



**Friends of Carefree**, at the start of this meeting Michael Krahe, Cheryl Kroyer, and Jim Van Allen will join John Crane, Michael Farrar, and Gene Orrico along with Mayor Les Petersen to form the new council.

As noted on the [CFM Website](#) and in the 11/16 edition of The Sonoran News, Jim Van Allen will end his role in *CFM* for the duration of his Council service. Jim does not believe it is appropriate for elected or appointed Town officials to send newsletters or operate websites related to Town matters. This is a copy of the text in Jim's letter:

November 14, 2016

Dear friends and neighbors, on the 6th of December I will be sworn in as one of your elected Carefree Town Council members. I consider it an honor and an important responsibility. I have also considered it an honor to have collaborated with John Traynor, for the past two years in the publication of the Carefree's Future Matters (CFM) Newsletter.

We both realize my further participation with CFM, while serving in an official Town capacity, could be viewed as a conflict of interest. I believe it would be improper for any elected or appointed member of the council or town boards to publish documents or newsletters outside the scope of official town communications. John, like any citizen, has the right to question me or any of the other Council members and report on our actions and decisions as he feels appropriate - as we both have been doing these past two years.

I am grateful to those of you who voted me into office, and will never forget that citizens are the real bosses of the town. While protecting Carefree's financial future I remain mindful it is YOUR money we are spending.

Sincerely,  
*Jim Van Allen, Carefree*

### **Town Council Meeting, December 6, 2016 at 5:00PM**

**Items 1 - 3, Oath of Office & Vice Mayor Selection:** As a result of the August Primary Election the Mayor and the 5 of the 6 elected Council members took the Oath of Office. Council member Farrar was unable to attend this meeting and will take the oath when he is available. John Crane was once again selected as Vice mayor.

**Items 4 - 11, Consent Agenda:** All items were related to routine town business (meeting minutes, bills, financial reports, event permits, etc.). All Items were approved 7 - 0.

**Item 12, Call to the Public:** Jo Gemmill provided a comprehensive report on the upcoming Carefree Christmas Festival, which kicks off on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. She also thanks those who attended the Festival Preview last Thursday (12/1). The Festival has been receiving a

great deal of publicity so far, and will be showcased on local TV Friday morning between 7:00 and 7:30.

Mike Wold spoke regarding the 'Bridging the Gap' program and a special retreat being sponsored by the Walter Reed Society, in collaboration with Warriors At Ease. The program will be held from January 26<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup> at Spirit of the Desert. Mike and the Spirit have been very active helping individuals through the "Healing of Memories for Veterans and First Responders" workshops.

Bob Hesselgesser, CitySunTimes, spoke regarding the special section that has been available, and other advertisements that will help promote the Carefree Christmas Festival, and Annual Events in January. He brought copies for distribution at the meeting.

Lyn Hitchon announced that the new Desert Garden Calendar is now available for purchase at Town Hall.

Mayor Petersen announced that it was Linda Bentley's birthday. He said Linda has been reporting Carefree news and events for The Sonoran News for many years and her efforts are appreciated. Happy Birthday Linda!

Jim (sorry, didn't hear last name) said that a lot of money has been spent on the Arches and area around them. They make for a good Kodak moment, but event ads and other signs are being placed in those locations thus ruining those Kodak moment. He asked if the town could impose a prohibition against placing signs in those areas. The Mayor mentioned that a signage review was in progress and this concern will be included.

**Item 13, Current Events:** Mayor Peterson advised that the Easy Street Condo project has been terminated by Ed Lewis, and that his two parcels of land are now for sale. The Mayor read the November 29<sup>th</sup> letter from Ed Lewis to the public. Essentially Ed Lewis was unsuccessful in obtaining Construction financing.

**Item 14, Sky Ranch Community Relations Committee Appointment:** Thale Damman was appointed as a member of the Committee by a Council vote of 7 - 0. He joins members Scott Connelly, Bob Glenn and Wayne Fischer.

**Item 15, Report on Downtown Improvements:** Town Administrator Neiss summarized a number of holiday lighting projects in the downtown area which were contracted out to a Holiday Lighting firm. The lighting does look great.

**Item 16, Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:45PM.

**Last Month's Question:** *What did you like best and/or least about the Enchanted Pumpkin Garden Festival? What, if anything, should we do different next year? Should we charge a 'modest' \$5.00 per couple entry fee... kids and Carefree residents free?? Please vote on this item.*

These are representative of responses received: "The enchanted pumpkin garden was great. Don't charge!"

"The display opened on a Monday. It would have been better to open on the weekend. I went with my grandchildren on the Sunday before it opened. Not all displays were ready, obviously. However, we managed to see a good deal without any crowds & parking was not an issue. It looked to me like parking was an issue most of the rest of the time. I, myself, needed to double around to park to get mail. Doubtful, the \$5 fee will impact crowds & parking problems."

"I can't decide if charging admission to adults would be helpful. The entire area would have to be gated off. Then there would need to be people manning the entrances to collect the money. The logistics don't seem worth it. I volunteered as well. I was the "booze bouncer", not allowing people to leave the amphitheater area with alcohol. Several people tried to sneak past me. Which is what I think some people will try to do, to get away from paying the entrance fee. Have a great day!"

"I think the Enchanted Pumpkin Garden Festival is wonderful and brings a lot of people from outside the area into Carefree. I would like to see an elimination of the outside food vendors and encourage the local restaurants to provide booths or additional food items geared toward the festival to encourage business toward them instead of outside sources. There are many changes in Carefree I am saddened and embarrassed by, the arches, the horrid lighting throughout town and the "1980's" style mural painting on the exterior of our restrooms - it's good to have the Pumpkin Festival, gardens, Art Festival, and Christmas Parade to show our positive side. Let's keep the Festival free, at least for another year."

"I did enjoy the pumpkin festival. However, I found the theme to be a bit sadistic. I personally prefer a more whimsical Halloween theme. But the artistry was amazing. They had a slow go the first days. Didn't seem ready. Several people lamented that they wish they did not drive all the way up here, if they were not ready."

***This response summed up most of the remaining answers:*** "I am a resident of Carefree for 16 years and enjoy the small town atmosphere. I will keep my response short. Do not charge \$5.00 for an entrance fee to the Pumpkin Festival. It might seem like a modest charge to you but for many people it is a stretch. I myself refuse to go to a festival where there is a charge to enter."

*CFM received two additional responses to the October QOM.* Both agreed with the majority opinion and one of those went in to greater detail than most. Here is the summary section from one business owner, a 25 year Carefree resident: "The Carefree that we moved to has definitely changed and does no longer offer what we came here for. It is disturbing to see the decisions the Council makes. Interestingly enough, these decisions are supposedly "what the people of Carefree want." I do not know anyone who supports the splash pad, the arches, the constant street closures, the endless downtown activities, nor the condo expansion plan."

**November Question of the Month:** *What is your favorite and/or least favorite thing to do in December?*

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

Let me hear from you.

Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

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