

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
February 6, 2024**

6 p.m. Regular Business Meeting*

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Graham called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

1. Land Acknowledgement**

Kaplan read the land acknowledgement.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Hansen led the pledge of allegiance,

III. ROLL CALL

Mayor Graham, Councilor Hyatt, Kaplan, DuQuenne and Hansen were present. Councilor Bloom and Dahle were absent.

IV. MAYOR'S/CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Graham announced the City has launched a communications survey and encouraged citizens to fill it out before the end of February. This will tell the City how citizens would like to be informed. She extended a special thank you to the town hall attendees and expressed how nice it was to see so many people who are interested in helping the larger community.

The Mayor explained the process and rules for speaking to Council during public forum and for agenda items.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ***

1. Minutes of the January 16, 2024 – Business Meeting

Hyatt stated a correction was needed on item 8 regarding the Council Chair. The minutes reflect that she said *I think it's what's best for the Council* whereas she stated *I want what's best for the body*. Meaning that if it was the will of the group, she would serve.

Councilor Hyatt/Hansen /m/s to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2024 Business Meeting with corrections as noted.

Roll Call Vote: Councilor Hyatt, Kaplan, DuQuenne, and Hansen, YES. Motion passed.

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

VII. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Interim City Manager Sabrina Cotta commended the Community Development team for helping secure the City its 37th consecutive Tree City USA designation. Cotta reminded the Council that the February newsletter and the State of the City speech were up on the City's website.

Graham reiterated how the Public Forum would work and added that comments about the proposed ceasefire letter would not be included within this section. She also stated that she is removing the proposed letter from the consent agenda and making it its own agenda item.

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes – Public input or comment on City business not included on the agenda)

1. Bruno Marcotulli/Ashland/ Read from two excerpts from the City's code of ethics about holding local authorities accountable to their community. Felt that the City was intentionally obfuscating the work of Andrew Campanelli. Wanted the City to hold Councilor Dahle accountable for his statements regarding Mr. Campanelli and his work. Spoke to the work of "the people" raising the money to deal with the issue of land use laws. Wanted the Council to appreciate the efforts of the people and felt that the Council was abdicating its ethics code.

2. Kelly Marcotulli/Ashland/ Felt that Councilor Dahle was intentionally misleading the public about Andrew Campanelli's work and wanted the Council to appoint an alternative liaison to the safe tech community group. Noted that Dahle had not shared the draft ordinance with the group and that the City was continuing to ignore the voices of the people. Felt that the Council was intentionally ignoring recent studies about harmful radiation. Wanted the City to be a hub of safe tech. Wanted the Council to have a zoom session with Mr. Campanelli. Was concerned that the proposed amendment by Dahle would not address issues like cell tower fires.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1.** Liquor License Approval for H&S Stations LLC, #5027 located at 2500 Ashland Street.
- 2.** Liquor License Approval for Liquid Lounge located at 370 East Main Street.
- 3.** Liquor License Approval for Mezcal Restaurant and Bar, located at 23 North Main Street.
- 4.** Liquor License Approval for Carter Henry's LLC (dba The Noble Fox Restaurant & Brewery) located at 101 Oak Street.
- 5.** CEPAC Appointment

Councilor DuQuenne/Hansen m/s to approve the consent agenda. Roll Call Vote: Councilor DuQuenne, Hyatt, Kaplan, and Hansen, YES. Motion passed.

Graham welcomed Mark Morrison to the Climate and Environment Policy Committee.

Gaza Ceasefire Letter

Mayor Graham read the proposed letter to the Federal Government (letter attached).

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. **Rabbi David Zaslow**/Opposed letter. Felt that the letter should be about preventing genocide and protect Israel from Hamas.
2. **Carol Sumahara**/ Felt that it was easy for Americans to take their democracy for granted. Warned the Council to be careful whose side they were on.
3. **Ayala Zonnenschein**/ Identify as Jewish American and found the letter offensive. Asked if other letters had been written to Legislature about other issues happening outside of the US.
4. **Randi Seivak**/Oppose the letter. Felt that the letter might have unintended consequences.
5. **Rabbi Julie Benioff**/Homelessness, food insecurity, mental illness, fire protection are all items this Council is working on. Wanted peace for all but to also hold Hamas accountable for the events of Oct. 7. Nowhere is there an effort to hold Hamas accountable. Wanted Local governments not to get involved with foreign affairs.
6. **Lisa Horwitch**/Ashland/Was in the room when proclamation was signed supporting a stand on condemning hate. Was shocked by the proposed letter but understood that there are others who do not believe in a ceasefire.
7. **Laurel Miller**/Spoke about wanting Ashland to be a place that does not tolerate separation.
8. **Rabbi Avi Zwlobul**/Spoke to the response of citizens and highlighted how they find this letter offensive, hurtful, and risk their safety. Wanted like Ashland to stay a safe place for Jews and to focus on local issues.
9. **Daniela Cohen**/Ashland/Firmly oppose this letter.
10. **Jacqueline Brodsky**/ Felt that facts are dismissed. Felt that the City was ignoring the actions of Hamas.
11. **Linda Myerson-Cohen**/ Agrees with everything that has been said during this forum. Was deeply opposed to the letter, feeling that it would perpetuate more hatred and harm towards a very complicated matter.
12. **Manny Cohon**/Ashland/Vehemently oppose this letter. Felt that it was not a voice of peace.
13. **Benjamin Ben-Baruch**/ Thanked the council for drafting the letter. Encourage all Council members to sign the letter. Appalled at the community for their comments here. They do not represent the majority of the Jewish community.
14. **Brenda Gould**/ Thank the Council for their efforts. Felt that this was something Ashland can do to support peace and justice.

15. **Tony Foster**/Ashland/Spoke to the many Palestinians that had been killed since the start of this war. Demanded a total cease fire in Gaza adding that it was the minimum requirement. Felt he could not support any group who does not support a cease fire.
16. **Jaime Powell**/Ashland/ Reminded the Council and the speakers that they were on stolen land. Spoke in support of the letter and of a ceasefire.
17. **Greg Grano**/Ashland/Thanked the Mayo for drafting the statement. Felt that the act of pushing away genocidal acts was abhorrent. Grateful for the statement and Ashland to be on the right side of history.
18. **Ryan Navickas**/Ashland/Support ceasefire. Felt that people should take a stand and not be complicit.
19. **Emily Simon**/Urge the Council to express their own opinions to the powers that be that make foreign policy decisions on an individual letter. Felt that sending this letter as the Council or having the Mayor endorse the letter was something that could have far reaching consequences.
20. **Erin Modine**/Thanked the Mayor for her courage by writing the letter. Spoke to the trauma that the conflict has caused. Spoke to the wholesale destruction of Gaza. Voiced support to the letter.
21. **Sarah Mix**/Ashland/Thank the Mayor for drafting the letter and allowing the conversation to happen about this issue.
22. **Nicole Kemmer**/Grants Pass. Thanked the Mayor for drafting the letter and voiced support towards it. Brought up the human turmoil on the ongoing genocide.
23. **Kayla Blanchflower**/Thanked the Mayor for drafting this letter. Spoke to the Jewish community, about standing against antisemitism Thought that everyone should be against hatred. Voiced support for the letter.
24. **Alan Weisbard**/ Felt that the letter did not reflect the views of the people of Ashland and of Oregon as a whole. Wanted the City to focus on local issues. He strongly opposed the letter reiterating this letter does not reflect him.
25. **Morris Maizels**/Ashland/Israel has a right to exist. Felt that the Council was wrong to use the word Genocide.
26. **Alism Post**/Ashland/Spoke to the need for people in positions of power to speak up. Felt that a cease fire would not be against the Jewish people.

Mayor Graham thanked the various speakers for their input and wanted to continue having a respectful dialog within the community. She wanted to make sure that none of the statements within the letter could be weaponized against the Jewish people. She clarified that the letter does not speak to the ceasefire but instead would be calling for what needs to be done for long-term peace. The words that are used in the letter should not be turned into stating that the City of Ashland supports the ongoing discussion ceasefire process nor should it be weaponized by any antisemitic groups to justify genocide. Graham updated the language in the letter based on the feedback. (Revised letter attached.)

Hansen wanted to thank Ashland for coming to this meeting and peaceful dialog. His personal stance is his own and supports Mayor in sending this letter. The violence and hate that is happening all around the world is deplorable. Thanked everyone for their discussion. DuQuenne thanks the residents of Ashland. She heard humanity and love. Kaplan was impressed with the way in which Ashland showed up. He appreciated the comments from the speakers and appreciated the Mayor for changing the letter in response to what was heard. He voiced support towards the Mayor sending the letter. Hyatt highlighted the pain of the voices who spoke tonight. She did not have the understanding to solve this issue but knew that no one on the Council wanted innocent people to die. She thanked Mayor Graham for sending the letter.

X. PUBLIC HEARINGS – Postponed to the next Council meeting due to lack of a full Council in attendance.

- 1.** First Reading – Ordinance 3230 Amending Procurement & Contract Procedures

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1.** Resolution–Ballot Language for City Recorder

Cotta spoke about the item and the changes that had been made. DuQuenne mentioned that she didn't see any change. Cotta responded the changed statement now read. *"Yes' vote for this measure amends the City Charter to allow for the City of Ashland to hire an individual with appropriate training and skill to fill the Recorder position to include public records retention law, public meeting law, and election process. Currently there are no minimum professional skill qualifications for this position. The only qualifiers are residing within City limits and being a registered voter. The recorder is an administrative position that requires decision to be made based on knowledge, skills, and abilities outside of the number of votes garnered in an election."* DuQuenne felt that the language regarding the no vote was confusing regarding if the City Recorder had to live within the City limits. Cotta responded that a "no" vote would retain the current language, which says *"No' vote for this measure maintains the existing language in the City Charter which outlines the sole qualifications for being an elected Recorder and fulfilling the necessary job duties as being a resident and registered voter within the City of Ashland."* DuQuenne wanted the language of the "No" vote to be updated to reflect that the City Recorder did have to live within the City Limits, feeling that both options should be made equal regarding the explanatory description. Mayor Graham clarified what a yes or no vote would do. Hyatt spoke about the language regarding the number of votes, bringing up concerns that votes aren't valued for the position. She wanted to delete the phrase, *"outside of the number of votes garnered in an election."* Cotta suggested revising the statement to read *"the Recorder is an administrative position that requires decisions to be made based on knowledge skills and abilities."* Hyatt and DuQuenne agreed with the suggestion. Hyatt pointed out a small issue with a missing letter on the word "decisions." Hansen wanted to add additional changes to the explanatory statement of the "No" vote to address DuQuenne's concern, saying *"a no vote for this measure maintains this*

as an elected official, and maintains the existing language.” DuQuenne felt that the change was what she was looking for. Cotta agreed with the change. Kaplan asked for clarification, which Acting City Attorney Doug McGeary provided.

A "Yes" vote for this measure amends the City Charter to allow for the City of Ashland to hire an individual with appropriate training and skill to fill the Recorder position to include public records retention law, public meeting law, and election process. Currently there are no minimum professional skill qualifications for this position. The only qualifiers are residing within City limits and being a registered voter. The recorder is an administrative position that requires decisions to be made based on knowledge, skills, and abilities.

A "No" vote for this measure maintains this position as an elected official and maintains the existing language in the City Charter which outlines the sole qualifications for being an elected City Recorder and fulfilling the necessary job duties as being a resident and registered voter within the City of Ashland.

Councilor Hansen/Hyatt m/s to approve Resolution 2024-02 A Resolution of the City of Ashland Submitting to the Voters at the May 21, 2024, Primary Election a Proposed Amendment to Article III and Article VI of the Ashland City Charter with the changes identified here.

DISCUSSION: Hansen was glad to see the requirements needed for the City Recorder position changed. He felt that the clarification would help voters make their decision in an informed matter. Hyatt agreed with Hansen’s points.

Roll Call Vote: Councilor Kaplan, Hyatt, DuQuenne, and Hansen, YES. Motion passed.

I. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

1. Contract – Freshwater Trust for a Flow Augmentation Feasibility Study-Phase 2

Mayor Graham had a conflict of interest regarding the contract and excused herself. Hyatt, acting as Chair of the Council, took over proceedings for this portion of the meeting. Public Works Director Scott Fleury explained that this item was centered around completing phase 2 of the study. Phase 1 had been completed. Between Oct 15 and Nov 15 there was a potential that the City would not be able to meet its requirements for thermal limits. The second phase aims to look at temperature modeling and to decide how much cold water from Reeder Reservoir could be released to offset the thermal impact of the wastewater treatment plant. The third phase will be to develop a shade plan to offset the thermal impact from the wastewater treatment plant. Hyatt asked what exactly the Council needed to do regarding this issue. Fleury clarified that the Council would be awarding a contract for Phase Two of the process. Kaplan asked if the water management conservation plan included the release of cold water from Reeder Reservoir. Fleury responded that the water management conservation plan was completed prior to the feasibility study and that information was given to The Freshwater Trust for them to take into consideration for their analysis on future flow

projections. Kaplan asked about finding the flow rate and if the number Fleury had given was set in stone. Fleury responded that it was an approximate number used until TFT had completed their calculations. DuQuenne asked about the shading plan. Fleury responded that the shading program is about 60% complete with it expected to be in full compliance by the end of the year. The shading plan would allow for them to release excess water from the wastewater treatment plant if need be. Hansen asked about the kinds of fines Rogue Valley Sewer had received for being out of compliance. Fleury estimated that it was in the millions of dollars. Hansen asked if Ashland joined the Rogue Valley Sewer Program if that would help ease the cost, which Fleury confirmed. Kaplan asked about the "Shade-a-lator" model mentioned in the proposal. Fleury explained that it was a model used to determine the "shade credits" adding that a similar model existed regarding water release.

Councilor Hansen/Kaplan m/s to notify Freshwater Trust to proceed with Phase Two and to submit final feasibility and limitations report to the Department of Environmental Quality.

DISCUSSION: Hansen was happy that the City of Ashland was finding good solutions for being compliant with DEQ and taking care of the surrounding watershed. Kaplan thanked the staff and was happy with how all the pieces fit together to comply with DEQ regulations.

DuQuenne spoke that she did not support the budget and even though the item is in the budget. she felt that she could not support something where there was no concrete solution beyond hoping that the City would be compliant with DEQ.

Roll Call Vote: Council Kaplan, Hyatt, and Hansen, YES. DuQuenne, NO. Motion Passed 3-1.

Council took a recess from approximately 7:52PM to 8:00PM. Councilor DuQuenne had to depart from the meeting early. Mayor Graham spoke about quorum regarding the remainder of the meeting, stating that since there were now only three council members in attendance, she would be voting.

II. NEW BUSINESS

1. Letter of support – Emergency Communication of Southern Oregon (ECSO)

Cotta spoke about the purpose of the letter. County-wide is looking to make emergency communications better. This letter ensures the capital funds are available to complete the project.

Councilor Kaplan/Hyatt m/s to authorize the Mayor to sign the letter supporting the capital funding request for ECSO 911.

DISCUSSION: Both Kaplan and Hyatt felt that it was necessary and that the City should support it.

Roll Call Vote: Council Hansen, Kaplan, Graham, and Hyatt, YES. Motion Passed

2. 2024 Council Retreat

Cotta suggested a tentative agenda including emergency management training provided by Emergency Management Coordinator Kelly Burns. Kaplan asked if the retreat could shrink the time dedicated to Council training to focus on the emergency management training. Cotta responded that was not possible as they were going to lengthen the amount of time on Council training. Hansen was curious why it was difficult to come together to discuss ideas and priorities during the retreat. He suggested having an hour to talk about those topics. Graham would like to keep the training to two to three hours and supported emergency management training. She would also like more time to talk about workplans. Kaplan added that he was happy to have a "working lunch" during the retreat. Hyatt was looking forward to time together without the constraints of meetings. Kaplan if the public can attend, which Cotta confirmed. Hyatt asked if Council could face the public during presentations and discussion. Hansen suggested changing venues to help increase public attendance. Cotta asked what dates would be preferable out of the three proposed dates, March 8th, March 15th and March 22nd. The Council members and the Mayor provided feedback to Cotta on which dates would or would not work for them.

3. Fee Waiver Request – Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing

Planning Commission staff liaison Brandon Goldman spoke about this item. This was part of a series of affordable housing units that already had their fees waived. Habitat for Humanity was interested in extending a request to waive the Community Development and Engineering fees for this project. Goldman brought up that under Resolution 2020-24, all affordable housing units acquired through zone changes or annexations were obligated to pay these fees unless a waiver was approved by the City Council. Habitat for Humanity has acquired the lots, received their permits and are looking for the City Council to waive the fees so construction can continue.

Kaplan summarized that the resolution from a few years ago sounded like it would amortize over the entire development as opposed to just the affordable housing developer. Goldman responded there were two options available regarding affordable housing, with either the for-market developers creating the housing or a non-profit housing developer taking on the project. Goldman mentioned that the City Council had previously waived fees for Rice Park subdivision. Hyatt asked if waiving the fees would be an overall benefit to taxes base, which Goldman confirmed.

McGeary clarified the voting process for a quorum and explained according to the AMC, three councilors make up a quorum and the Mayor does not vote unless there is a tie.

Graham asked about the other six housing units mentioned by Goldman. Goldman responded that the other six lots were deed restricted for affordable units before at market housing could be built.

Councilor Hyatt/Hansen m/s to waive the fees for two affordable housing units developed by Habitat for Humanity, consisting of \$5,918.30 in Community Development Fees and \$3,698.94 in Engineering Services Fees, for a combined total of \$9,617.24.

DISCUSSION: Hyatt pointed out the rapid increase in the value of market rate housing and that any and all affordable units are necessary. Hansen and Kaplan concurred with Hyatt's points.

Roll Call Vote: Councilor Hyatt, Kaplan, Hansen, YES. Motion Passed

Voting was redone for the letter of support for Emergency Communication of Southern Oregon (ECSO)

Redo on vote: Council Hansen, Kaplan, and Hyatt, YES. Motion Passed

III. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

1. Contract – Ivy Morton Waterline Project

Fleury summarized the purpose of the project and how it would connect to the greater Ashland utility network. Fleury pointed out how this project would help solve several issues within the greater Ashland utility network.

Hyatt asked if a communication plan and timeline is available for those who will be impacted by this work? Fleury responded that Project Manager Jason Strait is working on creating schedules and drafting notifications for those who will be affected. Hansen asked about the new properties and how that would tie into the project regarding easement and access. Fleury responded that the City already had an easement with the previous property owner and that the City of Ashland now owns that property. He added that the City cannot grant itself an easement on its own property and that an easement was not needed as the City owns the property outright. The City could make a reservation on the property which would generate an easement if the property was divested from City ownership. Kaplan understood that the project was necessary but had questions about water rates. He asked if concerns about water rates could be factored into the project. Fleury responded that a cost/benefit analysis was already planned.

Councilor Kaplan/Hyatt m/s to award a public improvement contract to Central Pipeline for Project No. 2014-04 Ivy Morton Waterline, in the amount of \$1,187,680.

DISCUSSION: Kaplan noted that it was necessary to carry out and would eventually save the City money. Hyatt felt that it would help with the South Mountain repair cost avoidance and expressed interest in the increased flow rates for fire suppression.

Roll Call Vote: Councilor Kaplan, Hyatt, Hansen, YES. Motion Passed

2. Contract – Facilities Planning Optimization and Management Plan

Fleury spoke about this item. He gave special notice to David Summer from Outstanding Resource Waters of Oregon for his assistance and guidance as project leader. Fleury stated that the contract would handle facilities plans and facilities assessments. This would allow for the City to be proactive instead of reactive to optimization work. ORW would handle creating a facility plan and include future planning. Fleury expected that the project would be done by the end of year and would bring ORW's assessment to the Council for approval. Then it will go to staff to determine the facilities improvement plan.

Hansen asked if City Hall was one of the facilities that would be looked at. Fleury responded that City Hall would be looked at, with ORW having been kept in the loop about the building. Hyatt noted that there had been conversations before her arrival at Council regarding engineering reports, needed refits and façade concerns. She asked if those reports would be included within the plan. Fleury responded that structural seismic reports would be included. Hyatt asked if the City currently has people in a building where they are unsafe, which Fleury confirmed. Hyatt asked McGeary if there is a risk of liability to the Council members and staff if something were to happen. McGeary responded that there was a small potential, although there would be several hurdles in order to get to that point. Hyatt spoke that she was not comfortable with the answer being "maybe." McGeary stated that he understood Hyatt's concerns and that in law there are areas of grey. Hyatt asked if there was a way to direct staff to look at potential ways to mitigate potential risk? Graham responded that they could talk about that topic later. Graham asked about the Briscoe School and how to prioritize the three remaining items that need to be taken care of. Fleury responded that part of the process would be looking at what the building will be used for in the future, noting the issue of making too many changes now without considering future usage. Fleury highlighted concerns with Oregon Child Development Coalition and wanting to minimize any impact that construction might have on their operations.

Councilor Hyatt/Hansen m/s to approve the contract with ORW Architecture for Facility Management and Optimization plan in the amount of \$210,209.

DISCUSSION: Hyatt stated that she was glad that the plan was moving forward giving how infrastructure safety is moving into the future. Hasen was happy that the project would look at inventory, changes and how best to plan towards the future in all aspects. Kaplan was excited for the results to come out. Graham thanked Fleury for bringing up the Energy Service Companies conversation.

Roll Call Vote: Councilor Hyatt, Hansen, and Kaplan, YES. Motion Passed

Staff guidance: Hyatt made clear that she did not want to take up the issue of City Hall as a building. She did, however, want to ensure staff safety moving forward. Graham mentioned that in the past the Council had asked for quotes on what it would take to make City Hall safe and that she was interested in seeing what options were available regarding the immediate future. Kaplan agreed with Graham and was interested in seeing a set of options for staff.

Hansen felt that City Hall was the cornerstone of the community and wanted to know what options were available for the safety of staff. He was also interested in what the forthcoming report would say about the building.

Cotta suggested having the possible options discussed at a study session in March before any action is taken. Graham spoke in terms of Briscoe School, asking if it would be possible to have staff to come back to Council with an updated costs estimate for the three remaining elements. Fleury responded that they already had a good estimation of asbestos removal and the roof repair costs. He needs the report from Marquess & Associates Inc before being able to present any costs. Graham asked about potential electrical supply issues in the area around Briscoe School. Kaplan recalled a conversation about the possibility of solar for the roof of Briscoe, with Fleury adding that there will be a load bearing calculation done by Marquess & Associates which would answer the question about solar panel installation.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

Hansen spoke about recent Transportation Advisory Committee meetings and is asking for citizen input about bike parking inventory. He added that bike safety is also being discussed within the meetings. Kaplan gave an update about the first full subcommittee meeting for the Houseless Services Committee adding that they will be meeting every two weeks. Hyatt mentioned that the SOREDI economic forum meeting lineup looks interesting. Graham spoke about attending the Southern Oregon Homelessness Summit and received the State update about how to pivot from shelter beds to emergency housing. She hoped that the long-term plan of 2200 Ashland Street could be influenced by the recent conversation and movements within the State. She wanted planning with the site to be in sync with newer options being discussed by the Homelessness Master Plan.

V. ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

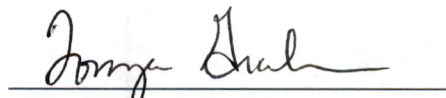
Councilor Hyatt/ Hansen m/s to adjourn meeting at 9:00 pm.

All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:00PM

Respectfully Submitted by:

Attest:


City Recorder Alissa Kolodzinski


Mayor Tonya Graham



February 6, 2024

Letter to Senator Wyden and Congressman Bentz

Dear Senator/Congressman,

As you know, 27,019 Palestinians have been killed and 66,139 wounded since October 7, including 85 journalists and over 136 United Nations Relief and Works Agency aid workers. An estimated 70% of the Palestinians who have been killed are women and children. At the same time, 1,139 Israelis have been killed and over 13,000 wounded during and since the Hamas attack on October 7. There are currently 108 Israelis held hostage by Hamas.

The International Court of Justice in the Hague has ordered Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent acts of genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the situation on the ground in Gaza is beyond desperate regarding the availability of food, clean water, medicine, and supplies. At the same time, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is fueling destabilization in the region.

For all of these reasons, the Ashland City Council urges you to do everything in your power to bring forward a cessation of hostilities in Gaza, secure release of all hostages, and provide humanitarian aid necessary to ensure the survival of Palestinian civilians.

Sincerely,

Tonya Graham
Mayor of Ashland on behalf of the Ashland City Council

Letter to President Biden, Senator Wyden, Congressman Bentz

Dear Biden/Wyden/Bentz,

As you know, 27,019 Palestinians have been killed and 66,139 wounded since October 7, including 85 journalists and over 136 United Nations Relief and Works Agency aid workers. An estimated 70% of the Palestinians who have been killed are women and children.

At the same time, 1,139 Israelis have been killed and over 13,000 wounded during and since the Hamas attack on October 7. There are currently 136 Israelis held hostage by Hamas.

The situation on the ground in Gaza is beyond desperate regarding the availability of food, clean water, medicine, and supplies.

For all of these reasons, the Ashland City Council urges you to do everything in your power to bring forward a long-term peace by working to ensure a cessation of hostilities in Gaza, to secure the release of all hostages, and to provide humanitarian aid necessary to ensure the survival of Palestinian civilians.

Sincerely,

Tonya Graham
Mayor of Ashland