

MARCH 19, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING
POSITION STATEMENTS & WRITTEN COMMENTS

PUBLIC FORUM

WRITTEN COMMENT ONLY

1. **Steve Cushman (Naperville)** The City Council should not endorse any matters related to the Israel Hamas issue. The council is elected to weigh in on city matters and not foreign policy issues. Federal officials are elected by voters for matters like this. Do not be bullied by the protest groups disrupting City Council meetings and, most recently, disrupting downtown traffic. I find it especially offensive that some of this group are not Naperville citizens. Let them disrupt their own towns. Thank you.

2. **Dana Fish (Naperville)** I thank the City Council for refusing to place the ceasefire on the agenda. Naperville should not be involved in any international disputes because it is a unit of local government. As a Jewish resident of Naperville, I would feel threatened if my community passes a resolution supporting a cease fire with Hamas, a terrorist organization that has stated it will continue to murder Jews again and again and again. Israel has the right to protect herself. There was a cease fire on place on October 6. Unfortunately, the events on October 7, 2023 changed the course of history. On that date, Hamas, the Iran-backed terror group controlling Gaza-- which won the Palestinian legislative elections--launched an unprovoked and vicious surprise attack on Israel. These terrorists infiltrated Israel to murder and kidnap Israelis. In this attack, Hamas murdered over 1,300 Israelis, wounded 12,000 and took over 230 hostages into Gaza—including babies under 1 year of age and young children. During this infiltration, Hamas members brutally raped Israeli girls and women, while mutilating their genitalia, cutting off body parts, and then murdering the victims. Naperville should not be involved in international politics. Looking back through several years of council minutes, I could find no other instance where Naperville has ever passed a resolution calling for the ceasing of violence against any group. There have been and currently are numerous communities around the world suffering from oppression, violence and murder, including but not limited to the Coptic Christians in Egypt, the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, and the Uighur Muslims in China. There were no resolutions regarding any of these communities. Naperville did not pass a resolution condemning the murder of hundreds of thousands of Syrians by the Assad regime or the kidnap and murder of thousands of Yazidis by ISIS. I have not seen any calls from citizens of Naperville to condemn the kidnapping last week of more than 400 Christians from Nigeria (at least 287 of whom are teachers and children). These groups have endured unspeakable atrocities and deserve our attention and support. By prioritizing a ceasefire in Gaza without addressing the plight of other persecuted groups, you are sending a message of selective concern and disregard for the suffering of all of humankind. Additionally, for the small community of Jewish citizens in Naperville, the demands for a ceasefire resolution (and the discord that request sows) brings about a sense of unease and insecurity. I can tell you that it has made me feel unwelcome in my own city and afraid for myself and my family's safety. It has made me feel alone amongst my neighbors. By appeasing Hamas and its supporters in the US, you are emboldening those who seek to harm Jews both abroad and at home. Furthermore, the ceasefire resolution fails to acknowledge the legitimate security concerns of Israel, including the constant threat of rocket attacks and terrorism from Hamas and its associated groups in

the Middle East. By disregarding these concerns, you will alienate your Jewish community members and send the message that their safety and well-being are not a priority.

It is undoubtedly distressing to witness innocent deaths in Gaza. It is also essential to recognize that Hamas, as a designated terrorist organization, bears the responsibility for the ongoing violence and instability in the region. By passing a resolution for a ceasefire with Hamas, you are legitimizing and emboldening an entity that continues to target civilians and promote extremism. Moreover, Hamas's corrupt governing of the Palestinian people in Gaza, their continued indiscriminate firing of rockets at civilians in Israel, and their promises of continued violence and murder against Jews worldwide has escalated tensions and threatened the safety and security of innocent people on both sides of the conflict. By endorsing a ceasefire, you fail to hold Hamas accountable for their actions and undermine efforts to achieve a lasting peace.

I understand the desire to prevent further bloodshed and alleviate the suffering of civilians (civilians on both sides of this complex conflict). However, any call for a ceasefire must be accompanied by a call for the return of the Israeli hostages, concrete steps to disarm Hamas, dismantle their infrastructure, and promote reconciliation and coexistence among all parties involved. It should be noted that there was a ceasefire in place on October 6, 2023, and that ceasefire was broken by Hamas. Additionally, there have been several offers of a ceasefire made by Israel— all of which have been refused by Hamas. If Hamas would release the hostages and lay down their arms, there would be no further fighting, and I believe it would encourage the development of a Palestinian state and stability in the region.

I urge you to not get involved in global politics and to keep your focus on the concerns of this city.

3. **David Fish (Naperville)** I request that my wonderful Naperville, where I have raised my kids and have a business (Fish Potter Bolanos, PC), not get involved in international politics. There was a cease fire on October 6. This all changed after Hamas terrorists raped and murdered countless Israelis on October 7. Israel has the right to defend itself. To paraphrase a former Israeli Prime Minister: "If the [Palestinians] put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons today, there would be no more Israel." -Golda Meir Thank you for staying out of this international conflict and you hard work on making our City great!
4. **Sandra Lehner (Chicago)** The morning of October 7th, battalions of Hamas terrorists and other terrorist groups in Gaza, followed by a number of civilians from Gaza invaded Israel. The terrorists murdered children and parents in their homes on kibbutzim, which are agricultural collectives in Israel, in the cruelest ways, committed rape and mutilation of women's bodies, and murdered over 300 young people attending a music festival for peace. Hamas terrorists murdered 1,200 people in Israel including young people from Nepal and Africa who came to study agriculture, and foreign workers and Arabs. The terrorists took 200+ hostages from Israel to Gaza including a baby and his 4 year old brother. One hundred twenty (120) hostages are still being held in Gaza and it has been over 5 months. No one knows their condition and the International Red Cross has not checked on the hostages well being even once. Some hostages were seriously injured by the terrorists on October 7th and some need medication for illness. Reports from hostages who were released are that they were given very little food or water, a number of young women hostages were beaten and raped. Hamas has recently rejected ceasefire deals and release of the hostages. Israel is fighting Hamas in Gaza and Israel's military works to prevent civilian casualties. It is well known and even stated by President Biden in his recent SOTU address that Hamas terrorists have built their rocket

launchers and weapons of war close to schools, hospitals, mosques, and other civilian areas. Hamas even threatens its civilians not to evacuate buildings where Israel has notified civilians to evacuate for their safety. Hamas's strategy is to attack Israel, kill the greatest number of civilians in Israel by burning them alive, beheading them and executing them, and by firing over 10,000 rockets at cities in Israel. Then when Israel responds to stop the rockets and attacks from Gaza, Hamas maximizes the casualties of its civilians while the terrorists hide in tunnels. They expect the world to demand Israel stop fighting the terrorists and leave Gaza with an immediate ceasefire. If Hamas survives, then they consider this victory and can plan the next massacre in Israel. The call for a ceasefire that leaves Hamas in power will only result in more deaths and suffering in Israel and Gaza. Please do not vote for a ceasefire resolution that does not demand the release of the hostages and for Hamas to surrender so there is a chance for peace.

5. **Reem Townsend (Bolingbrook)** I would like to encourage the board to bring up discussion on a ceasefire resolution in Gaza during new business. Your constituents have been asking for one for months. Plainfield, Bolingbrook, Villa Park, have all passed ceasefire resolutions and proclamations. Naperville board: please listen to your voters.

I14. Award of RFP 23-156, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant Service to Envisioning Equity Work LLC

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1. Susan Bolda Marshall (Naperville) AAUW Naperville - Gender equity is a primary goal of the AAUW Naperville. As a result, we strongly endorse the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion training.
We recognize that diversity extends beyond gender to include race, religious beliefs, political affiliation, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, exude orientation and more. Naperville is an increasingly diverse community. Acknowledging and embracing this diversity strengthens us as individuals and as a community.
It is far too easy to reduce differences to an argument about who is right and who is wrong and such arguments seem to be increasing in frequency and vitriol. Learning to value those differences takes effort and DEI training is one to we can employ. We applaud the city of Naperville staff and leadership for engaging in these efforts.