

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

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MAY 26 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 May 12, 2021 meeting minutes.
- ITEM #2** Presentation and discussion regarding the Town of Cave Creek's plans for fire and emergency services. Cave Creek Fire Chief Jim Ford presenting.
- ITEM #3** Questions, comments and/or requests for future agenda items.
- ITEM #4** Adjournment.

DATED this 25th day of May, 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, MAY 12TH, 2021

WHERE: VIA ZOOM ONLINE*

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

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

None

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Brian Gilbert, Mark Robens, Dave Wilson, Darren Salotti, Dan Jarrett, Brian Tobin, Dave Hamilton, Brian Davis.

Town Administrator Gary Neiss called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL of the Public Safety Committee Meeting minutes dated April 4th 2021 **PASSED** unanimously.

Town Administrator Neiss provided an overview of the meeting and topics to be discussed.

Mr. Neiss introduced the first topic, which outlined the difference between Automatic Aid versus Mutual Aid. He explained that Mutual aid is conventional and can be found around the country; whereas Automatic Aid is a regional partnership within the Phoenix metropolitan area consisting of 25 communities which form a regional fire department that knows no jurisdictional boundaries. Mr. Neiss continued to provide a review of the attributes to these regional systems. Some areas of topic include: service levels based on daily operations versus regional emergencies; access to equipment for various levels of service (hazardous materials, mountain and water rescue); and discretionary service.

Town Administrator Neiss reminded the group about the 2 wildland fires that took place in Cave Creek this past year which required a regional response causing strain on the surrounding communities for an extended period of time.

Committee Chair Hine questioned the basis for who can qualify for automatic aid and who would be denied for automatic aid and how those decisions get made?

A possible explanation of why an entity can be denied participation with the Automatic Aid program, maybe due to the "Gifting Clause."

Committee Member Burns asked if there is a subscription cost or a dollar threshold to join Automatic Aid and does our equipment comply with Automatic Aid requirements?

Town Administrator Neiss explained there is both an initial setup fee and ongoing annual an annual fee associated with Automatic Aid. This ongoing fee structure includes equipment and annual fees for dispatch. The initial cost will be approximately \$200,000-\$250,000 for the initial set up of Automatic Aid and \$100,000 for the annual operation.

Mr. Neiss presented a map highlighting the existing fire stations/assets in the surrounding area..

Mr. Neiss provided an operational overview of the various fire safety territories, starting with The Town of Cave Creek. Explaining, Cave Creek is supported by the Rural Metro Fire Station through a subscription service. Currently Cave Creek does not have a master contract with Rural Metro. To the west of Cave Creek is a county island that is served by a fire district which is a taxation district. This district is approximately 180 square miles in size and is known as the Daisy Mountain Fire District. Residents with in this area, pay a property tax to support the fire program. Mr. Neiss informed the group that there are currently discussions to build a new fire house on the western side of Cave Creek, towards Carefree Highway and could be a shared fire station between the Town of Cave Creek and Daisy Mountain.

Town Administrator Neiss further explained, the fire station located off of Carefree Highway and I-17 is an asset of the Phoenix Fire Department.. Phoenix also oversees the fire station near Walmart and a 3rd location located at Dynamite and Cave Creek Road Fire Station.

To the south of Carefree within the City of Scottsdale are 4 fire stations. The nearest Scottsdale fire house was recently relocated to the east on Cave Creek Road.

Mr. Neiss emphasized the importance of the locations of the fire stations and how this plays a major role in emergency response times. The independent fire districts have different parameters for their emergency response time. For instance, Scottsdale has a 4 minute response time and Carefree has a less than 6 minute response time. Due to the location of Scottsdale's assets, it makes sense for Carefree to partner with Scottsdale for a master contract.

Mr. Neiss encouraged the committee members to consider an array of questions, such as: Will Carefree become isolated if the Town of Cave Creek transitions to Automatic Aid? Will the Town of Carefree be pressured to join Automatic Aid? If we look toward automatic aid as a solution for the Town of Carefree, what are the costs associated with Automatic aid?

Town Administrator Neiss opened the meeting to questions.

Committee member Wetta asked, do we have a mutual aid partnership with the City of Scottsdale?"

Mr. Neiss confirmed that there is a mutual aid agreement between the Town of Carefree and the City of Scottsdale. Scottsdale to provide service one mile into the Carefree boundary. Similarly Carefree can provide service one mile into the Scottsdale city limits..

Mr. Neiss explained the requirements to participate in the Automatic Aid system. Some of these requirements include: an obligation to join the Phoenix or Mesa Regional Dispatch System; participation with the Phoenix Wireless Cooperative Program (this program provides the radio dispatch equipment); a mandatory enrollment in the Computer Aided Dispatch System; compliance of standardized incident management procedures; mandatory training hours and requirements, a standardized chain of command when attending emergency response; inventory management and standardized equipment maintenance. In addition, participation in Automatic Aid a minimum of 4 personnel to accompany a fire truck, as well as an ambulance during any emergency response.

The ambulance service is overseen by Arizona Department of Health and Safety and it is not part of the master contract and provided an overview highlighting the allocation of funds for emergency services for local ambulance services and police aid.

Mr. Neiss presented 2 letters that were sent to the Town of Cave Creek following the 2020 Cave Creek fires. One letter from the Daisy Mountain Fire Department, asked for a commitment from the Town of Cave Creek to organize and structure a Fire Department that meets the standards and requirements of Article 2 Automatic Aid Eligibility. A second letter from the City of Phoenix stating; "as a result of the Town not developing a formal plan or path towards providing for fire service response for the Town of Cave Creek, the Phoenix Fire Department, in collaboration with our City Leadership has made the decision to no longer provide automatic response to the Town of Cave Creek." Consequently, these

letters forced the Town of Cave Creek to evaluate their Fire Safety program and begin to transition towards an Automatic Aid program.

Mr. Neiss explained that this presentation was meant to provoke ideas and generate questions for the Fire experts, such as Chief Kratz, Chief Gilbert and other future presenters.

Mr. Neiss provided an overview of figures outlining the number of dispatch calls during the month of April, 2021. The breakdown of these service calls totaled 63. Additionally 34 calls in April came from outside the Carefree's boundaries. 17 calls were Rural Metro subscribers, 14 were non-subscribers, and 10 calls from the non-subscriber category will be billed for the fire services. Adding, non-subscribers are charged a flat \$500.00 fee. This fee incorporates an administrative fee as well as a small revenue stream for the Fire Department.

Mr. Neiss provided history of the Town of Carefree's fire service. Explaining, Rural Metro has served the community since 1968. Originally, fire services for the Town of Carefree were issued through insurance policies that operated on annual subscriptions. Those who were not enrolled in the annual subscriptions were responsible to pay for the fire services in it's entirety.

In 2003, the City of Scottsdale and the Rural Metro decided to end their partnership, prompting the Town of Carefree question: What happens if Rural Metro decided not to service the Town of Carefree? After further review, Carefree felt it was in its best interest to initiate efforts to be self-reliant. The Town of Carefree started to invest in fire safety assets, such as a firehouse, fire truck and operational equipment. The Town of Carefree decided to continue a partnership with Rural Metro for the labor.

Town Administrator Neiss presented the master contract terms to the committee members. The original master contract was a 5 year term. Carefree extended the contract with Rural Metro for a total of 10 years. The term was comprised of 2 five year terms. The current contract expires June of 2022.

In addition Mr. Neiss touched upon the level of service that correlates with the master contract. These services include the following:

- 90% of the code red calls (code 3) must arrive within a 6 minute period.
- 3 personnel on the fire truck which includes 1 Fire Captain, 1 Engineer and 1 firefighter.
- Carefree is financially responsible for the mechanical work to repair the Town owned fire truck at cost plus 6%. The cost of a firetruck is a tremendous investment \$620,000 to \$680,000. There are different standards of trucks. One example provided by Mr. Neiss is the City of Scottsdale has fire trucks in the \$800,000 range.

Mr. Neiss continued to explain additional services within the master contract. These services include (but are not limited to): Safety, sprinkler and fire hydrant inspections, Certificate of Occupancies, CPR classes for residents, assessing Carefree assets, utilization of a Brush Truck, emergency management services, walk in blood pressure services, dispatch services without an additional cost, grant applications, overseeing equipment life cycle and event assistance. The master contract was started in 2007. In preparation for the

Master contract, a dedicated sales tax began in 2005.. Pointing out, the fire fund is a dedicated fund however it does not cover the balance of the cost of the contract. The first 3 years of fund had enough money to pay to the entire balance to support the fire program. 2009 the reserve was depleted and beginning in 2010, the Town has experienced a structural deficit which over the last 10 plus years has average approximately \$407,000. The additional funds subsidize the fire fund is taken from Carefree's operational budget.

Mr. Neiss advised the committee that moving forward, they will need to consider what a new contract will look like. Will there be a increase to the structural deficit and what stress will this have on the Town's operational budget? How can this structural deficit be offset? What are the evolving circumstances associated with Automatic Aid? Will there be a future pressure to join Automatic Aid?

Town Administrator Neiss compared similar communities with the Town of Carefree; Fountain Hills (mutual aid), Paradise Valley (automatic aid) and Scottsdale (automatic aid). Of those communities, Scottsdale has the largest continuous fire department with nearly 260,000 residents; Fountain Hills has approximately 25,000 residents, Paradise Valley has about 14,000 residents and Carefree has a population of nearly 4,000 people (population Census data does not reflect seasonal residents). Next Mr. Neiss reviewed how much each community spends on the fire program. As of last year Scottsdale spent nearly \$47 million for their fire program, Fountain Hills has \$3.8 million dedicated to their fire department, Paradise Valley has \$3.4 million and Carefree has \$1.6 million (Data is collected from the Auditor General Forms). Cost encompasses master contracts, building maintenance, utilities, and equipment repairs. Additionally Mr. Neiss discussed the amounts each community spent on fire services, employees per fire department, cost per capita and the cost per employee.

Mr. Neiss introduced the Town of Carefree Budget for FY 2021/22, using a three legged stool to illustrate typical Municipal Revenue Model and the Town of Carefree's Revenue Model.

Town Administrator Neiss explained that State shared revenues are composed of four categories, income tax, sales tax, Highway User Revenue Tax and Vehicle License Tax. Carefree is projecting growth in sales tax revenue, and continued growth in the retail and restaurants.

Mr. Neiss provided an overview of the overall revenue stream compared to the Town's expenses.

Carefree's largest assets are the public streets. Additional assets include the fire station, the office building and the gardens. Future projects will include new cross walks and light signals, improvement to pedestrian cross walks, signage throughout the Town, garden maintenance, a security system in the gardens, and the water consolidation program.

Mr. Neiss wrapped up the meeting by outlining the upcoming presentation schedule. Mr. Neiss requested that the Public Safety Committee members think through what was presented during the meeting and come up with questions for the agencies.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 pm

DRAFT