

April 2, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING
POSITION STATEMENTS & WRITTEN COMMENTS

PUBLIC FORUM

WRITTEN COMMENT ONLY

1. Patrice Basso (Naperville) I wanted to thank the Mayor and City Council for prioritizing local issues. I do not think a Gaza ceasefire resolution is appropriate. This is a topic that is best handled by contacting members of Congress. I also believe that supporting such a resolution would be divisive to our local community.
2. Vincent Diraddo (Naperville) As a member of Congregation Beth Shalom in Naperville (but not authorized to comment on behalf of the entire organization) I am in opposition to the Resolution for an immediate Gaza cease file. This Opposition is not directly related to anyone's religious rights but my opinion that the City Council uphold the United States Constitution in regard to separation of Church and State.
3. Robyn (Naperville) The City Council should be aware of the fact that if a Palestinian support resolution is passed, it will set a precedent for the future allowing any group having issues anywhere in the world to come before the Council for a resolution of support. The City of Naperville's mission is not to promote any group with an agenda that does not directly impact the City, nor does the City have any influence over the outcomes of any such world-wide conflicts.
4. Richard Weiss (Naperville) Naperville is a diverse city and many religious & ethnic organizations, including Congregation Beth Shalom, have worked diligently to promote harmony and acceptance among all groups. Any resolution that supports a particular group's position will increase divisiveness and erode the tolerance that we currently have in the City. I urge the Council members to NOT pass any resolution regarding this issue and maintain a position of political neutrality.
5. Allyson Gorman (Naperville) Dear Members of the City Council:

I am saddened to have to write a comment but have spent a lot of time evaluating the situation in the middle east since October 7th. I strongly oppose a ceasefire resolution to be added to the agenda as an American Jew living in this community. I have feared for my family's safety since this day as antisemitism has been rising all over this country since last fall.

As an example, I declined to put up Hanukkah decorations at the holidays, something that we have always done since moving to Naperville. I have removed colleges as potential options for my teenagers to attend because of the hate and antisemitism that students are facing on many college campuses.

When 9/11 occurred, President Bush was adamant about apprehending the top leader who committed this heinous terrorist act (Osama Bin Laden). We, as Americans, supported his steadfast support of holding the terrorist leader accountable. Unfortunately, the leader of Hamas has been hiding in a large underground network that he and his team have built under hospitals and children's centers, schools, etc. This has been by design.

By adding a ceasefire resolution to the agenda, the City of Naperville is not condemning

the heinous act that occurred on October 7th by Hamas against the Jewish people. Israel has the right to defend itself against terrorism, just like Americans did regarding 9/11. The teaching of hatred against a particular group is not “freedom of speech” but rather terrorism. Plain and simple.

Walkouts planned at NVHS, adding resolutions to a city council agenda, and chanting “from the river to the sea” condones acts of violence against one group of people: Jews.

It is not the responsibility of the City of Naperville to be involved in geopolitics. It’s only a distraction of those that govern politics, and our local leaders need to focus on making Naperville safe for ALL those that live here - of all ethnic and religious groups.

We chose to live in Naperville (and the western suburbs) because of its diversity. By putting something on the agenda that doesn’t denounce terrorism and suggests that Israel should not defend itself or hold the terrorist leader who attacked its citizens accountable (and still holding them hostage) only leads to a further divide here in town.

Thank you.

6. Beth Weigensberg (Naperville) Dear Members of the City Council:

I urge the members of Naperville’s City Council to neither propose nor vote for the Resolution Calling for a Permanent and Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza. I find it frustrating and disappointing to see this divisive and inappropriate resolution come forward in Naperville. First and foremost, any position made by our local government will have absolutely no effect on foreign policy and this will only continue to divide our Naperville community. Understanding their role to govern on local issues, the Naperville City Council has never issued resolutions on any previous or current international matter. With no possibility of influencing the strategy or outcome of the Israel-Hamas war, why would our Naperville City Council consider supporting this resolution that would do more harm than good within our local community? The vocal voice of a few in support of this resolution are NOT representative of the majority of Naperville residents.

I truly believe Naperville is the best place to live in the county, and I’m proud to raise my family here. Our residents live, work, and go to school together across many races, cultures, and religions. Our diverse communities are our strength, and we can support one another as neighbors in this community despite our disagreements about foreign affairs. To take a position (for or against) on a ceasefire resolution aggravates tensions, fears, and division within our community, which will make it harder to come together as a community on other more important local issues.

I urge the City Council to consider ways to proactively address the increase in antisemitism and the growing harassment and intimidation of those speaking out against this resolution. As our City Council members, this where you should focus your attention and where you can have a real, substantive impact - one that will strengthen our diverse community, rather than taking a symbolic action that will have no impact on what actually happens in Gaza, but would unfortunately increase divisiveness, harassment, and hate here at home in Naperville.

Thank you.

7. Alexis Rago (Naperville) Dear Naperville City Council Representatives,

I oppose the passing of a resolution supporting a ceasefire in Gaza for several reasons

including the safety of Israel, Israeli citizens, and Jews around the world. It's important to remember that Israel is at war with Hamas, a terrorist organization that has declared it will continue mass attacks, similar to October 7th, until all the Jews are gone. Hamas continues to choose to put the safety of the Gaza citizens at risk by using hospitals, schools, and mosques as a base for Hamas fighters.

Unfortunately to support a ceasefire is to support Hamas. Israel might be coerced to stop their war against Hamas. Not so with Hamas. A ceasefire will, in effect, provide time for Hamas to regroup and prepare for their next onslaught against the state of Israel. Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, raping, burning, and murdering over 1200 Israeli civilians. Their charter calls for the elimination of the state of Israel, killing Jews worldwide, and establishing Islamic rule. To support a ceasefire is to take sides in this conflict. Please be on the right side and oppose the resolution.

When it comes to foreign policy issues, the City Council should see its scope of responsibility as allowing Naperville residents to speak and hold rallies publicly and to proactively address how to address harassment or intimidation of those speaking out. Episodes of harassment have been reported. That is where you should focus your attention because that is where you can have a real, substantive impact, one which will strengthen our community, rather than taking a symbolic action that will have little impact on what actually happens.

Passing a resolution related to a foreign policy issue sets a precedent that other interested groups in our city will come forward to ask the City Council to support their foreign policy preferences. Does the City Council want to set that precedent?

The City of Naperville updated the Mission Statement in Dec 2019 by addressing inclusivity and diversity, "To provide services that ensure a high quality of life, sound fiscal management, and a dynamic business environment, while creating an inclusive community that values diversity." How does this resolution align with our Mission Statement? It doesn't and therefore our city council should not allow this resolution to come to a vote at the next meeting. Passing this resolution will increase divisiveness and animosity locally. We work hard in Naperville to bring our diverse communities together despite our disagreements about foreign affairs. Whether to have a ceasefire IS an issue that divides our community. To take a position (for or against) aggravates this division and makes it harder to come together as a community on other more important local issues. It will lead to the view that "my side" cannot be seen in public with "your side," because you supported or opposed this resolution.

Thank you for your consideration and hearing my opposition to the resolution to support a ceasefire in Gaza.

8. Herbert Wigder (Chicago) All of us favor a cease fire in Gaza. The way to achieve it is simple:
 - 1- Hamas returns all living hostages immediately including Americans it kidnapped
 - 2- Hamas returns all dead bodies for respectful burial
 - 3- Hamas recognizes the right of Israel to exist
 - 4- Hamas changes its stated purpose which is the destruction of Israel
 - 5- Hamas stops launching rockets into Israel as it has done for years.
 - 6- Hamas stops building tunnels into Israel to attack Israelis.Israel is a small country. Extrapolate the size of Israel to the size of the United States and ask yourselves the following questions:
If any country had attacked and killed 40,00 American civilians, what would the USA have done?

If any country had kidnapped 4,000 American hostages, what would the USA have done?

There is no moral equivalency between Hamas which came into power and then tortured and executed its political opposition, and Israel which is a democracy. In our country, we do not blame the victim of attacks, rape, or murder.

Likewise, we cannot blame Israel for the attack, rape, and murder of its people by Hamas.

Hamas launched this savage attack against Israel knowing that the world would eventually blame Israel for civilian casualties. This was their original strategy according to retired US General Clark

I do not believe that the Naperville City Council should take a position on this divisive issue.

But if it does, the Council should blame Hamas and demand immediate release of all hostages, return of all the dead bodies it holds, recognition of Israel's right to exist, and cease all rocket launches into Israel which Hamas has perpetrated for years.

9. Shira Isenberg (Naperville) There is no legitimate city purpose in passing a resolution regarding international issues. The city council should focus on local issues and Naperville citizens. Moreover, when similar cease fire resolutions are raised in other local governments, they are incredibly one sided. Do any call for the release of the Israeli hostages who are civilians, both young and old? Do they recognize the slaughter of innocent Israelis on October 7 and unspeakable acts of violence (including brutal rape) that Hamas perpetrated? Do they recognize that Hamas has rejected all cease fire initiatives that would require the release of hostages? Do they recognize that Hamas purposely puts civilians in harm's way and keeps aid from civilians and that the IDF does everything it can to reduce civilian loss? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding no. Indeed, these resolutions are merely an "excuse" for antisemitism. In a time when antisemitism is on the rise and our children feel even more isolated on school campuses, we should not further isolate the Jewish citizens of Naperville. If any resolution should be passed by the city council, it should be to fight the antisemitism and hatred that the Jewish citizens of Naperville are facing and not to exacerbate it by bowing down to the pressure of a very vocal group of people who are bending the truth to further target Jewish people.
10. Stephanie Budrow (Naperville) I am proud to be a Naperville resident, having moved here 13 years ago to raise my family. As such, I believe the City of Naperville represents the community as a whole. For the city to take a stand on one side and pass a ceasefire resolution would only serve to divide us. I hope the board realizes its responsibility to represent the entire community.
11. Nikki Sigale (Naperville) Naperville city council miracle workers need to convince Hamas Terrorists to release the hostages and stop firing rockets at Israel. Then you can start working on Ukraine, Haiti and Sudan. Welcome to your new job description.
12. William Cohen (Naperville) Dear Members of the Naperville City Council, It is with great dismay that we write to you, as Jewish and non-Jewish members of the Naperville community, upon hearing that the City Council will be debating an anti-Israel ceasefire resolution at this week's council meeting. Many have tried to convince you that this resolution emerges out of a longing for peace; however, this could not be further from the case. This resolution will not promote peace abroad or at home in Naperville, will stoke antisemitism and animosity in our community, and is frankly a dereliction of the duty of an American government official.

As you know, the current war between Israel and Hamas started on October 7th.

Hamas, a United States Department of State Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, fired several thousand rockets into Israel, serving as a diversion for >1,000 armed terrorists to storm Israeli communities, killing >1,200 innocent civilians, including children, and taking >200 hostage. Over 360 civilians at a music festival near the border were brutally murdered with dozens more taken hostage. Multiple Kibbutzim (small agricultural villages) were sites of massacres- terrorists going door to door looking for Jews to murder, from young children to holocaust survivors. Families were burned alive in their homes, innocent people were beheaded in the street, and countless women were raped both before, and after they were killed. It was the largest killing of Jews since the Holocaust, in a modern-day pogrom.

To properly consider this ceasefire solution, I ask you to read this paragraph, close your eyes, and imagine this attack happening near your home. Imagine thousands of rockets raining down on the Naperville area. Imagine thousands of armed terrorists driving through the streets of our city, shooting any person they can see- cars parked at intersections, families waiting at bus stops, the elderly standing in their kitchen windows. Now imagine these terrorists going door to door in your neighborhood, with your family home. Some families, including children, are taken hostage, back across the border. Some families, including children, are tortured before being murdered in their beds. Some families are burned alive in their homes, beyond recognition. Now, imagine six months have passed. Those responsible for this attack on your home have still not been brought to justice, still fire rockets on your community, and still hold >130 hostages. Do you think it would be reasonable for a local city council 6,000 miles away to ask you to stop fighting to rescue your hostages? To prevent a similar attack from happening again? To bring those responsible to justice?

This ceasefire resolution is an affront to the local Jewish community, a fellow democracy, and one of our nation's closest allies. In January, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted on a similar resolution. In the days after, the Mayor said in an official statement, "Since the Board of Supervisors introduced their Gaza ceasefire resolution, and certainly since they passed it last week, our City has been angrier, more divided, and less safe. Sadly, that may have been the point. Their exercise was never about bringing people together; it was about choosing a side". She further describes the harassment and assault of Jewish community members and employees in City Hall during the debate and after the vote. We are afraid you will see the same in Naperville on Tuesday. Antisemitism in the United States, and around the world has skyrocketed since October 7th. Synagogues have been vandalized, Jews have been murdered in hate crimes, marches through the streets chant for the eradication of Jews, and many praise the Nazis. In the city of Chicago just a few weeks ago, a famous Jewish musician, Matisyahu, was prevented from performing at the House of Blues due to threats of violence. Israel is the only Jewish state in the world. Criticism of it is reasonable just as it is of any other government. In fact, many in the Jewish community have vigorous debates about Israeli politics. However, holding Israel to a different standard and set of rules than any other nation is antisemitism. If >130 Americans were still being held hostage by a terrorist group, would it be reasonable for foreign governments to pressure the United States to stop trying to rescue them, not to mention local municipalities? After 9/11, would it have been reasonable for foreign governments to say the United States must stop fighting Al-Qaeda? To claim, as some do, that this conflict is uniquely destructive due to Israel is as blatant of a lie as can be conceived. If the individuals promoting this resolution claim their primary motivator is peace, where were they as >400,000 people were murdered in Syria? Where were they as the Yemeni civil war claimed 377,000 lives as of 2021, and sent millions into famine? Where were they as ISIS butchered thousands across Iraq and Syria? Where were they as the Taliban

recaptured Afghanistan, placing women and children back under the rule of a radical Islamist government? Where were they as Russia invaded Ukraine? Where are they as China imprisons 1.8 million Uyghurs, a Muslim minority group, in concentration camps? Where were their cries of displacement as Pakistan ordered 1.7 million Afghan refugees to leave the country in November? To uniquely focus on Israel, a democratic ally of the United States and the only Jewish state in the world, while ignoring the actions of repressive dictatorships that have been far more destructive, is purely and simply antisemitism.

As a city government, the Naperville City Council has no foreign policy role. This resolution is strictly performative virtue signaling which will have no impact on the ongoing war. However, as American government officials, there is a topic in this war relevant to you. It is relevant to all Americans for that matter. Where are your calls for the release of 6 Americans still held hostage by Hamas in Gaza? Where are your calls for the terrorists who murdered at least 32 Americans on 10/7 to be brought to justice? 10/7 was Israel's 9/11. Behind Naperville City Hall is a memorial to the victims of 9/11; the only country besides the United States to have a 9/11 memorial with every victim's name inscribed is Israel. Israel and the United States fight the same fight, have the same enemies, and share the same values. The Jewish community of Naperville has long called our town "home"; however, we fear this vote will continue to unpack antisemitism and undermine that feeling of home. We urge you to vote no on this "ceasefire" resolution or suspend it from debate.

Thank you for your consideration,

William Cohen
Robert Cohen
Mike Cohen
Cindy Cohen
Phil Serna
Marty Karlin
Ryan Karlin
Dana Fish
David Fish
Scott Kagan
Jackie Kagan
Michael Murphy
Michael Dorning
Debbie Wray
Ron Wray
Marty Karlin
Ryan Karlin
Dana Fish
David Fish
Nancy Friedlander
Gary Friedlander
Robert Schubert
Steven Cataldo
Kim Gitz
Joe Gitz
Rabbi Mendy Goldstein
Alta Goldstein
Jacob Margulies
Ellen Margulies

Ben Raab
Ann Rabin
Michael Rabin
Peter Mihalakakos
Tara Gregus
Steven Spano
Lisa Spano
Susan Sorg
Roger Sorg
Toni Gadd
Mildred Schlifke
Donna Zirin

13. Jane Doe (Woodridge) -Do not ceasefire resolution. This Council should not take up any ceasefire resolution for a number of reasons. First, and foremost, this Council should not insert itself into the politics of Israel or Gaza. It should instead focus on issues in Naperville, not the minefield of international relations. As Mayor Scott Wehrli previously stated when the Council did not take up a ceasefire resolution, the Naperville Mission Statement requires that the City “provide services that ensure a high quality of life, sound fiscal management, and a dynamic business environment, while creating an inclusive community that values diversity.” A resolution targeted at Israel’s defensive war against Hamas accomplishes none of those things.

If anything, by inserting itself into a complex conflict in the Middle East, this Council would do the opposite. Just take a look around this nation at the level of animosity. In January, when a ceasefire resolution was debated in Chicago, the City’s lone Jewish council member, alderwoman Debra Silverstein, was shouted down and verbally assaulted for attempting to address the concerns of Chicago’s Jewish community and to balance to resolution because of Israel’s clear right to self-defense after Hamas’s atrocious massacre on October 7. Jews around the country and the world are already being harassed and being forced to hide their identity. Virtue signaling with an unconditional and biased ceasefire resolution will do nothing more than give succor to antisemites posing as anti-Zionists and alienate this City’s Jewish community.

To be clear, there was a ceasefire on October 6, 2023. Hamas broke that ceasefire on a Jewish holiday, Simcha Torah, when thousands of its terrorists stormed over the border, massacred civilians, committed atrocities including grotesque sexual assaults, and then took hundreds of hostages. It was the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, which was then subsequently celebrated by the director of the Council of American-Islamic Relations. And Hamas has promised to repeat October 7 again and again until every Jew in Israel is dead or gone and Palestine extends “from the river to the sea” - you know, genocide. In other words, a resolution in favor of an unconditional, immediate ceasefire is nothing more than a resolution in support of Hamas’s stated genocidal goal of the eradication of a Jewish presence in Israel.

Of course we would all like to see a more peaceful world, including in Israel and Gaza, but this Council passing a ceasefire resolution will not get us there. Instead, it brings the divisions that we’ve already seen infecting major U.S. cities to Naperville, without having

any actual effect on issues on the ground. And it would ignore that absent a defeat of Hamas's military capacity, Israel and Gaza would undoubtedly find themselves in the same place again in a short period of time when Hamas breaks another ceasefire.

This Council should not wade into these waters. But to the extent that this Council feels compelled to pass a resolution on the events in the Middle East, any resolution demanding a ceasefire should be directed at the party who broke the last ceasefire: Hamas. Therefore, the ceasefire resolution, if passed, should include the following provisions: First, a return of all the hostages that Hamas took on October 7. Every single person that Hamas has taken, including those that it has since murdered, must be unconditionally returned to Israel. Second, any resolution should demand the dismantling of Hamas as an organization. Every surviving leader of Hamas should go into exile in Turkey, Qatar, or another state that lacks any qualms about individuals who celebrate the murder and rape of Jews, and its terrorist foot soldiers must lay down their arms. Third, all Palestinian terrorist groups - whether Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Fatah, or another group - must agree to cease engaging in terror against Israel and recognize Israel's right to exist.

If this Council is truly interested in a lasting ceasefire, then it would do more than just pass a useless resolution demanding Israel stop defending itself. It would instead address the cause of the current conflict by placing the blame where it belongs: on Hamas, and its allies who caused the current conflict in the first place.

14. John Doe (Naperville) I am a longtime resident of Naperville. My kids go to school in Naperville. I have coached youth sports in Naperville and have deep connections with this community. I submit this comment anonymously because of the real threat that Jewish people face for being openly Jewish in this country today. My family and I both fear that if the same people who celebrated October 7, including the director of the Counsel of American-Islamic Relations (see <https://www.memri.org/tv/cair-exec-director-nihad-awad-amp-happy-gaza-october-seven-victorious-israel>) would threaten and possibly harm us if they knew our identity.

This Council should not take up any ceasefire resolution for a number of reasons. First, and foremost, this Council should not insert itself into the politics of Israel or Gaza. It should instead focus on issues in Naperville, not the minefield of international relations. As Mayor Scott Wehrli previously stated when the Council did not take up a ceasefire resolution, the Naperville Mission Statement requires that the City "provide services that ensure a high quality of life, sound fiscal management, and a dynamic business environment, while creating an inclusive community that values diversity." A resolution targeted at Israel's defensive war against Hamas accomplishes none of those things.

If anything, by inserting itself into a complex conflict in the Middle East, this Council would do the opposite. Just take a look around this nation at the level of animosity. In January, when a ceasefire resolution was debated in Chicago, the City's lone Jewish council member, alderwoman Debra Silverstein, was shouted down and verbally assaulted for attempting to address the concerns of Chicago's Jewish community and to

balance to resolution because of Israel's clear right to self-defense after Hamas's atrocious massacre on October 7. Jews around the country and the world are already being harassed and being forced to hide their identity. Virtue signaling with an unconditional and biased ceasefire resolution will do nothing more than give succor to antisemites posing as anti-Zionists and alienate this City's Jewish community.

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Of course we would all like to see a more peaceful world, including in Israel and Gaza, but this Council passing a ceasefire resolution will not get us there. Instead, it brings the divisions that we've already seen infecting major U.S. cities to Naperville, without having any actual effect on issues on the ground. And it would ignore that absent a defeat of Hamas's military capacity, Israel and Gaza would undoubtedly find themselves in the same place again in a short period of time when Hamas breaks another ceasefire.

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15. Lauren Reyes-Yu (Naperville) Hello, my name is Lauren Reyes-Yu. I grew up in Naperville and now live here with my husband and daughter. I've spoken at the past two city council meetings. While I am unable to be present tonight, I'd like to continue to

implore Naperville's City Council to pass a Permanent Ceasefire Resolution in Gaza.

At this point, I find myself struggling to understand what can move the council on this matter. We've given facts, shown illustrations, and shared personal stories. We've met with several of you over this matter. This resolution is absolutely within the scope of city council. Across the United States, over 100 localities have passed them, including the city of Chicago. But you know this already. Each of these resolutions is not going unheard. Resolutions, like the one we have the opportunity to pass, influence both state and national governments to take action. And that's what we want. A permanent and immediate ceasefire, including a cessation of all hostilities, the release of all hostages and prisoners, and unlimited aid into Gaza.

This genocide is deeply, emotionally impacting the residents of Naperville. I grew up here as a young Latina child. I remember what it's like to feel unwanted and unwelcome in this city. Although Naperville's demographics continue to diversify, and the city itself claims to value its own multiculturalism, being a resident of color still brings many difficulties. Do I belong? Does my family belong? Did we make the right choice moving back here? These are questions I ask myself regularly. A Ceasefire Resolution would not only speak to our state and national government, it would send a clear message to Naperville's diverse populations: We belong. Our children belong. Naperville is our home.

I really believe that at the end of the day, each of you must feel something over the devastation that is occurring in Gaza. I call on each of you to remember why you entered politics in the first place. The support for a ceasefire is immense. Please do not fear how a few voices, even those in power, may respond. Your constituents will support you in the passage of this resolution. Future residents will look back on this and feel proud to call Naperville their home. I kindly ask that you consider what I've written along with the other statements tonight, especially the ones from Palestinian Americans. Please know you are supported in this matter by your constituents. The Naperville Ceasefire Resolution will have a lasting impact on larger government bodies to prompt action, and it will also serve as a public affirmation that the thoughts, values, and experiences of Naperville's communities of color matter.

Thank you,
Lauren Reyes-Yu

16. Marilyn Wigder (Glen Ellyn) Honorable City Council Members- I too like many others would like to see an end to the war in Gaza. I have a daughter , 3 teenage grandchildren and many cousins living in Israel, all of whom could have been killed, tortured or kidnapped by Hamas on Oct. 7. There has been no talk of the hostages return. Why are the aggressors asking the city of Naperville to publicly take their side in asking for a ceasefire resolution? This is not something for individual municipalities to be involved in. These people have every right to voice their concerns to their congressional representatives. This is not the job of the Naperville City Council. Will Naperville also be issuing a resolution demanding a cease fire from the Russian government on behalf of

the people of Ukraine? The city council needs to keep in mind and focus on what their responsibilities are to all the citizens of Naperville and turn this request down. Thank you, Marilyn Wigder

17. Carol Tritschler (Naperville) My name is Carol Tritschler. I live in Naperville and have lived here since 2000. Dear Mayor Wehrli and members of the City council, Thank you for your service and for all you've done to make Naperville such an outstanding and diverse place to live. To celebrate Easter, I attended: an Episcopalian service on zoom and the DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church in Naperville in person. I also zoomed in for Easter vigil for Palestine through Churches for Middle East Peace on Saturday. Please go to Religion News Service (religionnews.com) March 26, 2024 article, entitled "More than 140 global Christian leaders call for Gaza cease-fire in Holy Week letter" With the byline, "We repent of the ways we have not stood alongside our Palestinian siblings in faithful witness in the midst of their grief, agony, and sorrow, the leaders wrote". Please read about how so many of our National Christian leaders, with local churches here in Naperville, have signed a strong ceasefire resolution sent to President Biden.

I implore you, the Naperville city council, like these church leaders, to ask President Biden to "have the moral courage to end U.S. complicity in the ongoing violence and, instead, do everything in your power to prevent the potential genocide against Palestinians in Gaza". Please put ceasefire resolution on the agenda for the April 16th Naperville city council meeting, and proceed to pass a resolution calling for permanent ceasefire now in Gaza and humanitarian aid, and restoring aid to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the near East), and support peace and justice in Israel-Palestine. As I have done, I hope you will ask our Senators Durbin and Duckworth and Illinois US Congress Representatives, and President Biden, to end unconditional US government funding of the Israeli military, which is bombarding and killing the people of Gaza. I do not support Hamas violence and empathize with Israeli civilians attacked and killed or injured on October 7th or held hostage. The Gazan refugees are being asked to evacuate but have nowhere to go. Please send message that we stand for permanent ceasefire and humanitarian aid to Gaza and freeing hostages and stopping mass starvation! Thank you.

18. Steven W. (Naperville) I respectfully oppose any consideration of a cease fire. The war against Hamas is a complex global affaire and any consideration of a ceasefire resolution is beyond the mandate of our local municipal government. Noteworthy is that the proposed resolution as presented makes no mention of returning the hostages and is absent of any restrictions on the perpetrators of the October 7 terrorist attack. Supporting such a resolution is effectively a vote for Hamas and will only divide the community.
19. Burton Pinchuk (Naperville) I am opposed to the Naperville city council involving itself in an issue that has no relevance to our city. There will be many speakers in favor of a resolution, but how many of these speakers are calling for an immediate surrender by the Hamas terrorists and the immediate release of the hostages? I would bet that none of them are expressing this position. If the pro cease fire advocates are not hypocrites

they would support the Hamas surrender and release of hostages and they would therefore have an immediate cease fire.

Israel is fighting an existential war and demanding a one sided capitulation is grossly unfair. Why is Israel not allowed to defend itself?

20. Rabbi David (Naperville), Rabbi of Congregation Beth Shalom of Naperville

To: Mayor Scott Wehrli and Honorable City Council Members

April 2nd, 2024

I am writing to you today on behalf of the membership of Congregation Beth Shalom to strongly request that you oppose the draft resolution "Calling for a Permanent and Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza," and for you to vote no to adding it to your April 16th or any future Council agenda. I will also be speaking at the public forum in person on the 2nd and again on the 16th should need be, as will many of our members of our 250 household community of Naperville citizens in large part.

We, as a Jewish community, are still in shock from the horror of the October 7th attack - the worst atrocity against Jews since the Holocaust - where over 1200 people, of all ages, faiths and nationalities, were butchered. On October 7th this year we were in the midst of a Jewish Holiday known as Simchat Torah - meaning the joy of the Torah, where Jews around the world joyously celebrate the revelation of our sacred scriptures. Our joy was shattered upon the news of the gruesome attack against Jewish lives, and shattered even more as our community learned of loved one's who were killed, and even some who were taken hostage. This attack affected our community members directly.

I am disappointed, and deeply troubled, that the Naperville City Council has chosen to focus on an international conflict, rather than on the problems that you have the power to impact directly. You will be setting a precedent to express your opinions on a multitude of other international conflicts well outside the expertise of the city council. The council has issued no resolutions about the invasion, direct premeditated attack on civilians or the occupation of Ukraine; the gassing and slaughter of Syrians by Bashar al-Assad, the kidnapping of school children in Central Africa or the persecution and attempted genocide of the Rohingya by Myanmar.

The City Council has the power to address problems facing Naperville, but I doubt that council members have influence regarding the longstanding and intractable Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many experts from around the world and national foreign policy mavens, from countries such as the United States, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UN, and more have tried and failed to find a pathway to peace over many decades. What therefore can the Naperville City Council possibly bring to this matter? All this draft proposal does is divide our community at a time when unity is needed, and it makes no tangible difference to the situation of Palestinians or Israelis.

In addition to being outside the City Council's mandate, I believe that this resolution is inaccurate and seeks to ostracize the Jewish community. Demonizing Israel contributes

to the frightening atmosphere of swelling anti-Semitism around the world, including here in Naperville. Just last month a student was called Hitler at one of our local elementary schools. This resolution will lead to further increases in antisemitism and puts your Jewish constituents at risk.

Furthermore, this resolution is a one-sided travesty that ignores Hamas' culpability and disingenuously seeks to blame Israel for defending itself against terrorism. On Oct. 6th, there was a ceasefire in place, which Hamas broke not Israel, and they broke it by invading Israel, targeting civilians, kidnapping them from their homes and their beds, raping and murdering innocents, and more. 240 people were taken hostage, including children and infants. 179 days later, over 120 hostages remain in Gaza, including an infant who turned 1 in captivity, a 4 year old, and 19 women who have endured ongoing rape and torture at the hands of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. In response to those atrocities, Israel was forced into a defensive war that they did not choose or want. The Citizens of Israel have an inalienable right, even a duty, to defend themselves, just as the United States did in response to 9/11. Hamas was the clear and unequivocal aggressor and the one-sided draft ignores their actions.

This proposed resolution therefore asks the victims of the aggression, the citizens of Israel, to declare a unilateral ceasefire. It should be that Hamas, as the party that initiated this conflict and has repeatedly rejected ceasefire compromises - it is incumbent upon them to release all of the hostages, including the bodies of those who have died, before a ceasefire should even be considered. I continue to hope and pray that the State of Israel continues to search for ways to mitigate civilian casualties without compromising the goal of their mission of eradicating the ongoing threat from Hamas to Israeli citizens. Hamas could end this war today by returning the hostages and ceasing its attacks on Israel, but rocket attacks continue to fall on Israeli civilians even now. It is for these reasons that the war continues, and that our federal government continues to support the Israeli Defense Forces and the State of Israel.

As a rabbi, I hope, and work towards, peace in our local and global community. My heart breaks for what this war has wrought. I am horrified by the deaths of innocent civilians in Gaza and the devastation that the innocent Palestinian people of Gaza have experienced. I pray for the day when the State of Israel can securely and peacefully stand alongside a Palestinian state.

I implore you to reconsider the purpose, content, and impact of this deeply flawed resolution. As always, I stand ready to partner with you in the work of improving Naperville for all its residents.

Sincerely,

Rabbi David Eber
Congregation Beth Shalom

21. Jennifer Weiner (Naperville) I implore Naperville City Council NOT to support any action calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. Movements like these do nothing to fix the problems overseas but lead to many problems here in Naperville. It divides our Muslim and Jewish communities. We all want peace in the region and peace at home. There was already a ceasefire in place on October 7. Now there are thousands dead and hundreds still in captivity. Instead of a ceasefire, perhaps we should call out the brutality of Hamas and what they created. No matter what we say, the Israelis won't stop fighting until the hostages are returned home. Please listen to your community - and do things that bring us together, not tear us apart.

POSITION STATEMENT

OPPOSE

1. Barbara Lipkin (Naperville) – resolution for a Gaza ceasefire.
2. Karen Butterfield (St. Charles) – oppose the resolution for a cease fire.