



**Friends of Carefree,** I hope you are enjoying our incredible fall weather, including the much-needed rain in our region. I don't have the statistics to back up this next statement, but I do believe that this past September has been the best, mildest, in my 19 years here. So far, our Fall has been a dream. Enjoy.

Personal scheduling matters would have made it difficult for me to attend the October council meeting last Tuesday, but after reviewing the agenda it was an easy decision to skip the meeting; the audio recording was sufficient.

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### **Council Meeting of Tuesday, October 2, 2018, 5:00PM, at 33 Easy Street:**

Council member Krahe was unable to attend but participated via phone.

On this occasion, a seemingly kinder, more amenable mayor presented Council member Mike Farrar with a plaque commemorating his 7 years of service on the council, longest of all current members.

**Items 1 - 11 Consent Agenda:** These items were all related to routine town business (meeting minutes, bills, financial reports, event permits, etc.). Council member Orrico had questions on #3, Paid bills, and member Kroyer had questions on #8, 9, and 10 relating to the Thunderbird Festivals. All other items were approved 7 - 0.

On Item 3, Council member Orrico inquired about Restitution payments, which the clerk explained were payments made back to the court for fines paid. He also asked about payments to Brown & Associates for 51 hours billed. The administrator explained that our inspector could not handle all the work so Brown is used to fill in, thus avoiding the need to hire additional staff.

Items 8,9, and 10 pertained to permits for the TBird festivals in November, January, and March. The items were somewhat confusing, but all were explained.

The questioned Items (3, 8, 9, 10) were approved 7 - 0.

The mayor took a moment to explain the difference between 'Call to the Public' - people speaking to the council/town and 'Current Events' - the council/town speaking to the people. *[That distinction is generally obvious, but someone must have asked about it.]*

**Item 12, Call to the Public:** Resident Bob Jenkins outlined his support for the addition of East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) courses [*once known as 'high school Shop Classes' or 'Trade School classes' back in New York, and probably elsewhere as well*] to the curriculum of Cactus Shadows High School within the CCUSD. He stated that there is a desperate need to bring skilled trades people back into the workforce because there is a growing shortage of those workers. Current workers are an aging group generally older than 42, some much older. He went on, at great length, to explain the misconception that the trades were low wage jobs, citing many, many examples to the contrary. *[Anyone who has paid a plumber, or an electrician lately can understand that misconception!]*. The

proposed addition to the curriculum is contingent upon voter approval of the question in the upcoming General Election.

**Item 13, Current Events:** The week of October 1 – 7 was declared Carefree Restaurant week, with local restaurants offering special meals and pricing during the event.

Beth Renfro, the recently hired Marketing Director gave another overview of 2018 edition of the Pumpkin Festival, our 4<sup>th</sup>. In case you missed the previous announcements and signs, it will be held October 19<sup>th</sup> thru the 28<sup>th</sup>. A number of new features are being added including a haunted house and live music along with other entertainment at two locations within the garden. Information and activity schedules can be found at [www.CarefreePumpkinGarden.com](http://www.CarefreePumpkinGarden.com)

Volunteers are needed. You can volunteer by visiting the website above and then scrolling down on the Home page toward the bottom, or call town hall at 480-488-3686.

Governor Ducey declared October ‘Domestic Violence Awareness Month’ to help raise awareness of this important issue.

Rural Metro obtained a \$3,659 grant for a ‘big wheel and stokes stretcher’, which is used to transport injured people on local trails and mountains. There was no cost to Carefree.

The mayor corrected an announcement he made during the September meeting that 2019 will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sundial. Lyn Hitchon calculated 2019 – 1959 is in fact 60 years.

The upcoming Veteran’s Day event will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WW1, and will be Carefree’s 10<sup>th</sup> year honoring Veterans with our event.

Council member Orrico announced that the Kiwanis pancake breakfast on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> will be dedicated to Veterans and Kiwanis will be making a donation to Veterans and they are planning to provide meals to Veterans as well.

**Item 14, Presentation by CCUSD Superintendent of Schools, Debbi Burdick:** Dr. Burdick provided an overview of CCUSD’s performance ( #1 in Maricopa County, #6 in the State) and also additional information on the planned inclusion of EVIT courses *[mentioned above in Call to the Public]*. Even though many students will move on to higher education, others could be better served by moving into practical vocations. A partnership with EVIT, if approved in the election, would give students the opportunity to attain practical experience at minimal cost to taxpayers. *[I didn’t hear the specific cost of that partnership, but Dr. Burdick explained a bit about anticipated school tax rate increases. I believe I heard her say that the rate increase would be \$0.05 per \$1000 of assessed value. Since your specific increase would be tied to the assessed value of your home, you would need to calculate your potential school tax increase. To aid in that endeavor CCUSD has placed a tax calculator on their website, so you can visit <https://www.ccusd93.org/> then find the ‘Quick Links’ section on the lower left of the home page and select ‘CTED Property Tax Calculator’. There is also a 2018 CTED Election Information Fact Sheet you can download or get it from the [CFM Archives](#).]*

**Item 15, Approval of a Liquor License Application:** The liquor license for Elysian Desert Distillery, located within the 100 Easy Street facility, was approved 7 – 0. *[You’ll soon be able to savor blended vodka to brighten you own spirits when retrieving your mail!]*

Just prior to adjournment, Councilman Mike Farrar took a moment to thank Carefree residents for the honor and privilege of serving them over the past 7 years and wished the new council all the best.

**Item 16, Adjournment:** If the meeting started at 5PM as scheduled, the 1 hour 13-minute recording suggests that the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:13PM.

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**At his point I'd like to share a letter I received from a reader several weeks ago.** It was so 'spot on' that I suggested she submit it to The Sonoran News which published it in their September 5<sup>th</sup> edition. With her permission, I'm providing it again for those who may have missed it, due to the slightly unusual location it occupied in the newspaper.

An Open Letter to Carefree

How sad for Carefree. I am not only disappointed but also appalled by the lack of concern shown by Carefree's citizens, Yes, I supported Mike Farrar for Mayor and didn't vote for most of the Council members because I believe that Mike offered the best opportunity to help our town survive. Mike's passion for Carefree, his moral center, his humility and his skills were superior. That said, lets be clear, I am an American, believe in democracy and accept the results.

What upsets me is that only about 1,000 of our almost 4000 citizens bothered to vote. Where were the rest of you? Don't you see that our town is literally dying? Didn't you see the mess the present council has created? Weren't you appalled that instead of ideas the present cabal ran on lies, distortions and dirty politics as their platform.

Next time, fellow citizens, register, get an early ballot, pay attention and vote. Thomas Jefferson spoke passionately about the duty of an educated electorate.

With the decision made, what can We, the citizens, do to salvage Carefree? I suggest the following as a start.

1. Pay close attention to what the town government is doing. That means demand transparency. Demand responsibility which Webster's defines as accountability.
2. Reinstate term limits. George Washington created the precedent of serving only two terms in order to insure representative government. It is incredible that a brazen narcissist would disregard the overwhelming mandate of the citizens. Legal or not, this policy had been followed for years. It is precedent.
3. Keep informed by listening to, thinking about, considering alternative ideas, not just the party line. Compromise isn't a dirty word. It's essential.
4. Be ready to initiate the Recall process if any public servant loses the Public Trust.

What should Mayor Peterson do to reunite this small town and begin the process of ending our economic malaise?

1. Understand that fully over 40% of those voting did not vote for you. They supported your opponent and his message. You MUST address their concerns and listen to their ideas and needs, Your oath is to represent all the people not just a faction.
2. Address the urgent needs of our town's merchants. So many of them demonstrated their frustration with your anti-business stance. Arches, colonial lights and bike lanes may be nice window dressings, but they don't make for a dynamic business atmosphere. Work with them. Work for them. Be pro business. They know better than you what might help. Heed their council.
3. On a personal note, I have a copy of an email you sent me in which you "invited" me to make an appointment to meet with you so you could "educate", your word, me. How demeaning and offensive. Unfortunately, you have a

reputation for talking down to your constituents which has been copied by some in the town hall. You set the tone others follow. Respect us.

4. Be humble. A good leader rewards and acknowledges others for their successes and actions. He doesn't try to take credit for things he didn't do. Good governance is WE not ME. Be honest. Lying diminishes everyone, You must set an example as mayor. Be flexible. It can't be "your way or the highway."
5. Take advantage of the highly educated and successful citizens who chose to live in Carefree. Move out of your comfort zone.
6. Build bridges before this town crumbles. Respect those who disagree. Reach out and find common ground. Don't lecture , pontificate or simply disregard those outside your inner circle. Be open to new ideas. It is an honor and a privilege to be elected Mayor (or to the Council.) Remember, "The Buck Stops Here."

Finally, Carefree's future depends on how our town officials deal with all the issues facing us. It's no small or easily resolved issue. Exercise the moral and civil virtues that are the essence of being an American. We expect the best from all of you.

Martena Miller

Also, with permission from Councilman Mike Farrar, I'm printing an email exchange between himself and an newly elected, yet ungracious mayor Peterson.

From: Councilman Michael Farrar [<mailto:mikefarrar@carefree.org>]  
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2018 2:55 PM  
To: 'Mayor'  
Subject: Veterans Memorial meeting request  
Importance: High

Les,

Politics aside, please let me know when we can meet to discuss next steps with the Veterans Memorial project.

Thank you,

Michael E. Farrar  
Councilman  
Town of Carefree

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From: Mayor [<mailto:mayor@carefree.org>]  
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2018 8:36 AM  
To: 'Councilman Michael Farrar'  
Subject: RE: Veterans Memorial meeting request

Mike,

Thanks for your expression of interest in participating in the Veteran's Memorial project. As discussed in the Council Meeting some months ago, a number of Council members believe that, to be truly meaningful,

this project should come forth from a "bottoms up" approach under the leadership of a group of Carefree Veterans, rather than a "top down" approach led by the Town Council. A group of Carefree veterans has been forming with the objective to take this on as a project. They are quite positive and enthusiastic. I have passed along your expression of interest to them. I expect that you will hear from them after they get through their formative work.

Best regards,

Mayor Les Peterson  
Town of Carefree, Arizona

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Les,

You also stated in that council meeting that you and I would work together on this. This is really quite unfair, and clearly a planned takeover by John Crane and yourself to circumvent all the work of myself and fellow councilmembers, Steve Hatcher and Gene Orrico, and take sole credit, it's just appalling. You were fully aware of the work that was being done by us and clearly know I have been the champion for a Veterans Memorial in Carefree for a number of years. John even stated to me that he didn't feel we needed a Veterans Memorial, unbelievable. Of course, he will probably deny that statement also.

Additionally, you are also aware that I had been working with the Executive Director, Pat Bell-Demers of the Sonoran Art League since Jan/Feb with their "Call to Artists" to their over 750 local Carefree and Cave Creek Artist members to solicit design proposal for the Veterans Memorial. There was only one candidate (Mark Carroll) that was the only stone artist that responded and he provided design proposals in my presentation, again they were only design concepts only. Nothing was ever finalized.

I also secured the \$2,000 commitment for a donation from the American Legion Post 34 (Commander Ron Turrell) for the Veterans Memorial and have been working with the Legion and it's over 500 local Carefree and Cave Creek Veteran members on final designs for the Memorial to be presented to council for approval at a future date. This has always been a bottom up approach by working with our local area Veterans.

I also secured the black onyx stone material donation from Wayne Helfand, President of the Rare Earth Art Gallery, saving Carefree over \$5,000 in stone material.

This is simply another coup by John Crane and yourself to take advantage of the work of others efforts when almost 90% of the effort has been completed by myself and my committee to grandstand on and take undeserved credit for.

Nevertheless, my only goal is to see a Veterans Memorial in Carefree, do what you will.

Mike

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The above exchange came on the heels of Les Peterson removing Mike Farrar from his long-standing positions representing Carefree on the Maricopa Association of Governments

(MAG) and the Economic Development Committees pointedly denying Farrar the opportunity to finish out his council term on those committees.

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Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

**Notice:** In addition to reporting *facts*, this Newsletter may contain the author's perspective on topics or events affecting Carefree residents. That perspective may not be popular with the mayor, some council members, staff, town attorney, a certain blogger, or even some members of the public. As I've stated many times over the past years, I try to identify those items which are *my* perspective of events by enclosing such material in *[brackets]*. If we lived in a perfect world, we'd need but one newspaper.  
God Bless America.

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