
DATE: Tuesday, January 16, 2024
TIME: 7:04 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 7:04 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: CM Shirese Hursey

STAFF PRESENT: Carol Mitten, Dave Wesner, Robert Kouzmanoff, William Kolschowsky, Elizabeth Hannan, Demond Dade, Kyle Hensch, Tim Cowan, Kimberly Smith, Vince Gustafson, Stepheny McMahan, Marcus Ricci, Breaden Belcher, Andrea Ruedi, Bridget Broihahn

OTHERS PRESENT: Jamie Wilkey, Carly McCrory-McKay, Jayne DeLuce, Madeleine Wolske

Chair: Maryalice Wu, *Ward 1*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, CM Wu called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

a. 11-06-2023 Minutes

b. 11-20-2023 Minutes

Motion to approve minutes by CM Bishop, and seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Public Input and Presentations

a. Presentation: FY 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

Presented by Jamie Wilkey, partner with Lauterbach & Amen, LLP; and introduced by Rob Kouzmanoff. Communicated findings from the City of Urbana's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the fiscal year of 2023. Recommended review of pages 14-24 which encompasses the management's discussion and analysis, and also serves as an executive summary to the report. Reported that overall equity improved for FY 2023. Introduced 2 new management letter comments (GASB 100 & 101) being introduced in future audit cycles.

A copy of the ACFR can be found on the City of Urbana's website alongside other, related reports.

b. Public Input

Dua Aldasouqi expressed hopefulness felt waiting for previous meeting due to the presentation on a proposed ceasefire resolution by Ben Joselyn. Stated dismay felt from Mayor Marlin's statements at the previous meeting regarding removing the discussion on a ceasefire resolution from the agenda due to divisiveness. Shared personal, lived experience as a member of the Palestinian diaspora in America. Demanded City Council call for a ceasefire between Israel and Palestine. *Robert Silverman* recalled creation of UPTV and memories from 2006 and 2008 regarding how he saw antisemitism spread through public television broadcasts. Compared current City Council public input discourse to the public input from 2006 and 2008 regarding antisemitic broadcasts. *Takeya Alamin* urged City Council to call for a ceasefire. Stated how 01-15 was Martin Luther King Jr. Day and how he would have been able to vocally oppose Israel if he had not been assassinated. Expressed that the United States government stands against all of Martin Luther King Jr.'s principles. Said that anti-Zionism is an intersectional movement which includes Jewish people and that to be pro-Palestinian is not to be antisemitic. Urged City Council to call for a ceasefire before quoting Martin Luther King Jr. to display City Council's responsibility to uphold justice. *Julie Watkins* commented on the currently futile process of representation of concerns regarding Israel and Palestine from constituency through federally elected representatives and senators. Stated how the best option remaining and most appropriate for constituents to have their voices heard is through public input through City Council. Requested for everyone to take this matter seriously due to the community's direct familial connections to Palestine. *Mark Ansel* stated admiration for the work conducted by City Council. Questioned the worth of time taken regarding foreign affairs and national affairs. Commented on how precedents set by previous resolutions regarding non-City of Urbana issues is wrong and should be disregarded. Shared view on how the community, and nation as a whole, seems to be extremely divided on Israel and Palestine. Disapproved of ceasefire resolution presented by Ben Joselyn and claimed it would only serve to exacerbate existing tensions and division. *Abu-Bakr Zafar* shared account from Dr. Mohammad Mattar, head of radiology at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza, on 10-13 regarding the amount of death in the Gaza. Cited death tolls from 01-16 in Gaza. Stated threat of potential deaths due to untreated diseases due to loss of healthcare services in Gaza. Demanded need for a ceasefire and spoke on the importance of a ceasefire resolution being passed by City Council. *Stuart Levy* reiterated statements from previous City Council meeting regarding the approval of a ceasefire resolution. Stated how a call for a ceasefire to the war between Israel and Palestine is a local and national issue that should be considered by the City Council. Recalled impacts on worldwide economy that the war between Russia and Ukraine caused. Warned City Council of the risk of other countries joining the conflict between Israel and Palestine due to the conflict being located closely to important shipping routes. Stated that the proposed ceasefire resolution is not as one-sided

as people have claimed and that this understanding could be come to if one were to read the resolution. **Alan Cook** spoke on history of founding the Interfaith Alliance of Champaign County based on the idea of promoting dialogue and understanding between community faith groups. Mourned deaths of Palestinians in Gaza and deaths of Israelis on 10-07-2023. Expressed that he has personally not heard any person express empathy for what happened to Israelis on 10-07-2023 while also supporting the previously proposed ceasefire resolution by Ben Joselyn. Spoke in support of a ceasefire resolution and cessation to violence, but only if it is collaborated on by people who support Palestine, by people who are Jewish, and by people who support Israel. Called for further work on the wording of the ceasefire resolution to support everyone who has been affected by the conflict. **Josh** stated that the ceasefire resolution proposed by Ben Joselyn is not a call for peace and does not represent displaced Israelis from 10-07-2023. Proclaimed that all statements regarding federal funding for Israel, sourced from taxes from the City of Urbana, preventing the City from aiding its local population are meritless. Stated that the proposed resolution serves to condemn Israel's military response to the deaths of Israelis on 10-07-2023 and only calls for only Israel to cease their military campaign. Expressed that previous ceasefire agreements were broken by Hamas attacks. Claimed the City Council's purpose to its citizens in closing. **Marcy Goldstein** agreed that a resolution commenting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine does fall under City Council purview. Did not agree with ceasefire resolution proposed by Ben Joselyn. Empathized with the people of Palestine and Palestinians killed by Israel. Doubted effectiveness of humanitarian aid to Palestine and questioned its internal distribution methods. Recounted IDF accounts regarding the discovery of Hamas weapons in schools, mosques, and private residences. Claimed that Hamas is using Palestinians as human shields and stated that Israel's only option to combat Hamas is to accept innocent Palestinian deaths as an acceptable casualty. **Sana Sabwala** shared feeling of hopelessness regarding current circumstances in Palestine. Spoke in support of a ceasefire resolution even if it seems purposeless, but wishes to feel heard by elected representatives as a constituent. **George** claimed those who spoke against the ceasefire resolution were incoherent for claiming a call for a ceasefire would only increase violence, is not city business, and has no impact. Stated how those who spoke in favor of a ceasefire were unified in their grievances. Urged City Council to pass a ceasefire resolution quoting the escalation of violence in the region and to unify local community. Compared support for Israel to support for George Floyd murder, support for Jim Crow laws, support for claiming Martin Luther King Jr. was a terrorist, and support of local University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Ku Klux Klan chapter in 1920s. **Esther Patt** voiced support for a ceasefire resolution to be called. Shared anecdote from email communications from someone stating that calling for a release of hostages held by Hamas is unacceptable. Recalled memories of antisemitism from 1960s-1980s spoken by Palestinian spokespeople and leaders of Arabic nations. Apologized for wasting City Council's time. Posed the question of how people would feel if their family was taken hostage, but people were calling for a ceasefire resolution without including a term to release the hostages. **Eman Saadah** shared family history of being ethnically cleansed from his village in 1948 in the West Bank and moving to the Gaza Strip. Felt forced to speak out against their tax money being used to help fund military aid toward Israel. Urged everyone to view the conflict between Israel and Palestine through a humanitarian lens so justice and peace can be achieved. **Stav Ashur** stated that the ceasefire resolution proposed by Ben Joselyn is established on misinformation and lies. Shared personal experience of living in Urbana, having family living in Israel during 10-07-2023, and having their Israel flags continuously vandalized after 10-07-2023. Disapproved of the ceasefire resolution and made negative comments toward Ben Joselyn's actions of tearing down posters calling for the release of Hamas hostages. Wished for peace in Palestine and for Palestine to be liberated from Hamas. **Shane McClintock** spoke in support of ceasefire resolution by Ben Joselyn. Called for making steps toward peace and justice for Palestinians. Encouraged City Council to pass a resolution reflecting the Urbana community's ideals of justice. **Camille Cobb**

stood in favor a ceasefire resolution. Spoke against feelings of hopelessness regarding an impact of a ceasefire resolution and discussion around a ceasefire potentially causing further antisemitism. Stated optimism for the City of Urbana to stand in solidarity with Palestinians while also standing firmly against antisemitism. Shared experience of feeling hostility from a City of Champaign non-emergency services dispatcher when attempting to connect unhoused people with assistance in securing shelter. Pleaded City Council to consider both these issues when deliberating on budget distribution. **Ben Joselyn** shared personal experience regarding the on-going conflict between Israel and Palestine, and experience of learning from Jewish women, on a trip to South Africa, how apartheid is being reproduced in Israel and Palestine. Recounted experience learning at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington from professors who also taught activist, Rachel Corrie, who was crushed by an Israeli bulldozer during the demolition of Palestinian homes. **Azil** retorted against Takeya Alamin's statements regarding Martin Luther King Jr. by reciting a quote from him calling for peace in Israel and its right to exist. Stated people who spoke in favor of a ceasefire did not comment on claims of Palestinian authority paying murderers and terrorists. Denied genocide of Palestinian people by stating how its population growth is faster than average Western countries. Claimed speakers who supported a ceasefire are too one-sided in their perspectives and give no credit to Israel's humanitarian efforts. **Karmel** stated Hamas broke a ceasefire agreement on 10-07-2023 and that Hamas had been lining civilian infrastructure in Gaza with tunnels, turning them into military bases. Blamed Hamas for Palestinian deaths caused by Israel's retaliation and bombing. Claimed that war against Hamas must continue and that peace through a two-state solution cannot begin without their removal from power. **Bara Saadah** shared recent death tolls from Gaza between 01-08-2024 to 01-16-2024 and compared them to the population of Urbana High School. Spoke on unemployment and starvation that family and people in Gaza had experienced before 10-07-2023. Expressed concern for children Palestinian captives held in indefinite detention by Israel. Refuted claims of Hamas tunnels existing in Gazan civilian infrastructure by citing accounts from reporters in the area that had disproved those claims. Claimed Palestinian voices are being silenced by disinformation spread by Israel. **Jake McGinty** expressed gratitude for City Council holding space to discuss the potential for a ceasefire resolution regarding the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Spoke on merits of a ceasefire resolution being passed by the City of Urbana and requested City Council to continue listening to public input regarding this matter. ***Due to network failure in the city building, written public input was unable to be read as the received list is incomplete. Public Input was received from the following 37 individuals that supported a ceasefire resolution, but were not read: Soop Kish, Ammar Bhutta, Hanan Jaber, Hadjer Benkraouda, Sanja Pudar, Kadra Ali, Ruth Jackson, Muhammad al-Faruque, Amena Abdo, Randa Altalla, Asraa Ibrahim, Bara Saadah, Hind Mhaouer, Parveen Chowdhury, Ghada Abdalla, Afeefa Ismail, Paola Munoz, Haneen Jaber, Sabrina Khan, Aishat Bello, Hala Elashmawi, Hend Abdelfattah, Mohammad El-Jawhari, Abu-Bakar Zafar, Alex Taylor, Talha Al-Zoubi, Hadeel Mohammad, Ayah Jaber, Takeya Alamin, Lilah Leopold, Alex Gordon, Joseph Altshuler, Marisa Natale, Sarah Blanco, Grace Wisegarver, Dua Aldasouqi, and Fatima Ahmed. Public Input was received from the following 14 individuals that opposed a ceasefire resolution, but were not read: William Kohen, Sheri Lagendorf, Reut Halevy, Erin Kerpel, Olivia Harris, Alexander Scheeline, Eileen Kohen, Mitchell Harris, Alan Cook, Tania Ionin, Frances Harris, Vadim Zharnitsky, Timur Oikhberg, and Daniel Liberzon. Numerous communications to City Council regarding the ceasefire resolution was received from the local community.***

5. New Business

a. Resolution No. 2023-12-096R: Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Economic Development Agreement (Champaign County Economic Development Corporation, Fiscal Year 2023-2024) - CD

Presented by Stepheny McMahon from Economic Development, Carly McCrory-McKay, Jayne DeLuce, and Madeline Wolske from Champaign County Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Resolution proposes a renewed agreement for the provision of regional economic development services by the EDC for the benefit of the City and the regional economy. Questions and discussion ensued.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Quisenberry, and seconded by CM Wilken.
Vote by Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

b. Resolution No. 2023-12-097R: Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Economic Development Agreement (Experience Champaign Urbana, Fiscal Year 2023-2024) - CD

Presented by Stepheny McMahon from Economic Development, Carly McCrory-McKay, Jayne DeLuce, and Madeline Wolske from Champaign County Economic Development Corporation. Resolution proposes a renewed agreement for the provision of marketing and community support services by Experience CU for the benefit of the City's tourism industry. Resolution would adopt a one-year Community Partnership Agreement for funding ECU through 07-01-2023 to 06-30-2024 with a proposed amount of \$15,000 from the Fiscal Year 24 budget.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Quisenberry, and seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Vote by Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

c. Resolution No. 2024-01-001R: A Resolution Approving Amendment No. 1 to a City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement (Champaign County Regional Planning Commission TBRA Agreement FY 2021-2022) - CD

Presented by Grants Division Manager, Breaden Belcher. Resolution provides additional \$125,000 in funding for the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Agreement to serve an additional seven to ten clients. The additional funding is sourced from unspent Fiscal Year 2021-2022 HOME funds; therefore, it has no impact on City general funds and no impact on core services. Questions and discussion ensued.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Bishop, and seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Vote by Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

d. Ordinance No. 2024-01-002: An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance (Chen/Tan Duplex at 312 West Illinois Street / Case No. ZBA-2023-MAJ-03) - CD

Presented by Marcus Ricci, also presented for Ordinance No. 2024-01-003 at the same time

because they are both regarding the same property. Ordinance approves a major variance to allow the construction of a duplex on the footprint of an existing single-family home by reducing the required front yard along Illinois Street from 15 to 9 feet, reducing the minimum open space ratio from 0.4 to 0.0, and also increasing the maximum floor area ratio from 0.4 to 0.52. Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), on 12-20-2023, recommended City Council to approve a variance to reduce the front yard along Illinois Street and a variance to reduce the required lot area. Followed by questions and discussion.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wilken, and seconded by CM Evans.
Vote by Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

e. Ordinance No. 2024-01-003: An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance (Chen/Tan Duplex at 312 West Illinois Street / Case No. ZBA-2023-MAJ-04) - CD

Presented by Marcus Ricci. Ordinance approves a major variance to reduce the required lot area for the property from 6,000 to 3,607 square feet and to reduce the required number of parking spaces for a duplex from 4 to 2. Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), on 12-20-2023, recommended City Council to approve a variance to reduce the front yard along Illinois Street and a variance to reduce the required lot area.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wilken, and seconded by CM Bishop.
Vote by Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None

6. Staff Report

a. Fire Station Design (Final Programming)

Presented by Senior Management Analyst, William Kolschowsky, FGM Architects, and P.J. Hoerr. The purpose of the presentation was to preview the design, identify feedback that can be incorporated, and to transition to implementation after finalization. Currently at 50% through the design process with an estimated cost of \$14,400,000 for construction, \$700,000 below estimates from 10-2023. Two main changes to the program came from inclusion of geothermal energy and the addition of second bunks. Further questions and discussion followed.

7. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken thanked public for their continued input regarding various issues and spoke in support of a ceasefire resolution that would promote peace. Also thanked everyone who worked toward keeping unhoused people warm and sheltered during the cold winter. Made a point regarding the City Council goals reminding that Will requested them by 01-18-2024. Noted that the addition of a discussion regarding clarifying council goals may be added onto the 01-22-2024 City Council meeting agenda. *CM Quisenberry* echoed CM Wilken's comments thanking the people who supported unhoused people during the cold weather. Thanked City of Urbana staff for continuing to work during inclement weather. *CM Bishop* announced that on 01-21-2024 at 3:00 p.m. the East Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council is holding a job hiring expo at UA Local 149 at 1003 North Dunlap in Savoy, IL. Shared that 20 local labor unions will be represented at this expo and that they are currently in the last month of accepting applications for the year for apprenticeship classes. *CM Evans* announced that on 01-18-2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the New Covenant Fellowship church on 124 West White Street in Champaign, IL, the meeting for the Champaign Urbana Reparations Coalition will be held and all are welcome. *Mayor Marlin* reminded all that on 01-19-2024 at 5:00 p.m. at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, city staff will be present to provide information about the Dr. Ellis sewer lateral lining project and associated works. Also reminded that participation to the public for City Council Ward map redistricting has been opened and can be accessed on the City of Urbana's website. The deadline for ward map proposals is 02-15-2024 and submissions can also be emailed to Wardmaps@urbanaillinois.us.

8. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 10:39 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#).

Minutes approved: 03-18-2024

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: S K <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 12:12 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Soop Kish and I am an Urbana resident, and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence, we must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Ammar Bhutta <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 12:17 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi, Hope this mail finds all of you well.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Ammar Bhutta and I am a business owner in Urbana and I support a ceasefire (not sure if in 2024 someone actually has to state it out loudly as apparently there are humans walking on our planet that believe that they are for Genocide rather being against it!).

From October 7 until January 15th, 101 days, at least 23,984 Palestinians have been killed including 10,600 children, this does not include the more than 10,000 missing assumed to be under the rubble.

Let's be reflective of the sentiments of our community that is grieving and be on the right side of history. A history that is not for Nazi ideology but against it. A history that is for the rights of black and brown people and not for occupiers. A history that is always for the rights of the oppressed and the oppressors. Time for each one of you to stand up and be counted.

thanks,

Ammar Bhutta

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hanan Jaber <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:26 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Hanan Jaber and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you
Hanan

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hadjer Benkraouda <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:33 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Hadjer and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Sanja Pudar <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:34 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Sanja Pudar and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you,
Sanja Pudar, Savoy, 61874

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Rasmiya Ali <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:38 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is [KadraAli] and I am [Champaign resident OR local community member] and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: naseerahvj <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:51 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Body:

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Ruth Jackson and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

--

Ruth (Naseerah) Jackson MLS (ASCP)
BS Medical Laboratory Science (Illinois State University)

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Muhammad al-Faruque <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:53 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT for 1.16.2024 City Council Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Muhammad al-Faruque and I am a local community member. I support a ceasefire resolution at the City Council, as more than two-thirds of Americans do for the cause. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to the City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire resolution at the City Council.

Please also note that if the City Council does not adopt a ceasefire resolution now, it will make its place in history along with those who committed or supported genocide. That will be a very dark spot on the forehead of the City.

Thank you in advance for your wise and impactful initiative.

Sincerely,
Muhammad al-Faruque

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: amena abdo <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:56 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Amena Abdo and I am local community member and I support a ceasefire in Gaza Strip and West Bank along with more than two-thirds of Americans.

Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank.

We cannot afford silence.

We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: randa altalla <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:00 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Please read

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

My name is Randa Altalla and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence, we must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Asraa Ibrahim <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:01 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: I Support Ceasefire

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council,

Please read my email out loud during public input. My name is [Asraa Ibrahim] and I am [Urbana resident OR local community member] and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire. Thank you

Asraa Ibrahim

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Bara Saadah <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:05 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT: Ceasefire Resolution

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council,

Please read my email out loud during public input.

I'm Bara Saadah, a proud resident of our community for 17 years and a local resident physician at Carle Foundation Hospital. Today, I'm reaching out not just as a healthcare professional but as someone deeply connected to this community.

The situation in Gaza is hitting close to home for me. I have family there, and I'm not alone. Many in our community share this connection but fear speaking out due to potential repercussions.

On October 13th, the statement about creating a humanitarian crisis in Gaza is deeply alarming. Over 30,000 Palestinians have suffered, and the devastation is heartbreaking. Our city government must step up to amplify our voices, especially when our state and national representatives remain silent. In the short time since last week January 8th when the ceasefire resolution was introduced to our city council, more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 in the West Bank have been killed. This is almost the same number as the students at Urbana High School and it does not include those injured.

This isn't just an international issue; it's personal. Our community values demand we stand against genocide and destruction. As someone who grew up here, I feel a responsibility to urge our city council to address this urgently.

In this public forum, I hope our community can be a voice for justice, peace, and the dignity of every human life.

Thank you for your time.

Bara Saadah, MD

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hind Mhaouer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:28 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input. My name is Hind Mhaouer and I am local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire. Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Parveen Chowdhury <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:42 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

My name is parveen Chowdhury and I am [Urbana resident OR local community member] and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Ghada Hassaan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 3:57 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Ceasefire

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Ghada Abdalla I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Lime Ninja <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 4:41 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Afeefa Ismail and I am local community member] and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Paola Andrea Muñoz Salazar <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 4:49 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Paola Munoz and I am local community member, and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Haneen Jaber <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 8:20 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To whom it may concern,

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Haneen and I am a local community member. I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Sabrina Khan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 8:42 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Sabrina Khan Jones and I am an Urbana resident and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you.

--
Sabrina Khan MBBS, MD

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: AISHAT BELLO <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 9:22 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input. My name is Aishat Bee, I am Urbana resident and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire. Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hala Elashmawi <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 9:37 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Hala Elashmawi and I am Urbana resident and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you
Hala Elashmawi

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hend Abdelfattah <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 9:46 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Ceasefire Resolution at Urbana City Council

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Hend Abdelfattah and I am a coordinator at the University of Illinois - Urbana Champaign and I support a ceasefire. Like many Americans, I draw a hardline at hostages. Prior to 10/7 there were 5,000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, primarily from the West Bank. More than 1,200 of these are hostages being detained without being charged or allowed to stand trial. These numbers are up to >7,500 detained and more than 2,000 held without charge or trial. These Palestinians are often abducted from their homes by Israeli forces during night raids where they terrorize not only the abductees but also their families and sometimes entire neighborhoods.

According to Human Rights Watch, Palestinians held in Israeli prisons are held under inhumane conditions, often with restrictions on food, medicines, and basic hygiene. Palestinians who are returned to their families report physical and mental abuse and often sexual assault. They are put in solitary confinement for months on end. This has been occurring since 1967 and the number of illegally detained hostages has been steadily increasing.

This does not include the gruesome details of the 1,000 Palestinian children who go through military courts every year. "Palestinian children in the military detention system face physical and emotional abuse, with 4 out of 5 (86%) of them being beaten, and 69% of them strip searched according to new research by "Save the Children".

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Mohammad S. El-Jawhari <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:48 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Mohammad, I am a Computer Engineer at UIUC and I support a ceasefire.

On October 13th, Gio Eiland - advisor to Defence Minister Gallant, former Head of the National Security Council and former IDF operations chief, said: "Israel needs to create a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, compelling tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands to seek refuge in Egypt or the Gulf." Israel has already achieved the first part of that statement with the massacre of more than 30,000 Palestinians, the collapse of the medical infrastructure, the destruction of more than 75% of residential buildings, and the collective starvation of the entire 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza. Israeli officials have time and time again clarified their intent for Gaza: genocide, destruction, and ethnic cleansing.

When we are ignored by our state representatives, one of the ways we can make our voices heard is to petition on local levels, as is our right as constituents. We call on you now. The City of Urbana might not have control over the war, but the council has complete control over whether they recognize the voices of the people they've been elected to represent.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Abu-Bakr Zafar <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 8:46 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Abu-Bakar Zafar and I am a local community member. I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to the City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. I am a local physician in the area and am horrified by the atrocities happening in Gaza. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

--

Abu-Bakar Zafar, MD
Department of Ophthalmology
Carle Foundation Hospital
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Alex Taylor <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 11:38 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.8.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Alex Taylor, I'm a math teacher in Urbana. I support the ceasefire resolution because civilians are being murdered in Gaza. Because for decades Palestine has been under military siege, intentionally deprived of access to water, electricity, and medicine. Because Israel's military occupation has caused the mass destruction of basic infrastructure, homes and hospitals. I support the ceasefire resolution because one is compelled by their moral conscience to affirm the existence and humanity of the Palestinian people.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Talha Al-Zoubi <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 1:30 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Talha and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire. From October 7 until January 7th, 93 days, at least 23,084 Palestinians have been killed including 9,600 children, this does not include the more than 7,000 missing assumed to be under the rubble.

-

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Hadeel Mohammad <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:05 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Hadeel Mohammad and I am a Champaign resident and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Ayah Jaber <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:06 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

Hello,

My name is Ayah Jaber and I am local community member who is calling on my representatives to support the ceasefire resolution. In Champaign County alone, multiple families have lost family members due to the Israeli bombardment of Gaza. These are innocent civilians of Gaza. Their only sin is that they are Palestinian. It is insane to me that we are debating whether or not to stop killing unarmed civilians, especially after the deaths of thousands of women and CHILDREN have been so clearly documented. In the history of humanity, we have never seen a genocide so clearly live streamed as the world stays silent. Please, don't allow Urbana to be a part of that silence. Call for an end to this senseless killing. Call for a ceasefire.

Thank you,
Ayah Jaber

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Takeya Alamin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:15 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Takeya Alamin and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you

Takeya Alamin

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Lilah Leopold <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:31 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Lilah Leopold and I am an Urbana resident. I call for a ceasefire, along with so many other citizens and local governments across the US. Other municipalities have already heeded the voices of their constituents who demand the bare minimum in a climate of unchecked support of wonton killing and unjust practices of war and incarceration wielded against the Palestinian people, the failure to exchange prisoners and hostages, and the erosion of basic freedoms and necessities of life both abroad and at home. Our hard-earned tax dollars do not have any place in this conflict except to relieve suffering.

I write as someone with family that includes many Holocaust survivors; the silence on matters of ceasefire and the wielding of accusations of antisemitism to smother freedoms of expression and buttress a climate of fear and division are terrifyingly far from true Jewish values and only further obscure and distort prevention of and protection from true antisemitic and Islamophobic acts.

Silence on ceasefire is complicity in acts of terror and horror the world continues to collectively witness on a daily basis. Calls for a ceasefire cannot be written off as naive attempts or capitulations--a ceasefire is the only sane and humane way forward and toward safety and security at home and abroad. (As well as toward salvaging whatever freedoms of democracy we supposedly enjoy here.) This is especially true for somewhere like Urbana--rich in a variety, talents, enterprises, and experiences of its citizens. This is ripe ground for dramatic erosion of freedoms and our collective humanity. An inability to collectively call for ceasefire is a cruel and monstrous thing.

We cannot stand by, with all of the benefits of history and of our collective knowledge, and allow history to repeat itself in new and novel forms of horror. We all stand to lose everything we hold most dear.

Ceasefire now. Thank you.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Alex Gordon <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 3:33 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT READ ALOUD 01/16/24

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Urbana City Council Members,

I am writing in strong, enthusiastic support of the proposed Urbana international ceasefire resolution.

I am a proud Jewish resident of Urbana and a Champaign Unit 4 school teacher. My Jewish upbringing taught me the importance and sacredness of human life. Like many, my heart aches when I see the destruction and death toll in Gaza. I feel helpless watching Israel's brutal, genocidal campaign against the Palestinian people. Razing homes, bombing hospitals and schools, and murdering children and families will not bring safety to Jews, or anyone.

A better world is possible if we demand it. Let's be known as a city that stands for peace.

Thank you,
Alex Gordon

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: joseph altshuler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:18 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud (Jan 16, 2024)

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Urbana City Council Members,

I am writing in strong support of the proposed Urbana international ceasefire resolution. Please include this email in the public record and read it aloud at the next meeting.

I am a proud Jewish resident of Urbana. My Jewish upbringing taught me the importance and sacredness of human life, as well the imperative to repair the world. Like many, my heart aches when I see the destruction and death toll in Gaza and Israel. I feel devastated watching Israel's brutal campaign against the Palestinian people, funded in part by our tax dollars. Razing homes, bombing hospitals and schools, and murdering children and families will not bring safety to Jews, or anyone.

A better world is possible if we demand it. Let's be known as a city that stands for peace.

Thank you,
Joseph Altshuler

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Natale, Marisa Gabrielle <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:32 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public input re: tonight's meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To the Urbana City Council,

I'm writing tonight to urge you to adopt the resolution before you regarding a ceasefire in Gaza. I'm writing to you as an educator, a specialist in the history of Israel-Palestine, and a deeply committed Jew. I am also on the board of the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation, though my comments do not reflect the position of the organization and I am in no way speaking on the Federation's behalf.

While I respect that many members of my community hold a different view, I do not agree with the contention that this resolution is antisemitic. It appropriately condemns the attacks against civilians committed by Hamas on October 7th, names them as war crimes, and condemns antisemitism. The demands for an immediate ceasefire and a pause on military aid are reasonable stances.

It is not an act of antisemitism to witness the unconscionable loss of life in Gaza and demand a stop to it. It is not antisemitic to know that we, as Americans, pay for the bombs that are leveling homes and killing Palestinian civilians, and to speak out against it. Though I cannot claim we are the majority, many American Jews support a ceasefire in some capacity. Multiple notable Jewish organizations, including those who consider themselves proudly Zionist and pro-Israel, like Americans for Peace Now, have joined calls for a ceasefire. Many more than that have made the same critiques contained in this resolution, condemning Israel's approach and the resulting civilian casualties.

I know that it is extraordinarily difficult, for those who are outsiders to our community, to navigate conversations about what constitutes antisemitism. I merely wish to bring it to the Council's attention that the Jewish community is not in agreement on this issue.

I respect that the way this is framed may not be ideal to some of my fellow Jewish community members. It is still my feeling that in the absence of an alternative text offered by those who take issue with this resolution, adopting the one before you is both morally correct and urgently necessary.

Best wishes,

Marisa Natale
Ph.D Candidate, History
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Pronouns: she / her / hers
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Sarah Blanco <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:30 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24 Meeting

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Sarah Blanco, I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire. Justice and equality are always city business.

If we are ignored by our state representatives, one of the ways we can make our voices heard is to petition on local levels, as is our right as constituents, a right also noted in The Resolution Opposing War Against Iraq. When the larger bodies of government fail to represent the will of the people, the people have every right to call on their local governments to recognize the needs of the majority. We call on you now. The City of Urbana might not have control over the war, but the council has complete control over whether they recognize the voices of the people they've been elected to represent.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Grace Wisegarver <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:18 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Please read my email out loud at the meeting tonight 1/16

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello,

My name is Grace Wisegarver and I am a community member of Champaign-Urbana going on 34 years and an educator of Champaign-Urbana for going on nine years.

I am here today to uphold the city council on a resolution for a ceasefire in Palestine. Now, before you roll your eyes and ask how this is relative to Champaign, I want to tell you why I first became in support of the Free Palestine movement. As an educator and advocate for children and students, I have time and time again have put myself in their shoes and imagine if the genocide today were happening in Champaign. I think of the list of children that have since passed since October 7th and imagine the horrors if it were to be my own students, Past, Present and Future. (Which if you recognize my name, has been to many of the relatives of the people standing in this very room.) I think of their safety. I think of which classroom window I can break to get my students out of our school if we were to be carpet bombed. I think of my early education days and imagine how many toddlers I can carry in my hands while getting them to a safe exit. I think of my behavioral school days, and imagine how I would keep my kids from going into crisis while running away from snipers and bombs. We do not know the future that holds for Champaign and with everything going on in Palestine and Yemen, we have to be realistic. I think it is important to remember the safety of our residents, students and others of Champaign-Urbana.

So, I, Grace Wisegarver, call on Champaign City Council to call and support for a ceasefire in Palestine.

Thank you.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Dua Aldasouqi <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:27 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] 1.16.24 PUBLIC INPUT

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comment out loud during public input.

My name is Dua Aldasouqi and I am a local CU community member and I support a ceasefire.

On October 13th, Gio Eiland - advisor to Defence Minister Gallant, former Head of the National Security Council and former IDF operations chief, said: "Israel needs to create a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, compelling tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands to seek refuge in Egypt or the Gulf."

Israel has already achieved the first part of that statement with the massacre of more than 30,000 Palestinians, the collapse of the medical infrastructure, the destruction of more than 70% of residential buildings, and the collective starvation of the entire 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza. Israeli officials have time and time again clarified their intent for Gaza: genocide, destruction, and ethnic cleansing.

I demand a ceasefire as do the majority of Americans.

Thank you,

Dua Aldasouqi, MA, RDN

Owner & Founder

A Muslim Dietitian

www.amuslimdietitian.com

IG: [@amuslimdietitian](https://www.instagram.com/amuslimdietitian)

ALMAZ Wearables

www.almazwearables.com

Pinterest: [@almazwearables](https://www.pinterest.com/almazwearables)

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Fatima Ahmed <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:41 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT 1.16.24

Importance: Low

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my email out loud during public input.

My name is Fatima Ahmed and I am a local community member and I support a ceasefire along with more than two-thirds of Americans. Since the ceasefire resolution was introduced to City Council on Jan 8, Israeli forces have killed more than 884 Palestinians in Gaza and 7 Palestinians in the West Bank. We cannot afford silence. We must do everything within our capacity to end this rampage and it starts with a ceasefire.

Thank you,
Fatima Ahmed

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: William Kohen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 10:53 AM
To: !City Council
Cc: Eileen Kohen
Subject: Public Input

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I am dismayed that yet another group recently was given a platform before the Urbana City Council to spit out its venom directed toward the State of Israel and by extension Jews under the guise of seeking a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas War. This group demands the council pass a formal resolution calling for a cease-fire. Interestingly, this same group did not call for a cease-fire in any other current conflict around the world.

It is reprehensible that some ultra left-wing council members encourage/support this discussion of international issues, especially if it involves Israel, a close ally of the United States. I believe it is the council members' responsibility to focus on city business/issues to benefit all Urbana citizens. To her credit, Mayor Marlin attempted to re-focus the council. I strongly protest any potential council vote on a formal resolution to call for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas War. There are far more appropriate venues for a discussion of this international conflict.

Please include this email in the public record.

Regards,

William Kohen

Ward 7, Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: sheri langendorf <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 8:27 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Comment: Please read aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

My name is Sheri Langendorf and I am an Urbana resident. I do not support the Urbana Council using its time to obtain input about a ceasefire in the Middle East.

During the ceasefire on October 7th, Hamas attacked innocent civilians in Israel, killing over 1200 people and kidnapping over 240 civilians. Over 132 are still being kept as hostages.

We cannot afford silence. Where were you on October 8th and why didn't the Urbana City Council speak up against this brutal attack of innocent people- many are American citizens? Why isn't the Urbana City Council speaking up against using rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war? Why isn't the Urbana City Council speaking up against babies being decapitated in front of their parents?

Ending the rampage starts with Hamas releasing the hostages.

Sheri

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Reut H <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 11:13 AM
To: !City Council
Cc: Marlin, Diane
Subject: Public Input
Attachments: VID-20240116-WA0003.mp4; IMG-20240116-WA0002.jpg

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

COULD YOU PLEASE INCLUDE THIS LETTER IN PUBLIC RECORD AND READ AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

As an Urbana taxpayer, I would like to raise an objection on the public record regarding the proposed resolution and presentation regarding the conflict between Israel and Hamas, which appeared before the Urbana City Council on 01/08/2024. The objection extends as well to presenter himself. Outside of a few points below, I won't go into detail about the numerous claims and accusations asserted in the presentation itself, as there have been numerous letters and comments already. I will though state my objection to the history of the presenter, as well as to the presentation, which was slanted and contained numerous falsehoods, misrepresentations, omissions, and double standards.

Ben Joselyn, who put forth the foreign policy resolution and prepared the opening presentation, was recently caught on film ripping down posters of Israeli hostages less than 3 weeks after Hamas brutally mass raped, tortured, mutilated, burned alive and murdered babies, children, and adults. It is hard to see this as anything other than an act of hate. Given the significance of which facts or claims are presented and which are omitted, as well as to how claims are exhibited, the credibility of the person preparing and presenting such claims matters. Joselyn's actions in tearing down posters of hostages crossed a number of moral and ethical boundaries, and the people of Urbana have a right to know the character of the person whose claims form the basis for the Resolution advanced by Council Member Grace Wilken and Christopher Evans. I therefore kindly request that this letter be put in the public record, and that it be read out at the upcoming City Council Meeting.

It was interesting at the conclusion that Ben Joselyn concurred when Council Member Christopher Evans asked him to emphasize that the Resolution and presentation "did not take sides." The Resolution in fact used loaded terms that perverted history and the current reality, and that demonstrated extreme bias. It also did not include any credible solution that addresses Israel's security concerns against an existential threat by a terrorist organization (and Iranian proxy). The Hamas Charter explicitly seeks the elimination of Jews throughout the world, and this has been constantly reinforced in comments by Hamas leaders, culminating with October comments that Hamas seeks to recreate October 7th "again and again." There was a ceasefire on October 6th, and it is unclear how Israel can be expected to seek a ceasefire with an organization with an avowed goal of Israel's annihilation.

From here I'd like to provide a couple brief comments regarding claims made during the presentation and/or in the Resolution. The Resolution makes vague reference to colonization. Jews have lived continuously in what is now Israel for over 3,000 years, and they are not colonizers of land they are indigenous to. Also of note, the majority of Israel's Jews are Mizrahi whose families were dispossessed and cleansed from Arab countries. That includes my own family, which was cleansed from an ancient Jewish community in Iraq that dated back 2,700 years. My father grew up for many years in a refugee camp without running water or electricity.

With regard to the ICJ accusations that were referenced repeatedly during the presentation, the case by South Africa is in fact weak and political. While Joselyn ignores the genocidal intent of Hamas (crucial to any ceasefire call), he cites claims regarding Israel's intentions that are patently false, as overwhelming evidence shows. A quote by Netanyahu was cynically misrepresented, and of course the fact he stated that Israel has no intention to permanently displace civilians or occupy Gaza has been ignored. [see <https://www.wsj.com/articles/amalek-and-jihad-israel-ground-invasion-gaza-c2cfaeb1>] The ICJ is a politicized body in which judges are selected based on regional blocks, and overwhelmingly they vote based on their governments' political positions.

The reference to dozens of countries voting against Israel also ignores the (realpolitik) politicized environment that for decades has resulted in the UN General Assembly and UN HRC routinely condemning Israel each year more times than the rest of the world combined. This has occurred even as millions have been slaughtered (including during the last 20 years in Rwanda, Sudan, and Congo), and as tens of millions have been displaced elsewhere. It should also be clarified that when Americans are presented with clear circumstances surrounding cease fire calls, support drops dramatically (with a majority against it). [See <https://thehill.com/opinion/4399520-the-pitfalls-of-polling-about-a-gaza-ceasefire/>]

Thank you for taking time out to consider my objections, as well as my request that this be entered into the public record and read out.

Sincerely,

Reut Halevy

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Erin Mangurten <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 11:26 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

My name is Erin Kerpel and I attended UIUC and I now have a son who attends school there. I do not support the Urbana Council using its time to obtain input about a ceasefire in the Middle East. During the ceasefire on October 7th, Hamas attacked innocent civilians in Israel, killing over 1200 people and kidnapping over 240 civilians. Over 132 are still being held hostage. We cannot afford silence. If the Urbana City Council feels the need to involve itself in international affairs, where were you on October 8th to speak out against the attack on innocent people and why aren't you urging Hamas for a ceasefire? Additionally, why aren't you speaking out against the war crimes committed by Hamas, who used rape and sexual violence as a weapon, and who tortured and burned babies in front of their parents? I urge you to think about the goal of this resolution, which will ultimately further divide your constituents.

With gratitude,

Erin Kerpel
Director of Programming for Gratitude Generation
www.gratitudegeneration.org
FB group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gratitudegeneration/>

Board Member of Furever Home Dog Sanctuary
www.fureverhomedogsanctuary.org
FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/fhdsdogs>

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Olivia Harris Barkoff <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:01 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Olivia Harris Barkoff
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Council Members and members of the Urbana community,

I write with great concern over the focus of an Urbana City Council meeting on a foreign overseas conflict. While Urbana has many challenges and urgent local matters to address, there are members of the community who would rather take time away from the concerns of the community to focus on the one Jewish country in the world. A horrific attack was perpetrated upon the nation of Israel on October 7 with clearly stated threats to repeat the attack until there is no more Israel. Israel is obliged to defend and protect itself and its citizens from attack. They waited three weeks to begin their defense in order to give Gazan citizens the opportunity to move away from militarized areas. They are trying to avoid unnecessary casualties which is drawing out the war much longer than if they did not take such care. It is not our business to interfere with foreign policy. It is the business of the city council to take care of the city. I hope the members of the community will take care of their own citizens while still holding the victims of this unfortunate, hate driven war in their hearts.

Thank you very much.

--

Dr. Olivia Harris
Animals Are People Too

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Alex Scheeline <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:04 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Mideast Resolution

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members:

As you can see from my address, I am a Champaign resident. Nevertheless, if you are considering business that stretches to the Middle East, perhaps you will also consider input from your neighbors to the immediate west.

Do any of us condone any of the violence currently occurring? No.

Do any of us condone violence anywhere? No.

Does violence occur between some people under some circumstances? Yes.

We have long-since figured out in the US that condemnation accomplishes nothing. What has a chance of working is to determine causes and propose constructive mitigations. That requires clear-eyed understanding of what is happening and why.

Would Israel be clearing tunnels, destroying arms caches, and otherwise defending itself had 1400+ of its citizens not been murdered, raped, and kidnapped on October 7? No -- it would have continued as it had for years prior thereto, suppressing rocket fire but otherwise doing its best to live side-by-side with Gaza.

What simple action could end the current violence? Surrender of Hamas would immediately allow hostages (or their corpses) to be returned to Israel, humanitarian aid to flow unhindered, and formation of a civil government to begin. Were Israel to cease the destruction of Hamas, would hostages be quickly returned? That seems unlikely. Would humanitarian aid flow to the 2 million residents of Gaza or to the remaining Hamas forces? The latter seems likely if history is any guide.

The Urbana City Council, if it passes any resolution, should, **FIRST**, condemn Hamas's attack on Israel. **SECOND**, it should advocate for humanitarian aid to anyone who is unarmed (anyone in Gaza who is not waging or abetting resistance). **THIRD**, while advocating for peace and tranquility for everyone in the Middle East, it should refrain from any one-sided advocacy for any political group. The situation has proven intractable for a century. Are West Bank settlers complicating the situation? Many, of various nationalities, ethnicities, and religious persuasions, think so; others disagree. Should there be one, two, three, or more political entities between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea? There are advocates for each of these possibilities. But first, murderous groups like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah need to stop murdering, raping, and kidnapping Israelis. If radicals from Champaign were to start raiding the peaceful citizens of Urbana, would Urbana just shrug its shoulders? I doubt it -- and similarly, Israelis cannot stand by as their neighbors loose mayhem on their families and friends.

--

Alexander Scheeline
[REDACTED]
Champaign, IL 61821
Cell [REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Eileen Kohen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:23 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Kohen Eileen
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT READ ALOUD

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I previously sent the email below before finding out that I can request that it is read aloud. Please make this adjustment.

I also want to add this information from the Jewish Federation for your consideration. Antisemitism is at an all time high. The proposed resolution with its one-sided distorted views will only increase hatred and antisemitism in our community.

Esteemed council members – tonight you will hear speaker after speaker justify the indiscriminate rape, murder, and torture of innocent Israelis – Jewish and not Jewish. Some will even go so far as to deny that these extremely well-documented atrocities happened and they will spread appalling conspiracy theories that sully the memories of the victims. They will deny the horrific genocidal aims of the Hamas terror organization. And they will uplift the “intifada” and “resistance” against Israel’s existence. The arguments are not about Israeli government policy, they are about the very existence of the State of Israel – the lone Jewish state in the world. The messages of Israeli’s illegitimacy erases millennia of Jewish history, and the fact that these arguments are about the 75 years of so-called “occupation” demonstrate that the argument here is about Israel’s very existence.

For decades, the Jewish Federation has worked with the broader community and invested millions of dollars and untold numbers of hours towards shared society, coexistence, and a better future for Israelis and Palestinians.

These resolutions and these messages do not align with American values. They absolve Hamas, an organization recognized by our government as a terrorist organization, of any wrongdoing, and attempt to strip Israel of the basic right to self-defense that every nation has.

These resolutions are designed to promote antisemitic vitriol, agitate the community, and will exacerbate the rhetoric that has already led to the meteoric rise of antisemitism.

On Jan 14, 2024, at 2:26 PM, Eileen Kohen <[REDACTED]> wrote:

The Urbana city council should concentrate on city government, not international issues that are beyond the scope of local decisions. I find it upsetting that almost the entirety of the Jan 8, 2024, session was taken up by the proposed international cease-fire resolution. According to the News Gazette, “This topic took up all but 10 minutes of a meeting that lasted nearly two-and-a-half hours.” More important city business was shoved aside.

The Urbana city council is not the forum for such a resolution. It will not impact the conflict in the Middle East. It will serve to foster a divisive and toxic environment for our Urbana city residents, many of whom are Palestinians, Israelis, ex pats from Arab countries, members of the Jewish community, all of whom are attempting to peacefully navigate life here while also coping with loss and concern for family and friends in the Middle East.

I praise Mayor Marlin's request that the sponsors "withdraw it completely from the agenda and seek a venue outside city council for this discussion." Mayor Marlin is always the voice of reason. It's frustrating that she has to continually deal with a small vocal (and in my opinion, mis-guided) minority at many city council meetings. If this resolution does come up for a vote, I urge council members to reject it with their vote.

Please include this email in the public record.

Regards,
Eileen Kohen
Ward 7, Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Mitchell Harris <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 2:43 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I was dismayed to hear today that the Urbana City Council is going to take input tonight, 16 January 2024, on the "Proposed Urbana International Ceasefire Resolution," rather than work on governing the city.

Make no mistake, the ceasefire resolution authored by Ben Jocelyn is a statement against Western liberal values of freedom of expression, women's rights, and homosexual rights. The rambling, hateful resolution is filled with numerous anti-Israel tropes, no matter how preposterous or untrue. This resolution is political theater and not a serious statement on peace. Hamas broke the ceasefire in effect on October 6, it alone has the power to stop this war.

I urge you to heed to the words of Masih Alinejad, Iranian-American journalist and women's rights activist:

"Hamas and Islamic Republic are terrorists, and they do not talk for the people of Iran or Palestine.

"The whole situation in Israel and Gaza is an incredible tragedy.

"While this is a proxy war by the Islamic Republic and its terrorist arm Quds Force and should be condemned in strongest terms, it is critical that Israel should do everything in its power to protect Palestinian civilians under the laws of armed conflict.

"Let's us be honest: the crisis today is largely due to Hamas who took over Gaza in 2006 and has not allowed any elections since then. Gaza could have been another Dubai or Singapore. Instead, Hamas diverted funds to build tunnels and obtain rockets and weapons from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the world's biggest sponsor of terrorism, to wage war.

"The vast majority of Iranians don't support the Islamic Republic and are hostage to its soul destroying policies of the regime. The vast majority of Palestinians want peace, they want good jobs and decent education for their kids. They want a better life. That's not possible with Hamas leadership that takes its orders from the Islamist leaders in Tehran who want to export their vile revolution to take the world backwards to the sixth century.

"Hamas, like the Islamic Republic, is in the business of terrorism. Hamas doesn't care about Palestinians. Hamas knew exactly how Israel would respond to the brutal attack on its citizens on Oct. 7. Hamas is like ISIS. It must be destroyed."

Respectfully,
Mitchell Harris, Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Alan Cook <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 3:37 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public input read aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council members,

My name is Rabbi Alan Cook and I am a rabbi at Sinai Temple in southwest Champaign, the oldest Jewish institution in Champaign County and the only full-service synagogue in the region.

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed ceasefire resolution that has come before your body. I do not object to a cessation of fighting; it is my fervent wish that peace will prevail in the region. However, I do not feel that it is the business of the Urbana City Council to weigh in on issues of international geopolitics over which you ultimately have little-to-no influence.

If the Council feels, however, that it must address this topic, then I am dismayed that the resolution would be drafted without the awareness or input of the local Jewish community. The wording of the resolution as it stands contains factual inaccuracies and is one-sided. It calls on Israel to cease military operations in Gaza without similarly demanding that Hamas halt its daily barrages of missiles fired into Israel. Nor does it precondition the ceasefire on the release of the 135 individuals still held in Gaza (or the repatriation of their bodies if they are deceased).

I mourn for the Palestinian lives that have been lost in this conflict, as I mourn for the 1,200 Israelis who were brutally tortured, raped, and murdered under the guidance of Hamas (which has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union). Both the local Muslim community and the local Jewish community are in pain over this conflict. Please reject the narrative that says that empathy can only be shown for one side. To do otherwise is to continue to foment divisiveness and encourage antisemitism and/or Islamophobia.

I urge you to reject this resolution.

Thank you,

Rabbi Alan Cook

Rabbi Alan Cook
(preferred pronouns: he/him/his)
Sinai Temple

[REDACTED]
Champaign, IL 61822

[REDACTED]
<http://ravcookie.blogspot.com>

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good [people] to do nothing.”- Edmund Burke

לא עליך המלכה לגמר
ולא אתה בן-חורין להבטל ממנה

You are not required to complete the task, but neither are you free to abstain from it (Pirke Avot 2:15)

Please note: I am generally away from email on Tuesdays, and on Shabbat and holidays.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Tania Ionin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 3:53 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** QUARANTINE ***] Public Input Read Aloud

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members,

I am writing with regard to the resolution calling for a permanent and immediate ceasefire in Gaza that community members are urging the Urbana City Council to adopt. As current elected board president of the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation, I strongly urge you not to adopt the resolution in its current form. The resolution in its current form makes allegations against, and demands of, the State of Israel, while saying very little about Hamas atrocities and not demanding anything of Hamas. A resolution by a town in the United States is not going to have any effects on politics on the Middle East. The resolution as currently worded would only serve to further divide our community and to contribute to the growing rise of antisemitism. I urge the City Council not to consider adopting the resolution in its current form, but instead to work together with Jewish community leaders to draft a resolution that is not rooted in antisemitic and anti-Zionist language.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tania Ionin

President (2022-2024)
Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Frances Harris <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:18 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT: January 16, 2023

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear members of the Urbana City Council,

I am writing in regard to the proposed resolution regarding an international ceasefire. If I were a braver or stronger person I would be delivering these words in person at the meeting tonight, but I just cannot bear to witness the vitriol that is sure to feature prominently at the meeting. I am a longtime Urbana resident and I am Jewish. I know many residents (Jewish and non-Jewish) who are on both sides of this issue. I find it just too painful to watch people I care about being so dismissive of and nasty to each other.

I am a retired high school librarian. I spent much of my career teaching students how to evaluate information, particularly information they found online. The crisis in the Middle East has spawned a motherlode of misinformation, which has led to rising antisemitism and Islamophobia. The remarks made during the last City Council meeting (and the language in the resolution itself) were full of the kind of buzzwords that can only lead in that sorry direction. While I am glad to live in a community that is passionate about world problems, I do not believe our local city government is the place to solve them. We are not the experts. In contrast, I am proud that our wonderful city library has not been victim to the spate of book challenges that have plagued other cities. That is the kind of national issue that can be acted upon locally in a meaningful way. The crisis in the Middle East is not. Rather, these discussions only estrange us from one another. There are just so, so many other ways concerned Urbana residents can have a positive impact on this crisis.

A personal note. In retirement, I have focused on a new direction in my life. I am a klezmer musician and a proponent of Yiddish culture. Klezmer music is the traditional wedding and folk music of Eastern European Jewry. The Holocaust nearly eradicated much of Yiddish culture, particularly its language of nearly 1,000 years. Ironically, the founding of the state of Israel did not help because survivors and local Jewish residents were so intent on reviving Hebrew as a spoken language. I am happy to say that klezmer music is flourishing in today's world and the Yiddish language is also experiencing a big revival. However, I know the day will come when I will be challenged at a gig about playing "pro-Israeli" music. The line between antisemitism and anti-Zionism is very, very thin. The kind of discourse engendered by the proposed resolution only makes it thinner.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your service to our city.

Sincerely,

Frances Harris
[REDACTED]

Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Vadim Zharnitsky <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 3:21 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: [*** SPAM ***] PUBLIC INPUT

Importance: Low

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members,

I urge you NOT to issue a resolution on a ceasefire in the Gaza-Hamas war.

I believe it makes no sense for a city council to take a position on international affairs. While I am strongly pro-Israeli and I have just come back from a trip to Israel having seen the Hamas atrocities at two Kibbutzim and Nova festivals, I would never expect you to condemn Hamas. There are other political entities to do so and it is not part of your mission.

Now, as a matter of fact, the people in Israel I talked to from all sides of the political spectrum support removing Hamas from power and freeing (hopefully alive) hostages. Any unconditional ceasefire makes the IDF job much harder (as Hamas would somewhat restore their positions) and this prolongs the conflict with more civilians being killed. While I do not think your resolution would have any effect, if it did it would be only harmful.

Sincerely,

Vadim Zharnitsky

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: timur oikhberg <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:16 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Esteemed Urbana City Council Members:

I am writing to make my opposition to the Resolution Calling for a Permanent and Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza known. The reason is three-fold:

- (1) The current resolution is hopelessly one-sided, since it does not mention Hamas's atrocities, which triggered the current flare-up of fighting, destruction, and death.
- (2) I think the resolution misrepresents Israel's actions as "collective punishment," and misinterprets Article 33 of Geneva Convention IV.
- (3) Lastly, the resolution sharpens divisions within the Urbana community, and distracts the esteemed council from the hard and necessary work of running the city.

Sincerely,
Timur Oikhberg

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Liberzon, Daniel M <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 9:02 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Read Aloud

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear council members,

I'm a resident of Urbana, and I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the idea of the Urbana City Council adopting a ceasefire resolution with respect to the conflict in Gaza.

Hamas carried out a brutal attack on the State of Israel on October 7. It is Hamas that should cease fire and lay down its arms. Instead, they have vowed to repeat their attacks against innocent civilians until Israel is destroyed. It is against Hamas's aggression, not against Israel's well-justified efforts to defend itself, that we should stand united.

Tonight you will hear speaker after speaker justify the indiscriminate rape, murder, and torture of innocent Israelis – Jewish and not Jewish. Some will even go so far as to deny that these extremely well-documented atrocities happened and they will spread appalling conspiracy theories that sully the memories of the victims. They will deny the horrific genocidal aims of the Hamas terror organization. And they will uplift the “intifada” and “resistance” against Israel’s existence. The arguments are not about Israeli government policy, they are about the very existence of the State of Israel – the lone Jewish state in the world. The messages of Israeli’s illegitimacy erases millennia of Jewish history, and the fact that these arguments are about the 75 years of so-called “occupation” demonstrate that the argument here is about Israel’s very existence.

For decades, the Jewish Federation has worked with the broader community and invested millions of dollars and untold numbers of hours towards shared society, coexistence, and a better future for Israelis and Palestinians.

These resolutions and these messages do not align with American values. They absolve Hamas, an organization recognized by our government as a terrorist organization, of any wrongdoing, and attempt to strip Israel of the basic right to self-defense that every nation has.

These resolutions are designed to promote antisemitic vitriol, agitate the community, and will exacerbate the rhetoric that has already led to the meteoric rise of antisemitism.

Study after study demonstrates that the vast majority of the American public supports Israel in this war against terror. While we all want hostilities to end, just 20% of Americans believe in an unconditional ceasefire that does not include removing Hamas from power and freeing all the hostages.

Do not fall for their tactics. Let’s rise above the discourse presented in this resolution that favors divisiveness and hate over the values we should hold near and dear.