



**Friends of Carefree**, we began another month with two meetings of the Town Council on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The first was a Special Meeting to enter Executive Session [private] followed by the usual public monthly meeting.

### **Special Town Council Meeting, September 1, 2015, 3:30PM**

**Item 1, Enter Executive Session:** The Council entered Executive Session.

**Item 2, Adjournment:** Adjourned at 5PM. As of this writing, no details were available.

### **Town Council Meeting, September 1, 2015, 5:00PM**

*[Due to technical difficulties with the audio system there is no official recording of this meeting.]*

**Items 1 – 15, Consent Agenda:** All 15 items were related to routine town business (meeting minutes, bills, financial reports, liquor license(s), event permit(s), proclamation(s), and general agreement(s)). Items #2, #6, and #15 were pulled for discussion. All others were approved 7 – 0.

Councilwoman Price recommended a minor change/correction to the minutes (Item 2), which were accepted and approved, 7 – 0. Councilman Farrar inquired about several recent payments on the check register, one for LED light conversion of faux Gas Lamps (\$18,944.64 total), another for 50% of the Fireplace Furniture cost (\$6,782.93), balance due upon delivery, and an additional payment of \$20,000 to Villafane (total to date is \$50,000) in connection with the fall Pumpkin Exhibit. Item 6 was then approved 7 – 0. Councilman Miller Raised several question about Item 15 regarding town responsibilities in connection with the Greater Phoenix Council. Councilman Farrar and the Mayor answered all questions satisfactorily, and Item 15 was approved 7 – 0.

**Item 16, Call to the Public:** There were several speakers. Bob Swan, president of Kiwanis of Carefree, presented the Town with a check for \$20,000 as the first installment of a \$135,000, 7 year donation commitment to fund most costs associated with the Splash Pad. Many thanks and applause followed. Councilman Orrico (a Kiwanis Director and the current VP) added several comments, including mention that Carefree had the 7<sup>th</sup> largest chapter in the world. Further, he stated that all 17 directors had voted in favor of the donation to Carefree.

Joe DeVito, intended to speak regarding the Gateway item, but he decided to wait until Item 20 was discussed.

Evelyn Johnson, Executive Director of the Cave Creek Museum, distributed copies of their annual report along with invitations for Council and staff to attend a preseason reception and review of exhibits before the public opening.

Jim Van Allen, recalled that as a member of the Posse he had worked numerous Christmas Festivals where 6 to 7 thousand people attended, as well as Thunderbird Art Festivals and other events which attracted large crowds, mostly visitors, not residents. He said those visitors did not come to see Gateways and they seemed to find Carefree without them.

John Traynor, I was complimented by the Mayor for the printed labels used on my request to speak slips. *[I mentioned that I buy them in rolls of 5,000 – just kidding.]* In seriousness I praised the good works of our local Kiwanis organization, many of which go unnoticed by most people in the area. Their donation was a very generous gift to the town, and very much appreciated. I went on to discuss the Gateways and asked the Council, especially the new members, to carefully consider their vote on the project, to do so with integrity, and not be intimidated by anyone regarding their vote.

**Item 17, Current Events:** Captain Kip Rustenberg of MCSO introduced the new Lieutenant, Ryan Baranyos of the local District 4. Ryan has been with MCSO for 15 years and has worked his way up through the ranks. He was one of the two Carefree Traffic car deputies for 5 years and knows Carefree very well.

**Item 18, Fill the vacancy on the Planning and Zoning Commission.** The Council voted to appoint **Dave Davee** to the commission, 7 – 0. He immediately took the oath.

**Item 19, Purchase a tractor and mower attachment for the Public Works:** After a brief summary by Town Administrator Gary Neiss, the Council approved (7 – 0) the purchase of a John Deere Tractor, including various attachments for \$72,000. Since this had not been a budgeted item, it will be paid from the Contingency fund, which should leave a remaining balance of over \$100,000. Also approved tonight, in the Consent Agenda, was the purchase of a new Ford F150 pickup truck for \$21,500, which had been included in the budget.

**Item 20, Approve the number & locations of Primary Gateways into Town Center.** Even though the Council was split 3 – 3 over the number and locations of Primary Gateways at the special meeting this past Thursday (one member absent), this session ended with a reasonable, amiable accord.

The Town Administrator made a presentation on the subject, providing the year+ historical background, containing input from the Urban Land Institute (ULI) as well as from the Baker Group study. Mayor Peterson then opened up the meeting for Council discussion. Councilwoman Price proceeded to outline her Vision and the reasons for her support of the ‘**Framing**’ Proposal - the four Gateway approach. Councilman

Crane spoke next and delivered a very well-reasoned and detailed explanation of his support for the 'Core' proposal - just two Primary Gateways, one each on Tom Darlington Drive and Cave Creek Road.

Mayor Peterson then displayed a concise chart depicting the various estimated costs associated with each of the proposals under consideration. ***[Although admittedly not the final cut, the numbers were very compelling. I'm only going to provide a brief recap here; a facsimile is available in our [Archives](#) under the Slides, Charts, Attachments column.]*** The 'Core' proposal would cost approximately \$260,000 and would not require any additional Roundabouts to be constructed. The 'Framing' proposal would cost approximately \$1,508,000, which includes several new Roundabouts yielding a difference of \$1,248,000. Both proposals included substantial costs for underground electrical. Councilman Miller challenged the inclusion of additional Roundabouts in the comparison, but Councilwoman Price included them in her 'Framing' proposal, so the comparison was indeed valid. There is absolutely no doubt that the 'Framing' proposal would be both far more expensive and far more disruptive to our major roadways.

Councilman Farrar offered carefully considered and relevant comments regarding the rationale for supporting the 'Core' proposal. He outlined the positions offered by ULI and Baker (citing specifics from their Master Plan for Carefree) and reminded the Council that Steve Betz was hired to provide the town with expert insight into and assistance with Economic development. Mr. Betz had apparently advised the conservative approach to Gateways and suggested the town focus more on business partnerships and actual development. Councilman Miller commented that Councilman Farrar had just made the most passionate presentation he had heard from him. ***[It was unclear if that remark was intended as a compliment.]***

It should be noted that ManShip Builders made a very generous offer to donate masonry materials, construction, and project oversight for Gateways at the meeting last Thursday. Many thanks and applause was offered to Jim ManShip for his generosity and commitment to Carefree.

Mayor Peterson suggested that the Council should hear from the public considering he had several requests to speak. ***[I'll simply provide a brief summary here because many comments were similar and all speakers favored the 'Core' proposal. Once the recording of the meeting is made available, I'll update this Newsletter on our website and provide a link to the Town recording so you can listen to the thoughtful comments from everyone]***

Joe DeVito - mentioned that he spoke not only for himself but also for others who speak with him and exchange email. The 'Core' approach was the best choice.

John Traynor - mentioned that Gateways are not magnets and, of themselves, do not attract anyone. You have to give people a reason to come to Carefree and more Gateways are not a reason. Desirable businesses and real attractions draw people - not just once, but repeatedly because they have good reasons to come back.

Jackie McDermott – as a realtor *[and delightfully entertaining]* described the various ways visitors can gain access to Town Center and then potentially end up in locations other than the core business area or Gardens. Gateways at the locations suggested in the ‘Core’ proposal would provide the best means to direct visitors to the right places.

Jim Van Allen - suggested that the best looking building and broad streets make Hum Road a better site for a Gateway on Cave Creek Road than the location at Carefree Drive. He mentioned that more work would be necessary at Carefree Drive and that he did not believe a Roundabout would be necessary at Hum Road.

Tony Geiger - suggested the Council follow a conservative approach. He suggested the Council should let ‘*private development*’ decide if future Gateways are constructed and let private development fund them.

Jerry Wetta - also favored a conservative approach to save a few bucks in this year’s \$1.4M budgeted Economic Development fund. He went on to say Carefree would have other proposals to consider and that we’d need the money for them.

Lyn Hitchon, in terms of appreciation and impact, compared the gateways to an elegant ring worn on a single finger. Adding more rings to that hand would not enhance its beauty or appeal but would likely detract from the overall elegance.

When all speakers from the public had been heard, the Mayor asked if there was any additional discussion from the Council. Hearing none, a motion needed to be made. *[It was clear to all present that the ‘Core’ proposal was by far the most cost effective and desirable approach for Carefree’s character.]* Councilwoman Price spoke first, this time making a motion for the Council to approve the ‘Core’ proposal, which was quickly seconded by Councilman Miller. All 7 members of the Council, by roll call vote, approved the ‘Core’ proposal. *[Small Miracles are often unexpected.]*

**Item 21, Town Council updates:** Councilman Farrar advised that the Town would close on the 33 Easy Street property on September 11th.

**Item 22, Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:40PM.

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Respectfully submitted by Jim Van Allen and John Traynor

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