



Friends of Carefree, first things first, I wish you all a very Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. Since the meeting recording and the Pumpkin Festival Presentation material was not made available by 2PM today, an updated version of this Newsletter has been posted on the CFM website as V2, 01/05/17.

Town Council Meeting, January 3, 2017 at 5:00PM
Councilman Farrar was unavailable for this meeting.

Items 1 - 4, Consent Agenda: All items were related to routine town business (meeting minutes, bills, financial reports, event permits, etc.). All Items were approved 6 - 0.

Item 5, Call to the Public: No one spoke.

Item 6, Current Events: Vice Mayor Crane advised that the Health & Resources Expo 2017 event will be held on January 28 from 10am to 2pm at the Cactus Shadows Fine Arts Center. Over 40 Health and Resources vendors will be participating in this free event. You are encouraged to visit, participate, and speak with the experts. For additional information contact the Foothills Caring Corp at 480-488-1105, or Services@FoothillsCaringCorps.com. To review the event flyer on our website please click [here](#).

Item 7: Financial Disclosure Standards for Elected Officials: During the last Arizona Legislative session there were some changes made to the disclosure requirements. An online facility was to be available but is not yet ready, so updated paper documents will continue to be used. Council members can complete the required documents and submit them to the Town Clerk. Resolution 2017-01 was then approved by a vote of 6 - 0.

Item 8, Presentation on the Carefree Garden Seminars: Vice Mayor Crane introduced the topic and turned over the presentation to Jo Ann Rebello. These seminars were established in 2002 by then mayor Ed Morgan for residents of Carefree and neighboring communities. Each seminar is run by a Master Gardener. There have been 75 such seminars to date. This season all 4 monthly seminars (Jan-Apr) will be held at **The Speakeasy on Easy Street Jazz Club**, in the Post Office building at 100 Easy Street. A minimum \$5.00 donation is suggested. For more information and to view the seminar schedule please visit the [Desert Garden Seminars](#) page on the Town website or call the Town of Carefree at 480-488-3686.

Resident Joe DiVito commented on how much he has enjoyed the seminars, which brought over 5,000 people to Carefree over the years. They are especially valuable for anyone new to the area, and also provide education and ideas for established residents as well. Joe distributed little packets of cotton seeds to Council members and staff, while explaining that the crop has been found here for hundreds of years, and can be traced back several thousand years. *[It turns out cotton was introduced to Arizona back in 1885 when a guy named F.G. Hardwicke from Tempe won \$500 for producing the first bale of quality cotton. He had worked as a blacksmith for Charles Trumbull Hayden.]*

Item 9, Enchanted Pumpkin Garden Festival Report: Carefree Marketing & Communications Director Gina Kaegi provided a report on the 2016 edition of this event,

along with some comparisons to the inaugural 2015 edition. I'll provide some highlights here, but will also post a copy of her presentation when it is available [*now posted in CFM Archives*]. The event earned a "Top 5" in things to do in October in Phoenix" from Phoenix Magazine and the front page of Images AZ Magazine, including 6 pages of coverages. There was no other attraction like it in the State, and this year more than a dozen new attractions were added including Witch Story Reading and Hay Rides. The full list will be in the presentation material. Sponsors contributed \$18,500 to the event and 'in-kind' donations were made by Bashas', Let There Be Light, Venues, and Mortimer Farms. The estimated value of Local TV coverage was \$48K while National attention was highlighted by an ABC News story and a time-lapse video done by Villafane Studios sculptor Nikolay Torkhov. It can be viewed [here](#).

An Enchanted Pumpkin Garden Facebook page was created in September. There are lots of stats and demographic data from social media which you can examine in the presentation material [*social media drives me nuts*]. Food Trucks and the Beer Garden were additional attractions, and Ice Cream was the big seller [*it is difficult for me to believe ice cream beat out the beer garden as the #1 seller - must have been all those kids! I sense a challenge for next year*]. Easy Street Galleria sponsored "Design you own" pumpkin painting, with over 1,000 pumpkins sold.

[I don't recall seeing an estimate for the number of visitors to the event during the presentation, so perhaps I missed it.] Event costs were listed as \$60,849. Carefree Merchandise sales were \$15,202, with donations of \$18,500, the overall cost to the Town was \$27,147. Some recommendations are being considered for the 2017 event, with a tentative schedule of October 20th - 29th. A big **Thank You** goes out to the staff, sponsors, participating organizations, and volunteers for their dedication and hard work to produce another successful Enchanted Pumpkin Garden event.

Item 10, Carefree 2017 Fair & Festival Strategy: Mayor Les Peterson presented a comprehensive overview of the "*Preliminary Thoughts and Conclusions Relating to the Utilization of "Town Events" in Carefree's Marketing Program for 2017-2018 and Beyond*". [*That is more than a mouthful!*]. On a more serious note, the Mayor clearly communicated the circumstances and factors which have influenced Carefree's financial standing in the past, as well as the outlook and challenges for the future. Careful focus and planning of events will provide not only the means to attract visitors but will hopefully also be the vehicle to generate sustainable financial growth. Rather than *attempt* to provide you with a credible recap of the Mayor's comments, I'll post the presentation materials on the website [here](#). After the Council meeting recording is made available I'll provide a link to it along with the point in time reference within that recording so you can listen to the Mayor's own words.

Item 11, Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:38PM.

Last Month's Question: *What is your favorite and/or least favorite thing to do in December?*

I think the **Grinch** stole Carefree residents in December! I did not receive a single response to that Question! However I did receive more than a half dozen notes regarding the termination of the Lewis project. One in particular stuck a chord. "*How much money is the Town out as a result of the Easy Street Condo project, if any? Direct and indirect, if you*

*know or can find out.” I don’t have access to that information but I may try to work out an estimate. **Of course, the best possible answers would be available from the Town Administration and/or Staff. Anybody care to provide that information?***

Question of the Month: I’ll skip January and then see if there is interest in this feature next month. You will be the judges...

Feel free to suggest future questions and keep ‘em coming!

Let me hear from you.

Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

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