



TOWN OF CAVE CREEK

37622 N. Cave Creek Road, Cave Creek, AZ 85331 ■ 480-488-6600

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: August 18, 2021

Fire and Emergency Service Protection: Cave Creek to Lease and Purchase Fire Station

CAVE CREEK, AZ – The Town Council is moving forward with actions to secure fire and emergency medical services for the community. At the Regular Council Meeting Monday evening on August 16th, 2021, the Town of Cave Creek Council Members voted in favor to lease and purchase a property within Town limits located at 37042 N. Cave Creek Rd., to be used as a fire station. This was the most economical of three options identified and a significantly lower cost than building a new facility. These are early actions towards acquiring town-owned fire and emergency protection assets, in the pursuit of qualifying to apply for the Regional Automatic Aid System. This is part of a collective effort to work with the community in securing an all-hazard emergency service for the Town, as the town continues to grow and challenges continue to increase.

The Town of Cave Creek has held four community discussions open to the public, in addition to the Regular Council Meetings which happen monthly at Town Hall. Anyone can attend in-person or remotely online. There have also been ongoing neighborhood meetings with various communities and HOA's within Town limits. Please visit the Town's website to view these former presentations and subscribe to participate in the future.

A previously established goal of the Town Council (Resolution No. R2021-06) was to initiate steps to begin a process that gains the assets and requirements necessary to become a participant in applying for the Regional Automatic Aid System. Under the current model of fire protection, residents within the Town of Cave Creek independently subscribe for fire services with The Rural Metro Fire Department. Between 40-45% of residents currently subscribe to these services. This leaves vulnerability in the event of a major outbreak, without depending on the resources of neighboring jurisdictions. By gaining a fire station and emergency resources, the Town of Cave Creek aims to apply for entry into the Automatic Aid system.

Council Members have agreed to enter into an initial Purchase Agreement with the current owner of this property with a projected Close of Escrow (COE) on or before January 15th, 2022. The initial action approved (Resolution R2021-17) involves entering into a Lease agreement starting on October 15th, 2021, thru January 15th, 2022, with a larger goal to complete the final purchase of the property during January of 2022.



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The initial budget implications were discussed at the Town Council budget development meetings which were open to the public, recorded, and available for view online. The public is encouraged to partake in these open budget meetings, annually.

The Town is funding this fire station and the related operating expenses for the 2021-2022 fiscal budget year from current financial resources. Initial annual operating expenses are forecasted at about \$2.7 million for one fully staffed fire station. The initial start-up costs for acquiring the property and basic assets, along with the first-year expenses, have been approved and are covered in the current year's fiscal budget, with no tax increase. As for the ongoing expenses beyond these initial start-up costs and the first year of operation, Town Staff and the Council Members are engaged in meticulously exploring sustainable options with experts and the community.

To date, significant Council actions have been to direct staff to proceed strategically toward Automatic Aid membership, to approve a 2021-2022 fiscal budget for funding emergency equipment, to approve funding for the operating expenses for one station, to initiate discussions with an Automatic Aid provider, and to approve funding the lease and eventual purchase of a fire station.

Anyone can attend Regular Council meetings; they are posted ahead of time on the Town's calendar with links to the agenda and approved minutes. The public can also subscribe to receive the agenda's through the "Notify Me" link on the Home Page. These meetings are available both in-person at Town Hall and remotely via Zoom. Previous recordings of the Community Discussions mentioned above, the Regular Town Council meetings, and the open Town Council budget development meetings can be found through the Town's website on the home page under the "Government" tab.

Town Staff is still busy hosting neighborhood informational gatherings and are open to scheduling more of these useful community discussions.

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Quicklinks:

For recordings of the Fire & Emergency Services Community Discussions

www.CaveCreekAZ.gov/FireProtection

To register for news from the Town of Cave Creek

www.CaveCreekAZ.gov/NotifyMe

For recordings of Regular Council Meetings

www.CaveCreekAZ.gov/Youtube

Visit the Town's Website:

www.CaveCreekAZ.gov

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