

RESOLUTION 2022-04

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CAREFREE, ARIZONA, DIRECTING TOWN STAFF TO FURTHER REVIEW THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM BY HIRING CONSULTANTS TO ASSIST IN A TRANSITION INTO THE AUTOMATIC AID SYSTEM

WHEREAS, automatic aid system is consortium of municipal fire departments and fire districts contractually bound to act as a regional fire department where the closest and most appropriate resources are seamlessly dispatched to an incident, and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Compact for Mutual Aid is a discretionary system of response where request are made to nearby first responders for assistance in a time of need but that assistance is not guaranteed, and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) Report and Recommendations outlines a transition into the more reliable automatic aid program, and

WHEREAS, automatic aid consortium have denied Rural Metro's entrance into this consortium and have denied Carefree's requests based upon Carefree's current contractual relationship with Rural Metro.

WHEREAS, nearby automatic aid partners have stated that Rural Metro's request for mutual aid assistance in a time of need may not be honored, and

WHEREAS, an incremental transition into automatic aid was desired by the Town to permit time for economic development initiatives to develop and generate needed sales tax to offset increase in costs to join automatic aid, and

WHEREAS, nearby first responders have stated that mutual aid is not guarantee and they may not respond to a mutual aid request. As a result, these statements have forced the Town to expedite this transitional timeline to join automatic aid with a goal of July 1, 2023, and

WHEREAS, to ensure this goal is met, one or more fire and emergency service professional will be retained to assist in negotiating a short-term extension with Rural Metro and/or a future Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with an automatic aid partner or develop an independent Town staffed municipal fire department to accomplish a transition into the automatic aid program, and

WHEREAS, due to the significant startup as well as increased operational costs directly associated with the automatic aid system and the need to create a solvent fiscal plan to pay for these increased costs, a financial analyst will be retained to review the Town's financial capacity, examine the initial and likely future costs for these services and frame fiscal options for the community and Council to consider.

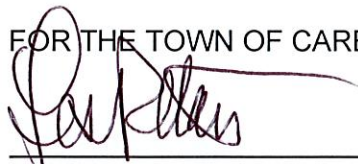
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED by the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Carefree, Arizona that the Town:

1. Negotiate a short term extension of the existing contract with Rural Metro. Such contract shall be considered for approval at a future Town Council meeting.
2. Execute professional service contracts with one or more fire and emergency service professionals to assist in the negotiation on short term contract extension with Rural Metro and a future contract with an automatic aid provider and compile the "all in" costs or develop an independent Town staffed municipal fire department to accomplish transition into the automatic aid program.
3. Retain a financial analyst that specializes in public sector modeling. Such modeling should evaluate the Town's financial capacity, capital reserves, trends with existing revenues streams, economic development initiatives, current operation expenses, performance of the general fund and the fire fund and the expected costs and financial stability of potential automatic aid partners and options to address any projected structural deficit in association with expanding the fire and emergency service program.
4. Provide for public open houses, newsletters and any other opportunities to seek citizen input (as illustrated in Exhibit A).
5. Based upon this process, provide the Town Council actionable items to discuss and consider to join automatic aid with the goal of July 1, 2023.
6. Authorize Town staff to give full force to implement the above deliverables.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Carefree, Arizona, this 15 day of February, 2022.

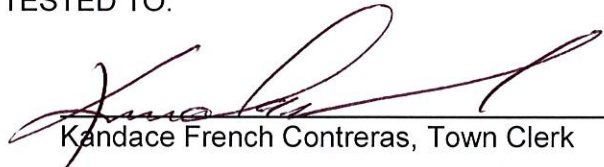
AYES 7 NOES 0 ABSTENTIONS 0 ABSENT 0

FOR THE TOWN OF CAREFREE



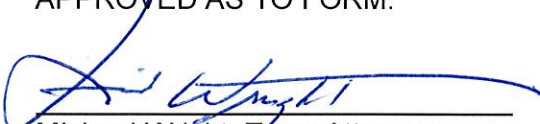
Les Peterson, Mayor

ATTESTED TO:

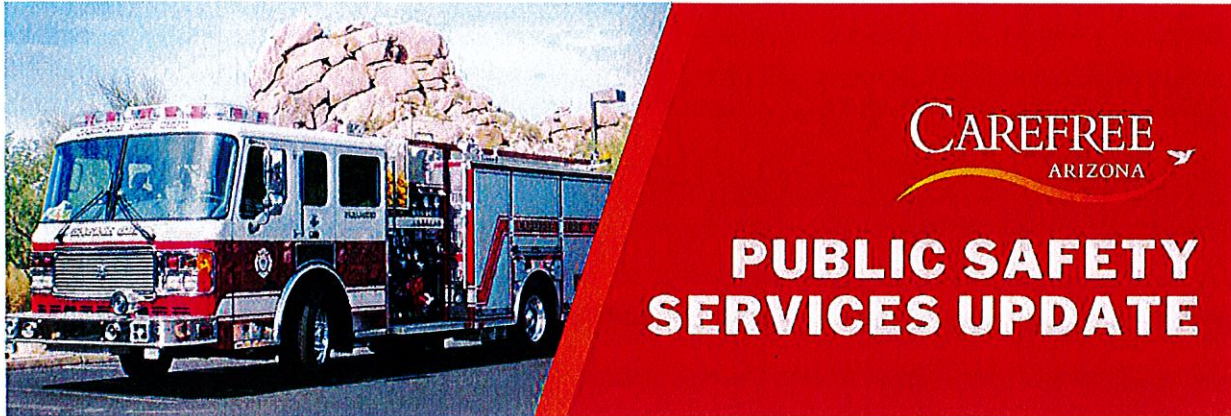


Kandace French Contreras, Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Michael Wright, Town Attorney



February 9, 2022 | 11:00 AM AZ Local Time

We would like to invite you to join us at the upcoming Town Council/Public Safety Advisory Committee meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 15th.

Important information regarding public safety services in Carefree:

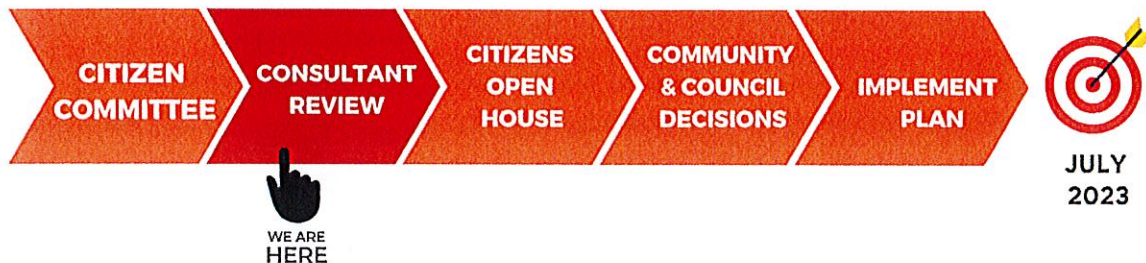
Last Spring, the Town Council requested that interested citizens volunteer to assist in an evaluation of the current level of fire and emergency as well as law enforcement services within the community. Eight citizens volunteered and were appointed to a Committee called the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC). Since April 2021, this Committee has held open, public meetings to learn, discuss and reconcile recommendations for public safety services within Carefree. To learn more, the PSAC Final Report and Recommendations can be found by clicking this link [Public Safety Advisory Committee \(carefree.org\)](https://www.carefree.org/public-safety-advisory-committee).

This Report will be presented to and discussed with the Town Council and the community at a joint meeting of the PSAC and the Town Council on February 15th [Town Council | Carefree, AZ - Official Website](https://www.carefree.org/town-council)

Next Steps in Public Process:

Collectively, this report and joint meeting are excellent opportunities for residents to learn more about Carefree's fire and emergency services and the future community decisions. Please take the time to review and consider this critical information regarding Carefree's fire and emergency services.

Citizen Participation Process



History of Fire and Emergency Services within the Community:

Beginning in the 1960s, Rural Metro provided fire and emergency services to Town residents and businesses through individual subscription services. In the past, a resident would annually pay a subscription fee to Rural Metro for fire and emergency services of approximately \$750. This model continued for approximately 40 years.

In the early 2000's the individual subscription model changed when the Town of Carefree assumed a master contract with Rural Metro, built a state-of-the-art fire station and furnished it with a fire truck and associated equipment pursuant to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. The master contract with Rural Metro simply provided the certified firefighters, paramedics and emergency medical technicians to staff the Town's fire house and equipment. This new master contract provided the Town with a higher level of service and accountability through defined service metrics. However, with this higher level of service the Town's annual operation costs directly associated with this new Town Fire Department increased. Therefore, at that time, to help offset this increase to the Town's annual operation costs, the Town Council approved a new funding stream with a 1% increase in the Town's retail sales tax.

Evolving needs:

Over the past 15 years this model has served the community well and has assisted countless property owners and families in a time of need. However, present day external influences are impacting the Town's current relationship with Rural Metro. Recently, the Town of Cave Creek assumed a similar model as Carefree and acquired a fire station and began to purchase equipment. However, in extinguishing the need for individual residential subscriptions for fire and emergency services, Cave Creek chose to contract with the adjacent Daisy Mountain Fire District. A benefit of Cave Creek's new contractual relationship with Daisy Mountain Fire District is that the District is part of a regional partnership of first responders called automatic aid. Automatic aid is comprised of municipal fire departments and fire districts located within the Phoenix-Mesa metropolitan area. Collectively, these automatic aid partners set uniform standards of service and seamlessly dispatch the closest, most appropriate equipment regardless of jurisdictional boundaries of participating entities. As a result of the uniform standards established by this regional partnership, there are

EXHIBIT 'A'

additional up front capital investments and a significant increase to current annual operational expenses. The Committee's report outlines options for the community to consider to meet the funding gap required to qualify for automatic aid partnership.