



Greetings Friends of Carefree,

Last month we mentioned that we would begin a monthly newsletter, essentially to recap Carefree Town Council meetings, as former Councilman Bob Coady had done for many years. The typical intent is to release the newsletter within a day of the meetings, generally held the 1st Tuesday of each month. I should mention that the 'we' is former Councilman Jim Van Allen, and I, John Traynor.

This inaugural issue is an exception on two counts. It is longer than planned due to the importance of the subject and it is late. During the morning of February 4th, news began to circulate that Mayor Schwan was going to resign at noon. Later, COINS published a note from David Schwan containing his resignation and the terrible news that last week he had been diagnosed with ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease.

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Town Council Meeting, February 3, 2015

All Council members present, excepting Marty Saltzman

Routine Agenda items, which tend to be administrative in nature, are grouped as the 'Consent Agenda' and voted on as a group.

The Consent Agenda (items 1 - 8) was approved by vote, 6 - 0.

Call to The Public: Evelyn Johnson, of the Cave Creek Museum, described a new exhibit which features photos of Carefree history.

Jim Van Allen asked the council to defer voting on the Resolution before them (ASU/Butte(Ed Lewis) Carefree) until Carefree voters had the opportunity to voice their opinion via election ballot. He went on to discuss alternatives for the council to consider including a rent free offer in an existing town core property, or use the Wild Holly building, either in lieu of the substantial Construction and operating costs facing Carefree should the planned project move forward.

Current Events: Free concert Sunday, February 08, 2015 1:00- 3 PM
MOGOLLON – at the pavilion.

The remainder of the meeting focused on Resolution 2015-02, concerning the proposed ASU cultural center.

Agenda Item 11: Town Attorney Michael Wright discussed legal aspects of Resolution 2015-02 and another that he called “Resolution 2015-blank”, which appeared to be a red-lined version, several pages longer. Neither the council nor the public had prior access to the -blank version. He commented that the Resolution the town was considering for approval was essentially flawed in that wording was vague and ambiguous. He stated it was “tantamount” to providing ‘Protected Development Rights’ to Butte Properties (Ed Lewis). He cited A.R.S. 9-1201 several times, and ultimately advised against approval of either Resolution. Lengthy council discussion ensued.

Melissa Price made a presentation of the financial aspects of the ASU/Butte/Carefree project from her perspective based on information available. During subsequent discussion several council members commented that they all were using their own numbers. **Further discussion and debate continued, until the meeting was opened for public comments. Numerous residents spoke, some highlights below:**

Joe DeVito asked if anyone in the town had seen the full Meyer [financial] report, instead of just the 2 or 3 page summaries; no one had. He asked the town to obtain the full report.

Bob Gerhart stated his hope the town would get ‘all’ the information out.

Stephanie [?] stated her hope was that the council could get together on a recommendation.

John Traynor made a few observations and then mentioned that if everyone (ASU/Butte/Carefree Council) involved really wanted to know if Carefree residents support the idea, perhaps the town should ask them by way of an election to obtain the definitive answer.

Lyn Hitchon suggested the council consider imposing a Property Tax.
[\[By Carefree statute, only voters can approve a property tax.\]](#)

Jim Whitmore suggested the town follow the advice for which the lawyer is charging them.

Jerry Wetta, a member of the 10 year financial plan committee, said we never intended the reserves be spent all at once. He also stated that his 40 years in wholesale taught him that size didn't matter, nor an attractive location - if you have what the public wants, they'll buy it.

Mr. Stewart said he thought the town had done an excellent job of caring for Carefree over the years and ended by quoting Vince Lombardi, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

At the conclusion of public comment, council discussion

continued. Ultimately the mayor said he could not commit to adopting a flawed Resolution. There was admission that the town had not provided any specific direction regarding the Resolution, but only asked Ed Lewis to draft one for consideration.

The mayor suggested that the staff, along with representative from the other parties, including legal counsel, get together and produce a Resolution they all could agree upon, and then present it to the council at a public meeting within 1 or 2 weeks.

Mr Lewis was invited to comment. He said "this is like dealing with a 6 headed monster." It was clear the council was divided on the issue and that neither of the Resolutions discussed were agreeable to all parties. He said he had not intended to create a legal document, and suggested that the group the mayor outlined take the Resolution 2015-02 version, modify it, and develop a version agreeable to all parties.

From the audience, Jackie McDermott asked to speak and went on to say she was unable to find a complete package of information, in one place on the town website, that fully described the proposed project. The mayor agreed that it was something that needed to be done.

Before the meeting was adjourned approaching the 2 hour mark, the vice mayor commented on my comments from earlier in the meeting. He said that Arizona election law permits two local elections per year, in March and May, making the suggestion of holding an election unfeasible given the time constraints the

council was facing. I asked if I could respond and was permitted to do so. I agreed that the calendar for elections was not favorable, but I pointed out that this project has been under review and discussion for 2 years, which was more than ample time to solicit public input via ballot, given the scope of projects the town is considering (2 large and expensive buildings). I then asked the town attorney if he could provide the legal definition for the word 'desire', which had apparently been a troubling word in the Resolution. I don't recall receiving an answer. Before sitting I suggested that, at the next meeting, the council be presented with only one mutually agreeable Resolution for consideration and public discussion.

More on this subject in two weeks.

Correction in V2, 03/27/15:

1 - to standardize font for readability

2 - spelling correction aasked -> asked

Respectfully submitted by Jim Van Allen and John Traynor

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