

MAY 7, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING
POSITION STATEMENTS & WRITTEN COMMENTS

PUBLIC FORUM

WRITTEN COMMENT ONLY

1. Jennifer Lezan (Naperville) Good evening council -

My name is Jennifer Lezan, I'm a Latina American and Naperville resident. I'm writing this statement of support as an ally to not only the Palestinian people in our community, but also the world - especially those currently facing genocide in Gaza. I do not write this comment to give a voice to the Palestinians, but rather to amplify their already deafening cries for help. Palestinians courageously document their harrowing reality through social media only to encounter a disturbingly persistent wall of denial and ignorance regarding the genocide they endure. Many in our communities are also opting to turn to propaganda in the mainstream media whose bias and racist undertones are obvious. I will share some facts that I hope you won't ignore. I am not merely requesting your consideration, I am DEMANDING a resolution for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and divesting any investments our city may have with Israel. As a tax paying citizen of this country and as a citizen of the city of Naperville, I will no longer allow my tax dollars to pay for the bombing and starvation of children and innocent civilians. Too often, as minorities, we shy away from hard stances and make ourselves smaller in majority white spaces like Naperville, but not anymore. It's time that those in positions of power and privilege listen. Famine across Gaza is becoming increasingly dire and has prompted new warnings by UNICEF, who's regional director for MENA stated "the child deaths we feared are here and are likely to rapidly increase unless the war ends and obstacles to humanitarian relief are immediately resolved."

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, Israel's siege on Gaza has killed over 35,000 Palestinians, with a further 71,920 injured and many unaccounted for buried in rubble. Palestinian officials have stated, Israeli attacks have killed at least 13,000 children. That is more than one Palestinian child killed every 15 minutes, or about one in every 100 children in the Gaza Strip. Is this the appropriate response to what happened on Oct. 7th? Personally, I think these numbers are underreported and the response has created a dangerous narrative that ignores the history of violence against Palestinians. How many more children and people must die before our community takes a stance? 10,000 more? 100,000 more? For me, 1 dead was too many and the fact that these numbers are so staggering within such a short time highlights how the people of Palestine are seen as less than. Their lives are considered less valuable to the Zionist government and therefore, the egregious response has been to wipe them out.

Is this where we are today? Have we learned nothing from our gruesome histories of war or settler colonialism? Regardless of your personal politics, the current situation in Gaza is about humanity. And I hope that each and everyone of you sitting on this council, especially those of you who ran on platforms focused on democracy, diversity, equity and working to disrupt and dismantle systemic oppression in our communities, digs deep to find your humanity and doesn't just consider a resolution and divestment, but instead fights to ensure a resolution for ceasefire and divestment passes. Those of us who voted you in, can just as easily vote you out. Furthermore, the inaction of the council and the barrage of unhinged statements by opposing citizens claiming those of us who are protesting and demanding a ceasefire are "terrorists" only highlights the bigotry and racism that silently breeds here in Naperville. It's time to do the right thing, stand up for

your constituents. Listen to your constituents. Stop allowing our taxes to be used to fuel a genocide. Pass a resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza and DIVEST our taxes from supporting the Israeli Government. It is the bare minimum Naperville can do.

I12-Approve the award of Bid 24-010, Riverwalk Fountain Repairs, to Crossroad Construction for an amount not to exceed \$423,600 plus a 5% contingency

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1. **Marilyn L Schweitzer (Naperville)** Please support this. The Fredenhagen Park Fountain has been out of commission for 2 years. Significant time was spent exploring other options by the Riverwalk PDC and Commission. Options, other than repairing the fountain, did not guarantee a cost savings. Since that time repairs for 2 fountains have become warranted. I appreciate the thoughtful efforts of both the Riverwalk PDC and Commission. This simply isn't going to become cheaper as time goes by. Nor as time passes is it likely that a less costly solution will miraculously appear that will serve the community's enjoyment as these have and will.

I26 Pass the ordinance approving the requested variances for the property located at 1019 E Ogden Avenue (Taco Bell) PZC 23-1-126

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1. Norma Jaimes (Naperville) I DO NOT approve all structural changes being requested for this business or the business itself
2. Odessa Santiago (Naperville) I do not support the Taco Bell project at all!