Carefree Fire station.

Chairperson Hine wrapped up the meeting and made tentative plans for Committee Members to meet at the Carefree Fire Station.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

DRAFT



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

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11th, 2021

WHERE: CAREFREE FIRE STATION 1

37401 N Tom Darlington Drive, Carefree AZ 85377

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

Members of the Public Safety Advisory Committee participated in person

SILENT ROLL CALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Peter Burns

Scott Peterson

Kim Taha

Jerry Wetta

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Chairperson - Leslie Hine

Vice Chairperson - Philip Henn

Sheila Amoroso

Anton Wilke

Call to Order: **37401 N Tom Darlington Drive, Carefree AZ**

Agenda Item: Committee Tour of the Carefree Fire Station and associated discussion.

A comprehensive tour was given by representatives from Rural Metro.

Agenda Item Two: Adjournment

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

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2021

WHERE: ZOOM ONLINE*

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

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ITEM #4 Adjournment.

DATED this 22nd day of August, 2021.

By: Kandace French Contreras
Kandace French Contreras, Town Clerk/Treasurer

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DRAFT Public Safety Advisory Committee Discussion Guide and Chair Comments for August 25th

Prepared by Leslie Hine, PSAC Chair

August 20, 2021

Background

The Carefree Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) was convened, and has been meeting twice a month since, April 7, 2021. Its charge has been to review Carefree's public safety programs and to make recommendations to the Town Council regarding both fire service and law enforcement service contracts beyond June 30, 2022. To date the PSAC has been focused on Carefree's fire services and will shift to law enforcement in October/November 2021. The PSAC is a citizen advisory board appointed by the Carefree Town Council. It has 8 members. Its meetings and actions are governed by open meeting and public access rules governing all Town business.

The agenda of the PSAC thus far has centered on considering two decision points with respect to fire service beyond June 30, 2022 (the end date of the existing master contract in place with Rural Metro).

The first fire service related decision/recommendation is whether the Town is best served through Automatic Aid versus a Mutual Aid agreement. The PSAC has heard presentations from Rural Metro, Carefree's current fire service provider that operates under mutual aid agreements with neighboring fire departments, and Scottsdale Fire Department and Daisy Mountain Fire District – both automatic aid participants. The Town of Cave Creek shared their concurrent deliberation process and its conclusion that it would pursue fire service under automatic aid only. Carefree Town Manager, Gary Neiss has presented on this topic and PSAC members have conducted their own research. The PSAC must sift through this wealth of information and opinion to decide what its recommendation will be to the Carefree Town Council. The question to decide is: *Is Carefree better served by automatic aid or mutual aid and why or why not?* The corollary question is: *Is Carefree better served by continuing with the existing contractor, Rural Metro, or contracting with City of Scottsdale or Daisy Mountain Fire District, why or why not?*

The second fire service related decision/recommendation is how Carefree might best pay for its fire service. A 1% dedicated sales tax has funded fire service for the past 15 years but has resulted in an average \$400K annual shortfall over the past 10 years. This shortfall has been covered by Town general fund revenues - a practice that has been determined to be unsustainable going forward. Additionally, it is generally not good practice to match (exclusively) a fixed cost like fire service to a variable (elastic) revenue source like sales tax. Property tax is a more stable, less variable revenue source better suited for funding fixed costs such as fire service (and public safety services generally). Carefree does not currently levy a property tax and state property tax share is minimal. The PSAC has engaged in this conversation

and benefited from the professional expertise of several committee members. The question to decide is: *What tax revenue mix/strategy would the PSAC recommend to Town Council to cover public safety services in future?*

Draft Summary of PSAC Presentations/Discussions To Date:

Question 1: Automatic vs Mutual Aid	Pros	Cons
<p><u>Automatic Aid</u> (Cost information based on prelim conversations with Scottsdale Fire Department and Daisy Mountain Fire District.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire resources deployed seamlessly as if one regional fire department without regard to jurisdictional boundaries may result in more effective response to big fire event (wildfire ala 2020). • One central dispatch and equipment with GPS equipment tracking to facilitate response efficiency • Closest appropriate equipment automatically dispatched to incident/service call regardless of political jurisdictional boundaries • Being considered a team player and part of the regional fire “team” as defined by the Life Safety Council • 2-3 potential partner options (Scottsdale, Daisy Mountain, (Phoenix not currently but perhaps down the road)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost 30-50% higher than Mutual Aid for annual ongoing costs • Startup costs \$500-\$750K for joining Automatic Aid system • Carefree must apply to Life Safety Council to be added to Automatic Aid on its own - not guaranteed based on contracted entity. • Loss of Town policy control as decision making control passes to Life Safety Council and to contracted fire department or district. Carefree interests not represented by elected body. • Loss of autonomy – signage, management control and decisions affecting Carefree fire service. • Service levels (need to confirm this) • Neither SFD nor DMFD has previously engaged in a contract for services such as would be required with Carefree – potential learning curve • Question remains regarding which entity would hold the Certificate of Necessity (CON) for ambulance and EMT services and where ambulance might be housed.

<p><u>Mutual Aid (Current)</u> (Cost information based on prelim conversations with Rural Metro Fire Department)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current provider, Rural Metro, has provided fire services to Carefree for over 50 years most recently under a 10 year contract set to expire June 30, 2022. Service quality and responsiveness have been exemplary as measured by performance metrics reported under current contract. • Costs are estimated to be 35-50% less than services potentially provided through automatic aid. • Carefree retains full control of fire service decisions and management. Rural Metro works for Carefree rather than Carefree paying to be an outpost station for another automatic aid provider and falling under the rules and elected politics of another municipal or fire district. • Rural Metro holds CON and ambulance and EMT services would remain unchanged. • Current service levels beyond fire and ambulance services, continue under contract with RM (i.e. fire marshal, community outreach, grant writing, snake removal, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Metro is only potential provider • Rural Metro’s service area is changing given Town of Cave Creek decision to establish fire service and to do so under automatic aid. Impacts of this change on Rural Metro operations and geographic coverage is uncertain particularly regarding Carefree’s west side neighborhoods and businesses. • Carefree would be a mutual aid “island” surrounded by automatic aid service entities – impact of this is uncertain. • Potential cost of major fire event that would require the help of other fire departments is unknown – will they respond in the event needed and if so at what cost to Carefree?
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There is a challenge in separating out the question of Automatic Aid versus Mutual Aid from the entities that represent either option. To talk of and assess Automatic Aid requires assessing the potential partners (SFD or DMFD) and their respective systems, costs and services. To talk of Mutual Aid requires assessing Rural Metro’s past performance, systems, costs and services. It is not possible to discuss/decide whether Automatic Aid or Mutual Aid is in Carefree’s best interests without considering who the provider will be. The conflation of Aid option and provider makes it difficult at best. The current fire service contractor has served Carefree well and as long as existing Mutual Aide Agreements remain in place, have

every possibility of continuing to do so in future. Additionally, with the capacity Cave Creek is adding in establishing a Town fire service, the burden on Carefree’s fire and emergency response resources should decline, reducing future need even further. Beyond this, the conversations and negotiations with potential fire service providers become political ones versus practical ones and difficult for a citizen advisory committee to navigate well.

Carefree would be well served to consider alternative scenarios beyond 5 years and to prepare for application to Life Safety Council irrespective of choice before it today. Perhaps the longer term answer for Carefree is to staff its own fire department in-house. Being ready for that possibility may be prudent.

Question 2: Sales vs Prop Tax	Pros	Cons
<u>Sales Tax</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing tax in place requires no action from Town Council or citizens. • Pushes the revenue burden on to businesses and non-residents. Residents pay virtually nothing for fire service unless they spend (and therefore pay sales tax) significantly within Carefree for goods and services. • Existing sales tax is in line with surrounding areas (the same as Cave Creek but more than Scottsdale and Phoenix) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales tax is pegged to economic cycles which makes it difficult to budget and rely on to cover fixed costs that do not move with economic cycles, i.e., the cost of fire service remains the same regardless of an economic downturn. • The existing sales tax revenue has not been enough to cover fire service cost and has resulted in an average \$400K annual shortfall over the past 10 years requiring the Town to draw on general fund and reserve resources to make up the difference. This is not sustainable. • The Town’s exclusive reliance on sales tax pushes a commercial development agenda. The need for sales tax increases results in the need for more businesses and the need to attract more visitors from outside the community, resulting in higher

		<p>traffic congestion and law enforcement coverage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in sales tax rate would push Carefree above surrounding areas potentially making goods and services less competitive with neighboring cities/towns.
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<p><u>Property Tax</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More stable source of revenue – property values, assessments and collections change more slowly than sales tax revenue Residents pay fair share of fire service cost. State laws protect residents against significant local property tax increases once established. Town Council cannot arbitrarily increase property tax rate beyond annual state limits (2% per year = .02 X voter approved tax rate. Bordering municipalities (Scottsdale and Phoenix) have property tax and Cave Creek is considering adding a tax to pay for fire service as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property tax initiatives require a citizen vote and are difficult to pass. Carefree does not have an existing property tax so it will be a heavy political lift to get it passed. The timing of a property tax initiative is important and requires a long term time frame. At the earliest property tax is unlikely to become a viable revenue source for the Town before FY2025. Property taxes can create an undue financial burden for retired residents on fixed incomes.
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Most likely a blended approach that relies on a mix of both sales tax and property tax to fund fire service and public safety services generally, is optimal and most realistic. The specific balance between these two sources may be better determined by Town staff and Council.

It also, appears important that the Town adopt a short, mid and long-term revenue plan given the planning horizons for potential passage of a property tax. In the short run (1-4 years), it is likely that fire service will continue to be paid for exclusively from the existing dedicated sales tax revenue. Sales tax receipt projections therefore dictate what fire service budget is possible. If a property tax initiative is successful, it may be possible and desirable to consider more expensive options offered under Automatic Aid.

Additionally, we must include all public safety services in our thinking about revenue needed – not just fire protection services. Once we have completed discussions on fire services we will turn our attention to our law enforcement contract with MSCO and remain open to the possibility that increases in services (and costs) may be needed there as well.

Comparative Decision Criteria (To Be Completed)

Criteria	Rural Metro	DMFD	SFD
Cost: One Time Start Up	-0-	\$515K	\$684K
Cost: Annual	Yr 1-3: \$1.9M Yr 4-5: ?	Yr 1: \$2.4M Yr 2 – 5: ?	Yr 1: \$2.9M Yr 2-5: ?
Automatic Aid (SatelliteDispatch) OR Mutual Aid (Radio Request)	Mutual Aid	Automatic Aid	Automatic Aid
Personnel Automatically Dispatched	3 firefighters per Engine 2 paramedic/firefighter	4 firefighters per Engine	4 firefighters per Engine
On-going training	X	X	X
Fire Investigator	X	X	X
Fire Marshall	X	X	X
Emergency Manager	X		
Emergency Medical Services (Ambulance)	X Holds Certificate of Necessity (CON)	X	
Monthly Reports	X		
Quarterly Reports	X		X
Annual Reports	X	X	X
Fire Hydrant Inspections	X		
Vehicle Maintenance	Parts + ?		
Fire House Utilities included in contract	X		

Insurance	X		
Grant Writing	X		
Community Outreach Programs	X		
Employee Retirement Costs	401K	Pension	Pension
Cost per dwelling/lot (residential and commercial) (total contract costs divided by number of dwellings/lots)			
Cost per estimated call for assistance (annual call estimate: 700)			

Draft Motion Language

Option 1:

To recommend that the Carefree Town Council pursue a new 5-year contract with Rural Metro and remain a Mutual Aid partner within the County of Maricopa regional fire protection system.

Option 2:

To recommend that the Carefree Town Council apply for admittance to the Life Safety Council Automatic Aid pool and enter contract negotiations with _____ for fire protection services.

Option 3:

To recommend that the Carefree Town Council cover fire protection and emergency response services through FY2025 with the existing dedicated sales tax revenue and cover anticipated revenue shortfalls with general fund revenue and reserves.

Option 4:

To recommend that the Carefree Town Council consider putting a property tax measure on the ballot for citizen vote before the end of FY2024 to pay for fire protection and emergency response services.