



# STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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November 15, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Karen T. Diemer, City Manager

**PREPARER:** Karen T. Diemer, City Manager

**DATE:** November 09, 2023

**TITLE:** Consider Resolution No. 234-21 Calling for an Immediate Cease-Fire in Gaza

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Council consider proposed Resolution No. 234-21 calling for a cease-fire in Gaza.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Council will consider a proposed resolution calling for a cease-fire in Gaza. The resolution has been developed by a group of local residents seeking to find collective language to express the revulsion felt by members of the community over the killing of innocent civilians resulting from the Hamas-Israeli War in Gaza. The group has sought to bring forth statements that could be commonly supported (recognizing it will never be universal) from many backgrounds, including those who identify as Palestinian, Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, Arab and more.

## **BACKGROUND/ DISCUSSION:**

During the City Council meeting of November 1, speakers in attendance spoke in favor of a resolution affirming solidarity with Palestinian people in Gaza and speakers spoke who were opposed to taking a “side” in the Gaza War, especially one that would diminish the rights and needs of the Israeli people and would continue to heighten the acts of anti-Semitic prejudice that has risen in our nation and community.

The item was not discussed as it was not on the meeting agenda. A couple of Council members did respond to statements made during public comment and shared that they would not support a resolution that caused further division and acts of hate and violence in our community and encouraged community members present that evening to come together around shared values such as the value of human life, need for humanitarian aid, release of hostages, a cease-fire and end to the killing of civilians.

Some members present that night did continue to meet and worked to draft a revised resolution that has support from some local Jewish faith leaders and members of the group formed to support the people of Palestine. Below is the draft language that continues to be reviewed, discussed and potentially edited.

**Resolution No. 234-21 A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Arcata  
Calling For An Immediate Cease-Fire in Gaza**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Arcata condemns the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas, which killed over 1,400 Israelis and leaves over 200 held hostage. There is no moral justification for such an attack; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Arcata condemns the collective punishment that the state of Israel is imposing on the Palestinian people in response to Hamas's attack by killing over 10,000 people, over 4,000 of them children, and displacing over a million Palestinian residents of Gaza; and

**WHEREAS** , none of this takes place in a vacuum, and is just the most recent and most severe outbreak in violence, resulting from the long-term subjugation of the Palestinian people by the state of Israel.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Arcata calls on the U.S. government to demand:

- An immediate cease-fire by all parties involved, including an immediate cessation of all
- attacks on civilian targets; and
- The return of all hostages to their homes; and
- Ongoing negotiations to cultivate lasting peace and create a system that represents the
- human rights of all people in the region.

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On Friday, November 3, the United Nations passed a resolution by a vote of 120-14-45. The Resolution called for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and a humanitarian truce, the release of all civilians, the protection of civilians and international institutions, and ensuring the safe passage of humanitarian aid into the Strip.

The United States voted no on the UN Resolution and has thus far rejected outright calls for a cease-fire, suggesting that it would amount to a victory for Hamas, yet has begun suggesting “humanitarian pauses” to allow more humanitarian aid into Gaza and to ensure safe passage of civilians looking to flee the areas of Gaza where intensive aerial bombing continues across the Strip.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

The City has a legislative platform that is updated bi-annually. As a local municipal government there are not items of national war policy that are included on that platform.

**COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:**

N/A

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA):**

No CEQA review is required.

**BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:**

N/A