

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

Received: February 29, 2024 (after 9:00 a.m.) – March 4, 2024 (before 5:30 p.m.)

March 4, 2024 Council Meeting

ADDENDUM

Submitted on Fri, 03/01/2024 - 09:55

First Name

Tom

Last Name

Morgan

Email

tzm7@mac.com

Address

39 Richards Avenue

Message

As you may recall, the council voted unanimously on May 2, 2022 to send Councilor Denton's zoning amendment on EV chargers to the Planning Board for a report back.

Subsequent to the vote, the amendment sat on the city manager's desk for a year and a half.

Among NH's 13 cities, Portsmouth is the only one that has no EV fast chargers. That's because the other 12 NH cities never banned EV chargers in the first place.

How long is this going to take?

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Fri, 03/01/2024 - 17:16

First Name

Anna

Last Name

Howard

Email

aehoward13@gmail.com

Address

553 Maplewood Ave

Message

The events of Oct. 7 shook us to our core, as a barbaric attack unleashed so much suffering upon innocent lives. The toll of this assault is a stark reminder of the 75-year-old conflict faced by our brothers and sisters in the region. In response, the escalation of violence has brought unimaginable devastation upon the Palestinian people, tearing families apart, shattering homes, and leaving behind a trail of despair. The statistics are numbing: over 1.6 million displaced, vital resources severed, and thousands of lives lost, with innocent children bearing the brunt of this tragedy. The situation grows more dire with each passing day.

The impact of this conflict on members of our community cannot be overstated. We feel the anguish of our Palestinian and Israeli brothers and sisters as their lives are torn apart by violence and despair. We cannot turn a blind eye to this humanitarian catastrophe. Our souls cry out for an end to the suffering, for a ceasefire to halt the bloodshed, and for the immediate delivery of humanitarian aid to the beleaguered people of Gaza. The time for action is now. We implore you to lend your voices to the call for peace, to stand in solidarity with those who yearn for respite from the horrors of war. Let Portsmouth be the beacon of hope in these dark times, advocating for a ceasefire and the unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of our fellow human beings. Thank you.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Sat, 03/02/2024 - 09:31

First Name

William

Last Name

Castle

Email

wrcastle@comcast.net

Address

229 Pleasant Street, Unit 1

Message

The City Council has an obligation to weigh in when others are complicit in the mass slaughter in Gaza. Already more than one in 100 Palestinians has been killed, with women and constituting most of the victims.

The Council's resolution should show a decent aspect for those Jewish citizens who feel tied to Israel as a refuge from centuries of persecution. It is not the role of the Council to fix blame for the conflict, which was triggered by a terrorist attack in which 1200 Israelis were killed and more than 200 taken hostage. However, the Council must listen to the rising tide of concern among the American people, including Portsmouth residents, and call for a permanent ceasefire and the return of Israeli hostages.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Sat, 03/02/2024 - 19:53

First Name

charlie

Last Name

Griffin

Email

charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com

Address

210 Hillside Drive

Message

Mayor Mc Eachern and Members of the Council

As a City Council you do not have unlimited power. Rather the nature and extent of your authority is governed by the City Charter. Article IV Section 4.1 says in pertinent part "The entire administration of all fiscal, prudential and municipal affairs of the CITY OF PORTSMOUTH AND EACH OF ITS DEPARTMENTS shall be vested in the City Council except as otherwise provided by this Charter ."

Article IV section 4.2 says " The City Council shall be the governing body of the City of Portsmouth and may exercise all of the powers and duties by law vested in boards of aldermen and city councils under state laws and this Charter."

NHRSA 47 sets forth the Powers of City Councils,. It does not address resolutions.

You and prior councils have passed resolutions .I have gone on line to the city's website ,keyed in the phrase "Council Resolutions " and found the following recent resolutions that have been passed; requiring masks to be worn during COVID; designating Portsmouth a Racial Justice City; appropriating funds from the American Rescue Plan Act; approving budgets and laying out a highway.

Each of these resolutions was consistent with the authority granted to the City Council under Article IV of the Charter as they directly pertained to the "fiscal, prudential and municipal affairs of the City."

However, passing the proposed Cook-Denton resolution concerning an international matter is totally unrelated to the "fiscal, prudential or municipal affairs of the City of Portsmouth" and therefore is not authorized under the Charter and exceeds your authority under the City Charter.

In addition, there are practical reasons why you should not pass such a resolution.

1. The Israel-Hamas war is a highly contentious issue as evidenced not only by the many demonstrations in this country, but also by the public comments and e-mails you have received and will no doubt continue to receive between now and Monday nights meeting. Our community is just starting to heal from the tumult of the Hewitt matter. The last thing it needs is to have that tumult rekindled, but that is exactly what will happen if you pass this resolution. The good will you earned by the manner in which you handled the Hewitt case will be lost.
2. By passing this resolution, you will be opening the door for requests to pass resolutions on other matters such as endorsing candidates for federal and state offices: promoting the purchase of EVs to the exclusion of gasoline powered ones : immigration and aid to Ukraine to mention a few. If you pass the proposed Cook-Denton Resolution .you will be hard pressed not to pass others such as those I have mentioned.

3.As I type this e-mail, I heard on the news that Israel and Hamas have agreed on the framework for a cease fire. If that is the case, the Cook-Denton proposed resolution may be rendered moot by Monday night.

In conclusion, while as individuals each of you is entitled to his or her opinion as to whether there should be a cease fire between Israel and Hamas, as a Council according to the City Charter you are only authorized to pass resolutions that directly relate to the "fiscal, prudential and municipal affairs of the City of Portsmouth. The proposed Cook-Denton resolution does not do that and for that reason and the others I have mentioned you should not pass it.

As always, I thank you for your consideration.

Charlie Griffin

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:32

First Name

Helene

Last Name

Pahl

Email

sophiegold@aol.com

Address

300 Rector Pl

NY, New York. 10280

Message

Why don't you vote to have the hostages released and Hamas surrender?

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:35

First Name

Patricia

Last Name

Leroy

Email

angus174@yahoo.com

Address

1 regency plaza

Providence , Rhode Island. 02903

Message

Please vote NO on ceasefire resolution.

Thank you

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:35

First Name

Tamara

Last Name

FICHE

Email

tfiche@gmail.com

Message

No to ceasefire please

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:46

First Name

Deborah

Last Name

Reich

Email

drdebr61@gmaol.com

Address

700 Greendale Ave

Needham, Massachusetts. 02492

Message

No ceasefire w terrorists

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. **Yes**

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:56

First Name

Sara

Last Name

Beer

Email

mandelbaumsara@aol.com

Address

1001 S. Cynthia St.

McAllen, Texas. 78501

Message

Stop the hatred.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. **Yes**

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:14

First Name

Joanne

Last Name

Foster

Email

jocfoster@outlook.com

Address

7 Hancock St

Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 03801

Message

Dear Council Members,

I am grateful that you have drafted and will tonight consider the adoption of a resolution pursuing a durable ceasefire in Gaza and Israel. I believe you have a unique and critical role in influencing our congressional delegation and our President to act. I urge you to pass this resolution with an amendment that urges Israel to immediately cease all military actions against civilian populations in Gaza. Citizens actions across the country have moved the administration to take a tougher position on the war, leading Vice President Kamala Harris just yesterday to call for an immediate ceasefire, for at least six weeks, between the parties. She also took a strong stance by calling out Israel for its relentless, indiscriminate, and inhumane bombing that has left over 30,000 Palestinians dead - most of whom are innocent bystanders in this conflict, stating, "People in Gaza are starving . . . The conditions are inhumane, and our common humanity compels us to act."

I hope you will consider amending your resolution to make a strong statement to acknowledge the disproportionality in suffering between these two peoples – with the Palestinians bearing an unimaginable share and generational loss. Please call on Israel to end all military actions against innocent civilians in Gaza.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Joanne Foster

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. **Yes**

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:23

First Name

Cara

Last Name

Zimmerman

Email

carabeadz29@gmail.com

Address

2253 Deer Creek Trail

Deerfield Beach, Florida. 33442

Message

Israel has the right to defend itself. Perhaps you forgot that Israel DID NOT start this war. They were celebrating peace at a music festival and were shot and killed, raped, beheaded, burned!!!! Just because of Palestinian hate.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:31

First Name

Karen

Last Name

Siegel Propis

Email

karensclinic@gmail.com

Message

A ceasefire rewards Hamas and terrorism. No ceasefire until the hostages are returned. Demand the release of hostages rather than a ceasefire. That is humane!

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:37

First Name

Keren

Last Name

Shechter

Email

keren_shechter@hotmail.com

Address

45 Lawton

Brookline, Massachusetts. 02446

Message

No to ceasefire

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:48

First Name

Barbara

Last Name

Massar

Email

bmassar@proportsmouth.org

Address

3 Greenleaf Woods Drive Unit 101

Message

As you're well aware, nonprofits in the City often struggle with finding suitable space for their operations. We found ourselves in such a predicament in late 2022.

To that end, I'm curious as to how organizations might be made aware of opportunities to lease City buildings.

The topic on tonight's agenda of the VFW leasing the Meeting House prompted my question as I do not recall reading or seeing anything about the building being vacant or the City looking to partner with an organization to operate out of the Meeting House.

This is in no way a criticism of the VFW, not at all, but a question of process.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 11:49

First Name

Ellen

Last Name

Mendel

Email

emendel97@gmail.com

Message

How could you vote for a cease fire for a sovereign country in which 82% of Americans would not be in favor? 82% of Americans are for Israel. If the massacre took place against the US - and killed and and raped thousands of our civilians (US is larger than Israel) would you not want your country to finish the job so you and I would be safe?

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 12:28

First Name

Deborah

Last Name

Mara

Email

demalemu5@gmail.com

Address

680 wea

Ny , New York. 10025

Message

Say no to cease fire.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 12:37

First Name

Lisa

Last Name

Friedman

Email

musik_57@yahoo.com

Address

PO Box 900682

Far Rockaway, New York. 11690

Message

Please vote NO to a ceasefire in the Israel war against Hamas. A ceasefire would only give Hamas a chance to regroup and get ready to kill more people- both Israelis and Gazans. If Hamas would release all hostages and surrender this war would be over today!

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 12:42

First Name

Gabrielle

Last Name

Hazan

Email

gabriellehazan@gmail.com

Address

2104 Edinburg Avenue

Cardiff, California. 92007

Message

Hamas is a terrorist organization. We need all our hostages home.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 15:22

First Name

Kerry

Last Name

Vautrot

Email

advocates@portsmouthhistory.org

Address

10 Middle Street

Message

Dear Councilors,

Portsmouth Advocates, the historic preservation advocacy arm of the Portsmouth Historical Society, encourages the City Council to consider the report from the combined Planning Board/Historic District Commission Work Session prior to moving forward with modifying the Zoning Ordinance to explicitly remove roof-mounted solar panels/appurtenances from the HDC's purview. Instead, we ask that the Council allow the HDC, together with supporting City Staff, a defined and reasonable time to prepare the framework for how to update the Ordinance. At the 2/21 Work Session, there were several ideas worthy of exploration: expanding administrative approvals, investigating opportunities for defined exemptions, and creating tools to assist applicants—making the process less daunting and frustrating for all parties.

We hope that you will allow the HDC time to make recommendations for how to best alter the Ordinance to be consistent with industry best practices for integrating renewables with historic properties.

Sincerely,

Kerry Vautrot, Portsmouth Advocates

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 15:29

First Name

Terry

Last Name

Lefkowitz

Email

terry.lefkowitz@gmail.com

Address

2990 flamingo drive

Miami Beach , Florida. 33140

Message

Support Israel

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 16:21

First Name

Pamela

Last Name

Levesque

Email

pjl2110@gmail.com

Address

211 Hillside Drive

Message

Dear Portsmouth City Council,

I am a resident of Portsmouth living on Hillside Drive. It is my understating that tonight there will be a vote regarding the CIP. For the safety of all those on Hillside, sidewalks for Greenleaf Avenue are an urgent matter, a matter that I hope you will address by including this in the CIP.

Please continue the work already implemented by the city to make our town a safe walking town by attending to this safety issue for those residents living on Hillside Drive. Studies by the City have concluded that car speed is an issue on Greenleaf. Safe walking passage is of concern for all those living on Hillside, adults and children. Your attention to this health and safety issue is necessary and time sensitive.

Best,

Pamela Levesque

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 16:56

First Name

Seth

Last Name

Levine

Email

sdl@sethdlevine.com

Address

569 MIDDLE ST
Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 03801

Message

I object to that part of the proposed Resolution calling for a ceasefire between Hamas, and calling for President Biden, Senator Shaheen, Senator Hassan, and Representative Pappas to pursue a ceasefire. A ceasefire was in place on October 7 when Hamas brutally killed over 1200 people and kidnapped over 250 citizens and, were a ceasefire to be implemented, Hamas would violate same and attack again. Hamas is an extremist, terrorist organization which must be stopped. Hamas has no respect for the Israeli state, and has no respect for a ceasefire. A ceasefire will enable them to brutally strike again.

Hamas' goal is simple-- to destroy the State of Israel and to kill all Jews. A ceasefire will permit Hamas to declare victory, re-arm, and attack Israel and kill more Jews. A ceasefire will not stop Hamas from its horrific attacks.

Hamas itself makes its position clear. For example, Hamas official Hamad Al-Regeb prayed for "annihilation" and "paralysis" of the Jews, whom he described as filthy animals: "[Allah] transformed them into filthy, ugly animals like apes and pigs." He prayed to "get to the necks of the Jews."

Overall political leader Ishmael Haniyeh spoke of Hamas rejection of ceasefire agreements by which, "Gaza would become Singapore," preferring to remain at war with Israel until a Palestinian state is established from the River to the Sea: "We cannot, in exchange for money or projects, give up Palestine and our weapons. We will not give up the resistance... We will not recognize Israel, Palestine must stretch from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea."making Palestine "from the River to the Sea, judenrein."
Political chairman Saleh Al-Arouri said Hamas seeks "total war."

Hamas official Ghazi Hamad said that Hamas would repeat the October 7 attacks "time and time again until Israel is annihilated."
Ahmad Abd Al-Hadi (Hamas representative in Lebanon) in an October 12, 2023 TV show laid out Hamas' expectation that it would be Israel that would sue for peace and indicated that a ceasefire is part of Hamas' overall strategy. He said that with a ceasefire, Israel would fail in eradicating Hamas, that Hamas would gain support, and that Hamas would re-group to attack Israel again.
While many in progressive nations speak of a "two-state solution," Hamas has made it clear that it will never accept this solution. Hamas rejects the Balfour Declaration, the British Mandate established by the League of Nations, the UN Partition Resolution in 1947, and all other resolutions and measures that derive from or are similar to them, including every treaty between Israel and Arab nations and any accords or agreements with any Arab or Palestinian group (e.g., Oslo accords). Simply put, Hamas does not recognize Israel's right to exist, or the rights of Israelis and Jews to self-determination.

Sadly, war against Hamas is necessary to protect Israel and its citizens. For several decades, Israel assumed that they could live beside the monster. but October 7 made it clear that Israel cannot live near the monster, and that the monster must be destroyed.

We must not resolve to ask our President, Senators, and Representative to call for a ceasefire.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 17:08

First Name

Kirsten

Last Name

Hunter

Email

kirhunter@gmail.com

Address

136 Cabot St
PORTSMOUTH, New Hampshire. 03801

Message

My name is Kirsten Hunter. I am a faith leader and resident here in Portsmouth, NH. I am hoping to attend tonight's city council meeting in person, but I have a potential conflict, so I am writing in case I don't make it. I would like to express my hope that you will pass a resolution calling upon the President of the United States, United States Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan, and United States Representative Chris Pappas to call for an immediate and total ceasefire, the provision of massive emergency humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, and the safe return of all hostages and prisoners, as well as to commit to lasting diplomacy to help foster a just and lasting peace in the region for all of its people.

I have read the proposed language of the resolution you have drafted for consideration at this evening's city council meeting, and I appreciate that the authors have attempted to frame a position that can invite agreement, and minimize dissent. That said, I would like to speak to a deep concern I have regarding the imbalance of human compassion I have witnessed in our community, and in our country for many years toward the plight of Palestinian people, which has become especially visible over the past 5 months as our US government has funded and armed a siege by Israel of unimaginable violence against the people of Gaza.

I was in the company of many of you at a vigil held at Temple Israel in the week following the devastating violence of October 7th. I have been in ongoing dialogue with many Jewish colleagues and friends in the months since as they have done the soul wrenching work of holding their own grief, and the grief and fear of their beloveds, while also watching in horror as that tragic day became an excuse for inexcusable cruelty toward a whole population of civilians who have long been denied basic freedoms that we, as US citizens, consider a human right.

This conflict did not begin on October 7th, but the tragedy of that day has been used to deepen divisions and to foster a spirit of vengeance in an understandably grieving population. This strategy is not new. For 75 years now, US citizens have been fed propaganda meant to prevent authentic understanding about Israel and Palestine. We have been told this is a conflict between Muslims and Jews, which it is not. This is a conflict between the state of Israel and the people who were displaced in its creation. Our press, and government leaders continue to repeat intentionally misleading statements, that reflect one-sided support of Israel and make no mention of the myriad ways that Israel has been breaking international law through illegal occupation and restriction of Palestinian freedom for decades, including most relevantly, the wall built around Gaza in 2007. Since October, Israel has illegally denied water, food, medical care, and shelter to the people of Gaza, treating them as collateral damage in a campaign they claim is meant to punish Hamas. Meanwhile, the United States has been the singular veto to three attempts by the United Nations Security Council to call for a ceasefire and for urgent humanitarian aid.

The entire infrastructure of Gaza has been obliterated. More than 30,000 people have been killed and at least 70,000 more have been severely injured. Children are starving to death. Israel has destroyed nearly all hospitals, houses of worship, schools, universities, and they have intentionally flattened farmlands, and olive groves to ensure that the people of Gaza will have nothing left when this violence stops- every one of those actions is a war crime. This is not a balanced conflict. The Israeli military is the 4th most powerful military in the world, and it is being backed by our own military, the most powerful war machine ever to exist on this planet.

The US has been a terrifying mentor to Israel. 21 years ago, in the wake of September 11, we used that devastating day to foster a spirit of vengeance ourselves, which resulted in 200,000 innocent Iraqi people being murdered by the US military. Even before September 11th, and certainly since then the people of the United States have been fed a diet of hateful rhetoric that continues to impair our capacity to see Muslim people as fully human.

Our country must reckon with our ongoing legacy of violence and racism- which has caused immeasurable harm to so many people including Muslims and Jews. We must understand that the world will no longer tolerate an empire that sees itself as above the law. We must recognize that our planet is demanding that we see our human interconnectedness. We are one people belonging to one planet- whatever religions we practice and wherever we live, and all children are OUR children. No nation - especially not a nation that claims itself to be a democracy- is beyond accountability to international law and universal human rights.

I believe we have the capacity as a community to hold multiple truths. To hold care and compassion for those grieving Israeli friends and family who were killed on October 7th, while also speaking clearly and without apology against the indefensible violence and cruelty we are watching in Gaza. It is time for us to stop mincing words, to stop worrying if we get it just right. It is time for us to hold hands as a whole community- a whole country- and to say "No More".

Thank you for your time, and for your service to our city.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.

Yes

The following email template was sent by 50 individuals from various locations in the United States:

Submitted on Mon, 03/04/2024 - 10:33

First Name

XXXX

Last Name

XXXX

Email

XXXXXXXXXX

Address

XXXXXXXXXX

Message

We are reaching out in opposition to a ceasefire resolution that will be proposed at your meeting.

While this appears to be a resolution in favor of peace, in fact it is a propaganda move to incite anti-Democracy, anti-Israel, and anti-Jewish sentiments. We urge you to refuse to even consider the resolution.

These politically motivated resolutions are circulating in "toolkits" sent out by the Committee on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and other terrorist network support groups in the U.S. [1]. The toolkits overtly state that they do not care about the wording; they just want to be able to claim that the city/county has denounced Israel. They have unfailingly proved divisive to the community and have had the effect of pitting sides against each other in antipathy rather than bonding them together in a mutual desire for peace.

There is no possibility of a ceasefire while Hamas is still in power. As Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) said, "Israel must destroy every element of Hamas," who's sole and sinister purpose is to eradicate Israel and the Jewish people [2]. For your reference, we have provided excerpts from the Hamas charter below [3].

Hamas has rejected proposals for months-long pauses in fighting simply in exchange for releasing the hostages. They have vowed to draw Israel into an eternal war, manipulating public opinion and thwarting the process of normalization underway between Israel and several Arab countries. Please note that there was in fact a ceasefire in place on October 7, when Hamas slaughtered Israelis, Americans, and Foreign Nationals in the most barbaric ways seen in centuries. Hamas vows to repeat this over and over even after a new ceasefire agreement is reached.

Furthermore, we urge you not to approve any resolution whose language parrots a false narrative claiming that Jewish people in Israel are colonizers engaged in a 75-year occupation. In fact there has been a Jewish presence in Israel for the past 3,000 years. They are neither colonizers, nor "occupiers" in Gaza - Gaza has been independent since 2005 when Israel removed all its residents and military from Gaza. In 2006, Gazans voted Hamas into power and they have been under Hamas rule since. Nonetheless, anti-Israel and anti-Jewish voices claim that Israel is occupying Gaza and that "resistance is justified", spreading dangerous misinformation about a democratic country that is used as a justification for terrorism.

As a city council, you represent your local residents in municipal decisions. If the city council were to engage in international affairs, you would likely need to vote on various matters, such as the ongoing Syrian war, the Yemen Civil War, the Rohingya Crisis, the South Sudanese Civil War, and numerous other global issues.

Sadly, ceasefire resolutions have been considered in many city councils in the past few months, and each time rather than enhance peace, they have brought with them vitriol, which has contributed to the 400% increase in anti-Semitism in this country [4]. We have most recently witnessed alarming Neo-Nazi marches in Nashville, the apprehension of an individual plotting to harm the Jewish community in Indiana, physical harm inflicted on Jews on college campuses, the murder of a Jewish man in San Diego and the unsettling cancellation of all college classes in Queens due to a credible terrorist threat.

Please understand that this war is not just about land. This is a holy war against the Jewish people and democracy itself. Senior Hamas official Mahmoud Al-Zahar stated on December 12, 2022, "The entire 510 million square kilometers of Planet Earth will come under [a system] where there is no injustice, no oppression, no treachery, no Zionism, no treacherous Christianity." (source:

<http://tinyurl.com/5n8298r4>)

Furthermore, with all the international conflicts that have not merited your attention, deciding to suddenly weigh in on Israel's foreign policy would send a dual message: a) that a democracy has no right to defend itself against barbaric terrorism, and b) that you hold Israel to a different standard than other countries.

The European Parliament has passed a stipulation that any call for a ceasefire should be conditional on the complete dismantling of Hamas and the immediate and unconditional release of hostages. We hope you would agree.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

"82% of Americans prefer Israel over Hamas" [5]

References:

[1] CAIR toolkit: https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-releases-community-toolkit-on-promoting-gaza-ceasefire-resolutions-by-state-local-governments/

[2] <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/4336113-rubio-activists-Israel-amas-cease-fire>

[3] https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/amas.asp

[4] <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-antisemitic-incidents-up-about-400-since-israel-amas-war-began-report-says-2023-10-25/>

[5] <https://harvardharrispoll.com>

Excerpts from Hamas Charter:

1. 'Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.' (Preamble)
2. 'The day the enemies usurp part of Muslim land, Jihad becomes the individual duty of every Muslim. In the face of the Jews' usurpation, it is compulsory that the banner of Jihad be raised.' (Article 15)
3. 'Ranks will close, fighters joining other fighters, and masses everywhere in the Islamic world will come forward in response to the call of duty, loudly proclaiming: 'Hail to Jihad!'. This cry will reach the heavens and will go on being resounded until liberation is achieved, the invaders vanquished and Allah's victory comes about.' (Article 33)
4. There is no solution for the Palestinian problem except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals, and international conferences are a waste of time and futile.' (Article 13)
5. 'The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: 'O Muslim, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him.' (Article 7) [3].

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes
