

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding appreciation to staff for their efforts; nailing down ambiguities; ensuring that equity is part of the process; prioritization of important events that may not have the means but are important to the community; the amount of money being allocated vs. what is gained; community building; appreciation for recommendations to add more criteria and structure to the process; appreciation to those who submit applications and hold events; support for the work of Economic Development; support for uniformity and transparent guidelines for decision-making; and clarification that the motion should read \$192,000, rather than \$191,000 as noted.

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER FISH, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER VERA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

1. AWARD \$192,000 IN GRANTS AND DESIGNATE 27 EVENTS AS CITY-SPONSORED THROUGH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 SPECIAL EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM; AND,
- 2, ALLOCATE UP TO \$18,00 IN CONTINGENCY FOR OFF-CYCLE EVENT SUPPORT; AND,
3. AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ADMINISTRATIVELY APPROVE APPLICABLE CITY PERMITS AND LICENSES NEEDED TO CONDUCT THE EVENTS, PROVIDED SUCH PERMITS AND LICENSES ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE SCOPE OF THE EVENT AS SET FORTH IN THE GRANT APPLICATION.

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Item A-2

CC - Discussion and Direction Regarding Pilot Micro-Grant/Small Business Assistance Programs

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

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Item A-3

CC - (1) Discussion of and, if Desired, Adoption of a Resolution on Peace and Diplomacy in Times of International Conflict and the Wise Use of City Funds; and (2) Direction to the City Manager, as Deemed Appropriate

Shelly Wolfberg, Assistant to the City Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Council Member Fish received clarification that the Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee (EHRAC) had not provided feedback on the item.

Mayor O'Brien invited public input.

The following members of the public addressed the City Council:

Maria Beg, with one minute ceded by George Ressler, expressed strong opposition to the resolution; reported being shocked when she saw the item on the agenda; felt that the resolution was a direct attempt to silence their attempts for City Council recognition of the genocide in Gaza; discussed the actions of the federal government to aid in the genocide with taxpayer dollars; the message that their voices don't matter and the way that they feel has no bearing on the City; Council Members she voted to elect; Council Members who have voted in support of Israel and Ukraine; concern that the City Council is suddenly shying away from international conflicts; and pain being experienced by constituents and residents that make it a local issue that should be dealt with on a local level.

Stephanie Sharp discussed Council Members who walked out on a presentation from a place where she works; appreciation for the word peace; placating so others feel comfortable while she feels tortured; wanting to believe that the City Council means well by the proposed actions; safety being used as a weapon that protects a specific subset of the population; vulnerable members of the community; inequity; terror; starvation; cruelty; she asked the City Council to not dismiss them; and she hoped that the current and future City Council would act equitably.

Emily Dibiny expressed opposition to the proposed resolution; discussed the racist statement made back on October 23; making amends by denouncing or removing the old statement; the new statement that is a slap in the face; disconnection from voters; bigot constituents; and she questioned whether Council Members would defend their properties if they were seized.

Mariah Fontijn, with one minute ceded by Alice Kim, read a statement from Thistle Boosinger urging the City Council to reject the agenda item; discussed witnessing her friends being attacked for advocating that Palestinians should be allowed to live in their homeland, free from occupation; the violence of

Edan On as arising from being a product of his environment; the fact that Culver City is not separate from the world; the stance of neutrality; people in Culver City directly impacted by what is going on; being diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) due to her brutalization at the UCLA encampment that caused a life-altering injury with daily pain; her inability to work; cowardice of Culver City; the ceasefire resolution as the bare minimum; the message being sent that lived diverse cultural experiences of residents do not matter; she asked the City Council to reject Item A-3; noted the responsibility of the City Council to represent all residents; and Ms. Fontijn added her own comments that the action seemed hypocritical and unfair.

Huong Nghiem-Eilbeck spoke in opposition to Item A-3; noted that silence in the face of mass suffering was complicity rather than neutrality; discussed the number of children who have died and those who are starving; documented deaths; lack of response by the federal government; lack of medical facilities; health care workers who have been killed; assassinations; mass graves; the man-made famine; she asked Culver City to express support for a ceasefire resolution and to stand behind humanitarian efforts that will be necessary following the war; noted the past practice of taking a moral stance; precedent; concern with souring relationships with Sister Cities and Olympic partnerships by silencing the stories of immigrant and refugee families; and she asked that the humanitarian crisis be acknowledged.

Ronald Davis echoed opposition to the proposed resolution; discussed the importance of listening to constituents; moving in a new direction; Pope Francis and Pope Leo; the rebuke of the views of the Vice President; the White Citizen's Councils in Mississippi; and he felt the Pope would say that not speaking about the genocide going on is not only immoral, but probably a sin.

Taylor Vivanco asked the City Council to vote no on Item A-3; felt it was not smart to put limits on what the City Council can and cannot do; discussed people coming to express their right of free speech; representation; democracy; making one's voice heard; repeated requests for a ceasefire resolution; efforts to silence the people who have come forward; eroding rights and civic engagement; democracy; and further degradation into fascism.

Edward Wolkowitz discussed a statement on the agenda that requests the community limit its comments to items within the

jurisdiction of the City Council; the October 2023 resolution expressing solidarity with the state of Israel which is clearly beyond the subject matter jurisdiction of the City Council; giving the people of Palestine equal dignity in Gaza; and he proposed that the City Council adopt a resolution supporting the ceasefire in Gaza and then limit future Council comments to those matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction.

Darrel Menthe hoped that the City Council would adopt the resolution; stated that the City Council was not empowered to make foreign policy; discussed complex issues in dispute around the world and in Culver City; support for controversial foreign policy positions; being at odds with the State Department; use of City resolutions to score points against neighbors on inflammatory issues; rhetorical battles; concern with bringing the warfare home; the work of the City to bring people together rather than alienating them; he felt the proposed resolution would bring people together; and he thanked Council Member McMorrin for bringing it forward and staff for agendizing it.

Elly Levy provided background on himself; asserted that textbook genocide was not an international conflict; questioned why the proposed resolution was brought forward; asked about the timing of the resolution; stated that the resolution was an attempt to silence speech about particular content; questioned whether the next step would be physically plucking people out of meetings to suppress speech; and discussed actions of the federal branch of government.

James Richardson acknowledged not being able to read through the entire resolution; noted the complex issue; sided with constituents; noted the difficulty of being unaffected by what is going on in the world; discussed issues of language and authority; disappointment that the City Council cannot say ceasefire; context regarding the surrounding war; concern with condemning one side but not the looking at what is going on on the other side; things going on in the United States; voices that do not have the privilege to speak without being harmed; and he expressed support for a resolution that uses the word ceasefire.

Kathy Brown expressed opposition to the proposed resolution; discussed the importance of allowing the City Council to speak up and weigh in; support for a ceasefire resolution such as many other towns and cities have done; the importance of thinking globally and acting locally; and she asked that the City Council stand strong in providing support to Jubilo Village.

Jasmine Delgado was called to speak but was not present in Council Chambers or online.

Jamie Wallace discussed the complex, personal issue; issues going on all over the world; the job of the City Council; lack of interest in what Culver City thinks from foreign leaders; she asserted that people were not being denied their right of free speech and Council Members were not experts on the foreign policy nor was is not their job; discussed time and effort being spent; and she noted that people could keep speaking to each other, but the City Council should not be responsible.

Sam A. urged the City Council not to adopt the resolution that would essentially stop discussion of international matters by the City Council; discussed the desire to focus on local government; real and personal ways that global events affect communities; increased Islamophobia and Asian-hate in Culver City; sending a message that lived experiences shaped locally and internationally are not welcome by silencing conversation about global events and humanitarian crises that affect people in Culver City; democracy; promoting compassion and resilience by allowing space for discussion; and she asked that Culver City uphold space for discussion for everyone to acknowledge that lives are shaped by more than just their borders.

Soe S. expressed opposition to the proposed resolution; asserted that the resolution showed where they stood with certain people in the community; discussed efforts to deter a decision on a ceasefire; the message being sent to those with family in Palestine; funding genocide with tax dollars from the United States; concern expressed about spending funds wisely while the City Council has delayed making a decision; making a statement in support of peace prevailing for all rather than peace prevailing for some; accountability; length of time the ceasefire resolution has been asked for; rescinding the resolution from October 23 standing in solidarity with Israel and from February 24 condemning Russia's attack on Ukraine; and she asserted that there could be no peace is there is oppression.

Jeff Cooper was called to speak but was not present in person or online.

Anthony Higgins discussed the issue that rises above race and religion; genocide; starvation as a weapon of war; the elimination of 90% of the hospitals; suffering on a huge scale; the obligation as a human being to do what you can with what

you have; the need to speak out for a ceasefire; concern that Culver City would support resolutions on Ukraine or October 7 and not speak out against the genocide; the opportunity to do something however small; and he asserted that it was time for a ceasefire resolution.

Discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding appreciation to community members who shared their feelings; the feeling that Council Members do care about the community and about reducing harm in the world; providing structure for something that has been prone to bias; who gets support and when and for what reasons; proposed language; the process; the message the resolution would send; the appearance of wanting to sidestep moral questions; concern with making people feel more silenced when speaking out is already dangerous; incidents across the country harming people who speak out; resolutions passed in support of Israel and Ukraine quickly, without hesitation and without public input; delays to repeated calls for a ceasefire resolution such as has been passed by 100s of other cities; the right to question funding of the conflict by the United States while communities at home go without healthcare and education; advocating at the federal level for transportation and at the state level for housing; having a role in where public resources are going and who is being harmed; the fact that values do not stop at city borders; ensuring that actions match words; examining where Culver City dollars go; residents at risk of being targeted for speaking out; education; referring the item to the EHRAC to be shaped with public input and rooted in community needs; making the statement count; taking substantive action; having the courage to stand on principles and involve the community in taking meaningful action; appreciation for bringing the item forward to have the conversation; and support for making sense of a clearly inequitable process.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the intention in bringing the item back; identity; fighting to be treated fairly in the country; recognition of countless international conflicts; lack of an intent to silence people; the inability of the current City Council to bind future City Councils; processes; data about the loss of life collectively happening; collective grief; conflicts in the Black community; feedback that there is no need to worry about people who do not live in the community; acknowledgement of grief and loss of life that continues to happen; ensuring that the lives of all peoples are valued; building a community fostering equity and accountability; modeling; maintaining the right to speak;

appreciation for support from the EHRAC; loss of life happening; voices being lifted up; dire losses and proportionality; continued violence against Black people; police violence; the importance of seeing the humanity in one another; moving forward as a community; lifting up shared values; focusing on the work of supporting more housing, transit, and sustainability in the community; items the City Council can have impact on in a meaningful way; openness to receiving more community input; and the intention in the call for peace.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding timing; optics; requiring people to jump through hoops; getting things right; ensuring that something meaningful is accomplished; the complex item; acknowledgement of concerns expressed about being silenced; respecting the diverse community and perspectives; the goal of encouraging dialogue to bring about peaceful resolution; peace as a process and a goal; promoting dignity, equity, and cooperation; peaceful resolution of disputes; and concern with the way the resolution is written.

Discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the reference to the Pope; comments about a "third world war in pieces"; suffering and injustice around the world; disproportionate impacts on marginalized communities; protecting free speech and due process; using platforms to advocate; directing collective efforts toward what can be shaped; acknowledging the broader world; direct impacts of global conflicts and atrocities to community members; the resolution as clarifying supporting peace through local action; building systems to resolve conflict without harm; encouraging dialogue over division; acknowledging that international conflicts will put communities at odds; the position of the City to take a moral stance on all conflicts when it comes to the cost of human lives; diplomacy; having a standard City policy for all conflicts; opening up the process to the community; and crafting the resolution in a more meaningful way.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the purpose of City Councils; capability of rendering resolutions; previous resolutions for Ukraine and October 7; ongoing issues; history behind conflicts; making the effort to get things right; time taken away from City business; tears and frustration; lack of understanding of each person's personal history and the history of the issue; different demands from different communities; peace as an ongoing effort to work together and uplift one another; important steps in the ongoing conversation; and continuing dialogue vs. a proclamation.

Mayor O'Brien reminded the audience that the time for public comment had ended and he was available to meet with individuals privately.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the need for additional dialogue on the item; a suggestion that the Standing Governance Subcommittee consider the item in addition consideration of potential recommendations from the EHRAC; requesting the statement be centered around Palestinian and Arab neighbors and consideration of a ceasefire resolution; crafting a resolution centering around the experience of the community that has not been recognized; prior ceasefire resolutions that have made some in the Jewish community feel unsafe; and people who do not come to address the City Council because they are afraid.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding other international conflicts affecting neighbors; concern with listing specific groups as tying the resolution to this point in time; consideration by the EHRAC and the Policy Subcommittee; scope of the Policy Subcommittee; creating an ad hoc subcommittee specifically for the discussion; and caution around continuing to workshop the idea if it is just words on a page and there are no actionable steps.

Council Member McMorrin moved to send the resolution to the EHRAC and, if possible, to the Policy Subcommittee, seeking their input and lifting up the intention of the resolution, and tying in actionable steps or programming with collaboration between Human Resources and the Equity Team to ensure programming, education and dialogue to go along with the resolution.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding concerns with costs; existing staffing for EHRAC; budgetary allocations for events; repurposing budgeting for actionable next steps; working to support the community by meeting them where they are; consideration of recommendations and requests by the City Council; determining whether a resolution is the right move; ensuring that the community is served; appreciation to the City Council and the community for their thoughtfulness on the serious and upsetting issue to many people; the importance of including community input into the proposed resolution to see if the item is worth pursuing; concern with mandating future programming; comments made about requiring people to jump through hoops and concern with sending

the matter back to the EHRAC again; concern with receipt of feedback from only one point of view; obtaining balanced feedback; making it clear that EHRAC is not mandated to create programming; next steps; those who are not comfortable attending meetings; providing a hybrid meeting to allow feedback from those not comfortable attending in person; and the ability to submit written comment to be received and filed.

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MCMORRIN AND SECONDED BY MAYOR O'BRIEN THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SEND THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO THE EQUITY AND HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EHRAC) AND, IF POSSIBLE, TO THE POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE SEEKING THEIR INPUT AND LIFTING UP THE INTENTION OF THE RESOLUTION, INCLUDING ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS AND PROGRAMMING WITH COLLABORATION BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE EHRAC TO INCLUDE EDUCATION AND DIALOGUE AND A PROGRAMMING PIECE TO GO ALONG WITH THE RESOLUTION TO MEET THE COMMUNITY WHERE THEY ARE, RECEIVE INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY ON THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION AND WHETHER THE RESOLUTION SHOULD MOVE FORWARD, RECEIVE EHRAC'S TAKE AWAYS FROM THE RESOLUTION AND BACKGROUND ON THE RESOLUTION AND TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION AND THE REASONING BEHIND IT WITH A NOTE THAT EHRAC IS NOT MANDATED TO CREATE PROGRAMMING.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWEING VOTE:

AYES: FISH, MCMORRIN, O'BRIEN, PUZA
NOES: VERA

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Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor O'Brien invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the City Council:

Malik Mahmoud was called to speak but was not present in person or in Council Chambers.

Maria Beg read a poem written to the mothers of Gaza for Mother's Day noting that the goal of representing humanity should be at the forefront of every conversation.

Denise Neal asked about the status of reparations for the African American community; discussed opportunities since DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) is being phased out to set up fiscally responsible, financially feasible opportunities for