

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY- -MARCH 18, 2025- -7:00 P.M.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft convened the meeting at 7:11 p.m. Vice Mayor Pryor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL - Present: Councilmembers Boller, Daysog, Jensen, Pryor, and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 5.
Absent: None.

AGENDA CHANGES

(25-146) The City Clerk announced that the Economic Development update [paragraph no. 25-175] was withdrawn from the agenda and would return on April 1, 2025.

PROCLAMATIONS, SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(25-147) Proclamation Declaring March 2025 as Women's History Month.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft read the proclamation and presented it to Holly Joshi.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

(25-148) Jessica Scheld, Alameda, discussed slow streets; requested removal.

(25-149) Jennifer Rakowski, Alameda, expressed concern about the Mario Gonzalez memorial being removed.

(25-150) Savanna Cheer, Alameda, discussed the Mario Gonzalez memorial; urged Council to discuss the matter with staff.

(25-151) William Morrison, Alameda, discussed public input at Commission meetings.

(25-152) Susan Sperry, Alameda, expressed concern about the condition of roads.

(25-153) Katherine Park Deakin, Alameda, expressed support for a Mario Gonzalez memorial, including a plaque or park naming.

(25-154) Jonathan Mintzer, Jewish Community Relations Council, discussed ways to engage with the Jewish Community.

(25-155) Lucas Newhall expressed support for slow streets, as well as walking and biking infrastructure improvements; suggested having a car free day on 4th of July weekend.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Jensen requested the Sister City item [paragraph no. 25-166] be pulled from the Consent Calendar for discussion.

The Council briefly discussed how to proceed.

Councilmember Jensen moved approval of hearing the Sister City item before the first Regular Agenda Item.

Councilmember Daysog seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote - 5.

Vice Mayor Pryor stated that she would recuse herself from voting on the Radium Exclusive Negotiating Agreement [paragraph no. 25-163] due to the Levine Act.

Councilmember Daysog moved approval of the Consent Calendar.

Councilmember Jensen seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote - 5. [Items so enacted or adopted are indicated by an asterisk preceding the paragraph number.]

(*25-156) Minutes of the Special City Council Meeting, the Special Joint City Council and Successor Agency to the Community Improvement Commission Meeting, and the Regular City Council Meeting Held on February 18, 2025. Approved.

(*25157) Ratified bills in the amount of \$4,699,417.24.

(*25-158) Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Five-Year Agreement with Hilton Farnkopf & Hobson Consultants, LLC for Solid Waste Consulting Services in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$530,000. Accepted.

(*25-159) Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Five-Year Agreement with Oliveira Enterprises, Inc. for Procurement of Senate Bill (SB) 1383 Eligible Compost and/or Mulch for Application Throughout Alameda (Various Locations) in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$200,000. Accepted.

(*25-160) Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Five-Year Agreement with A Plus Tree, LLC for Citywide Urban Forest Tree Treatment Services in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$1,000,000. Accepted.

(*25-161) Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Five-Year Agreement with The Professional Tree Care Company, Inc. for Citywide Urban Forest Tree Planting Services in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$951,199. Accepted.

(*25-162) Recommendation to Authorize Termination of the Emergency Action to Address Declaration of Unsafe Building and Notice to Vacate, Case Number X24-0470, for the City-Owned Building Located at Building 114, 2450 Saratoga Street, Alameda, California. Accepted.

(25-163) Recommendation to Approve the First Amendment to the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) between the City of Alameda and Radium Presents to Extend the Term of the ENA to December 31, 2025 unless Terminated or Extended as Provided in the ENA.

Since Vice Mayor Pryor abstained, the matter carried by the following vote: Ayes:

Councilmembers Boller, Daysog, Jensen and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 4. [Absent: Vice Mayor Pryor – 1].

(*25-164) Recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute a First Amendment to the Agreement with Alameda Family Services to Provide Full-Time Onsite Mental Health Support at Dignity Village and Extend the Term an Additional Six Months Through December 31, 2025 with an Additional Amount Not-to-Exceed \$93,326.08 for a Total Amount Not-to-Exceed \$202,357.08. Accepted.

(*25-165) Resolution No. 16254, “Authorizing the Filing of an Application for the California Division of Boating and Waterways Public Beach Restoration Program Funding for the Sand Replenishment of South Shore Beach Totaling \$6,282,535 and Committing a City of Alameda Local Required Match in the Amount of \$471,190.” Adopted.

CONTINUED AGENDA ITEMS

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR - ITEMS REMOVED FOR DISCUSSION

(25-166) Adoption of Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Regarding the Formulation and Implementation of Sister City Relations Between the Village of Wadi Foquin, Palestinian Territories and the City of Alameda. Not Adopted.

The Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer gave a brief presentation.

Councilmember Jensen inquired why the agreement is coming forward at this time, to which the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded when the agreement first came forth in 2017, Council directed staff review by the City Attorney's office; once the process was complete, Alameda Sister City Association (ASCA) switched gears and was moving forward to bring Varazze as the next Sister City; ASCA's process is to only do one Sister City at a time; after bringing forth Varazze, ASCA planned to bring Wadi Foquin; then, there was a global pandemic; in 2023, ASCA inquired about bringing it back; then, folks gathered together in 2024 to bring it forth tonight.

Councilmember Jensen inquired whether there is a limit as to how many Sister Cities Alameda can have, to which the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded in the negative.

Councilmember Jensen inquired what is staff's role in facilitating Sister City relationships, including welcoming Sister City leader visits and supporting Alameda leaders traveling to a Sister City.

The Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded it has been her pleasure to serve as staff and support a number of different Sister Cities; a delegation recently visited from China and presented the City with some gifts and documents, which included an invitation to attend regional festivities in China; Alameda was not able to go this year, but maybe another year; she receives inquiries regularly and exchanges information with delegates; during the pandemic, Alameda's Sister City in Korea donated thousands of masks to the City; another Sister City relationship is with Dumaguete; a committee within ASCA bring young scuba divers from Alameda to Dumaguete to do diving expeditions, as well as doctors to perform cataract surgery; all of it is

done by ASCA; her role is to share news and try to get people involved in understanding and promoting mutual relationship-building; encouraging more young people to participate is also an ongoing activity.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry, the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer stated each Sister City relationship requires a different level of work; she does not expect a Sister City in Palestine would require any additional work; as an example, the Sister City in Korea brought delegations of young people to Alameda twice; she worked with the Academy of Alameda; 8th graders went on tours of the USS Hornet and went to Tucker's Ice Cream; generally, staff time is limited and ASCA does most of the work.

Councilmember Jensen inquired how it fits into the Strategic Plan, to which the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded when the Strategic Plan was created, it included an illustration of an iceberg; stated the projects in the Strategic Plan are the tip of the iceberg; the bulk of the iceberg, which cannot be seen, includes work like Sister Cities.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry, the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer stated staff work is not only to support the community organization, but also the City's vision in the Strategic Plan to have an inclusive community and make sure everybody belongs.

Councilmember Jensen inquired what is the difference between a Sister City and a Friendship City.

Karen Fong, ASCA, responded a Friendship City is more like a handshake and a Sister City is more like a marriage; stated both still need official Council ratification; Sister Cities International (SCI) officially recognizes Sister Cities; Friendship Cities wait in the wings to go back and get ratified.

Councilmember Jensen inquired whether ASCA considered bringing Wadi Foquin back as a Friendship City after there was no action by the City Council in 2017, to which Ms. Fong responded in the negative; stated doing so would be taking a step backwards.

Councilmember Jensen inquired whether the cultural exchange between Alameda and Wadi Foquin would be subject to some approval or oversight by Israel given the governing structure and if it would be more of a challenge to establish the relationship.

Ms. Fong responded that she cannot really speak to the issue of Israel approval or oversight, but she certainly hopes it will not be a challenge; stated that she could guarantee ASCA is not going to do anything dangerous; ASCA works with SCI, which helps with travel arrangements and other similar things; ASCA does sensitivity training to avoid getting into trouble when travelling to the Sister City and will secure any necessary travel documents.

Michael Yoshi, ASCA, showed slides in response to Council inquiries regarding Wadi Foquin's compatibility as a Sister City and provided a handout; highlighted six areas of compatibility: 1) the value of family life and strong emphasis on development of children and youth through education, recreation and special programs; 2) spiritual traditions and customs; 3) farm history and culture; 4) the historic relationship to the land and environmental practices; 5) small communities in transition, located near in larger municipalities; 6) the values of peace, justice, equality, freedom,

and inclusion are values that both cities embrace.

Councilmember Boller inquired whether ASCA determined that other shared goals is the only category of compatibility or if there are other categories.

Ms. Fong responded it is basically anything; stated anything includes people-to-people relationships and how people see life and share cultural experiences; the guidelines are just guidelines; any possible reason to be a Sister City is out there; a lot of opposition is giving various reasons Wadi Foquin should not be a Sister City, which is why she believes it should be a Sister City.

Councilmember Boller inquired what community-based organizations or private organizations in Wadi Foquin are involved, to which Mr. Yoshi responded that he provided the information in a handout; stated there are different groups, including a soccer academy, which ASCA met with that is very interested in working to bring a soccer team to Alameda; there is also a youth development program, a women's association, and a number of different organizations in the village.

Councilmember Boller inquired about the level of correspondence with the highest-ranking officials in Wadi Foquin in the last few years or recent letters or writings showing Wadi Foquin's endorsement of the idea.

Mr. Yoshi responded back in 2017, there was disappointment after going through a lot of effort only to be summarily tabled by the Israeli Consulate; explaining what happened was hard initially; ASCA has been in constant contact with Wadi Foquin officials about continuing the process; ASCA never decided to just let it dissolve; it was kept open and conversation continued; ASCA's friends in Wadi Foquin have been in contact with its leaders; when visiting in January, he had conversation with key groups like the soccer academy; then, upon returning, he contacted the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer upon returning to discuss moving forward.

Councilmember Boller stated in the SCI Guidelines, emphasis is very much on the planning process, laying the groundwork, and testing the water for sometimes years at a time; a lot of that is between the official leaders of the two communities; inquired whether Alameda's Mayor has had any correspondence with Wadi Foquin in the last couple of years.

Mr. Yoshi responded Sister Cities are about people-to-people relationships and citizen diplomacy; it does not start with elected officials; it starts with people; if there are not people in both communities wanting to do people-to-people relationships, it does not happen; the initiative came to ASCA to move things forward.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she recalls having a meeting with some individuals from Wadi Foquin back in 2017.

Ms. Fong stated the Mayor from Wadi Foquin did a tour of the United States and stopped in Alameda for a meet and greet with City officials.

Mr. Yoshi added the Wadi Foquin Mayor visited Alameda in 2015 and made the Sister City inquiry with former Councilmember Frank Matarrese since he was also part of ASCA.

Councilmember Boller stated the SCI Guidelines says it will include an outline of potential sister

city programs and activities over a five-year period; inquired whether ASCA prepared a proposal with an outline of what would take place over the next five years.

Ms. Fong responded in the negative; stated that comes in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which ASCA has not done yet, but will eventually.

Councilmember Boller inquired whether the proposed outline of activities and programs are part of the planning phase before a Sister City is established.

Ms. Fong responded ASCA has specific types of exchanges in mind; stated ASCA wants to start a Sister City store to bring in olive oil and olives from Wadi Foquin, as well as ones from Varazze; ASCA is also thinking of a sports summit, including a soccer competition; some people are interested in pickleball; ASCA does not know what can be done just yet, but the possibilities are endless and the opportunity for the exchange is desired.

Councilmember Boller inquired what consideration ASCA gave to other portions of Palestine, including the larger geographical district in dispute in terms of its land, such as the Bethlehem district.

Ms. Fong responded ASCA has not given other considerations because two organizations are behind Wadi Foquin; ASCA seeks something sustainable; if there are people to support the Sister City, such as Friends of Wadi Foquin and the United Methodist Church, the organizations will support the relationship in the future; decades ago, Sister Cities with Sweden and Japan disappeared because the representatives in the City were not in existence anymore.

Mr. Yoshi stated the idea of broadening to the whole Bethlehem district is something ASCA would support, but it has to be done a little at a time; pulling together a soccer exchange will be a lot of work so it should be done one piece at a time and incrementally; ASCA also needs to be prudent about the capacity and what it can do to begin right now.

Councilmember Daysog inquired whether ASCA is concerned that, if approved by Council, Alameda would be taking a position on the settlement issue as well as on the on the Israeli military going through the town of Wadi Foquin.

Mr. Yoshi responded ASCA's understanding from the very beginning is that Sister Cities are not a political engagement, but a people-to-people cultural engagement; stated everything has a political context; the Sister City with China has a context; the ASCA would do its best to do people-to-people relationships under the guidelines of what is prescribed for Sister Cities.

In response to Councilmember Daysog's inquiry, Mr. Yoshi stated the City Council is free to do whatever it deems necessary in terms of its business; a Sister City relationship has its own guidelines around what to do; supporting Sister Cities is not taking a position on particular; if the Council wants to do so, it could, but it is not part of what being a Sister City is about.

Councilmember Daysog inquired whether there has been community support and/or opposition for any of the five Sister City cases included in the staff report.

The Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded the most recent one for Varazze

had community support from the organization Alpicella; outside of Alpicella, a few individuals with Italian roots were interested; there was not very much discussion because it was led by a community organization; there was support and no opposition; all of the different organizations that have come forward have been supportive; six other cities have a Palestine Sister City relationship; read an excerpt from a City of Boulder letter: "You will need to distinguish between political realities that all Sister Cities are faced with, and political advocacy. As long as a Sister City relationship is not advocating for political outcomes, there ought be no issues with political realities."

Councilmember Daysog inquired whether anyone knows if the Mayor and Town Council of Wadi Foquin acknowledge the State of Israel's right to exist as a country.

The Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded in the negative; stated ASCA asked if anyone is aware; no one on the committee is aware; she also did her own online search on Twitter accounts and could not find anything either in support or opposition.

Councilmember Boller stated that he did extra research and found cities have more robust guidelines and strong community support as a criteria; the success of the Sister City relationship depends in large part on broad-based community support from business, arts, culture, academia, and the local ethnic community; support should also be distributed among individuals, corporations, civic leaders, and the local government; inquired whether the City or ASCA did any type of outreach or workshops with the community to determine the level of community support to assess the sustainability of this in the last couple of years.

The Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded in the negative; stated her understanding is the City has never done a workshop like that for any Sister City.

Councilmember Boller inquired whether this is the first time there has been so much opposition to a Sister City, to which the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded that she believes so; stated that she does not know about the earlier ones, Sweden and Japan, but in recent years, she has not seen this level of opposition or support for a Sister City.

In response to Councilmember Boller's inquiry regarding the City of Boulder and the political problems after its formation, the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer stated that she did not do research; only six cities have a Sister City relationship with a Palestinian territory; one is Sacramento's relationship with Bethlehem; the rest are spread out throughout the country.

Mr. Yoshi stated in the last couple of years, the ASCA had an event at Twin Towers, United Methodist Church to discuss bringing the Sister City proposal back that was tabled in 2017; Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Councilmember Jensen; there were about 150 attendees.

In response to Councilmember Boller's inquiry, Mr. Yoshi stated it was not a City-sponsored event; it was held specifically to let the community know ASCA was intending to bring it back.

Urged Council not to become a Sister City with Wadi Foquin, which is located on the green line and controlled by Israel; stated antisemitism always increases in the United States when Israel is in the news; matters of international affairs belong in the federal government, not here: Susan Goldstein, Alameda.

Stated that she is a strong proponent of dialogue across differences, however, choosing to align with Wadi Foquin sends a clear message that only one side of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is supported by Alameda; Wadi Foquin is unlike any other Palestinian community that already has Sister City status with a United States city, as the entire area is within Israeli control; the conflict is heated and full of misinformation; urged Council against the Sister City relationship: Cynthia Minster, Temple Israel of Alameda.

Stated that he was deeply impacted by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at a young age, but became a strong advocate for peace and for the two-state solution; urged Council not to support signing the Sister City agreement with Wadi Foquin; stated the ASCA presentation is more than just a cultural presentation; there are no real plans or fit with Alameda; a decision to enter into the agreement will be seen as a political stance: Raviv Morre, Temple Israel.

Stated Alamedans have no power to make the lives of the Wadi Foquin residents better other than to show safety and security Alameda has that they do not; other cities in the world are prime candidates, such as South Vietnam, or any other Arab city that does not have open conflict with Israel; urged Council not to vote to make Wadi Foquin a Sister City; stated it will be throwing gasoline on the flames of current Jew hate and Israeli hate in Alameda: C.J. Kingsley, Alameda.

Stated the issue is about fear; several of her friends could not be here tonight to speak on the issue because of anti-Jewish activities and the fear that they feel in their homes and in public; adopting a Sister City in a politically unstable area is throwing flames on a problem; urged Council to vote no: Mary Gold, Alameda.

Stated the children of Wadi Foquin are under attack; their land is being illegally and inhumanely colonized; Alameda cannot let that happen with a Sister City; the community can learn and grow closer to people all over the world and show solidarity with the children of Wadi Foquin; this can be done through simple means, like playing soccer, but also by showing legitimacy for who they are; the exact goals of the Sister City program is to grow together, build global cooperation, foster mutual understanding, and promote peace; urged Council to support the Sister City, and to fight for a better world for everyone: Roan Byrne-Sarno, Alameda.

Stated that she opposes the agreement; she was Mayor when the item initially came to Council; it did not proceed for multiple reasons; in January, the United States issued an advisory not to travel to the West Bank because of terrorism, armed conflict, and civil unrest; she does not think it would be appropriate to send a delegation to Wadi Foquin; the pain heard from the speakers regarding antisemitism is real in Alameda; urged Council not to take any action which could exacerbate that: Former Mayor Trish Spencer, Alameda.

Stated Sister Cities organizations try to eliminate the issue of conflicts, community-to-community and person-to-person; with the war going on now, walls are being built; there are good and bad people on both sides of the wall; the question is very simple: does Alameda want to build a bridge or build a wall; he supports the Sister City relationship as the best scenario for people coming together: Robert Ratto, ASCA.

Discussed the positive experiences of creating a Sister City, including all the projects, humanitarian, educational, or economic; urged the Council to approve the community's request to make Wadi Foquin another Sister City of Alameda: Cynthia Bonta, Alameda Dumaguete Sister

City.

Stated that he is the SCI global outreach representative of Palestine; SCI is a peacebuilding organization; building peace in the world is a priority; every country in the world has its history, that is good and bad; citizen diplomacy is the concept that the individual has the right and responsibility to help shape foreign relations one handshake at a time; urged Council to approve the relationship and take the first step towards promoting peace and understanding: John Dabeet, SCI.

Stated that she is Jewish and supports the Sister City relationship agreement; she cannot imagine why Council would not approve the recommendation because it is something that the people of the community are doing; it would be approving a community project to connect two places; she has incredibly strong feelings about the politics in this situation; she has never felt unsafe in a situation as a Jewish person, because other people supported Palestine; the proposal deserves Alameda's support the same way any other place does: Maya, Alameda Business Owner.

Stated that she is a clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; her son loves people and is eager to learn; she is a neighbor who loves to know the diverse community, beyond sharing food, but especially valuing shared humanity and learning from one another; she supports the proposed Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin which will enable the building of relationships that promote peace and reconciliation, acknowledge each other's dignity and further understanding of what it means to be a compassionate neighbor, human being, and a member of a community like Alameda: Teresita Valeriano, Alameda.

Stated the duty of the Sister City initiative is to create bridges between communities and cultures that help dissolve the inverse outgroup mentality that underpins the fear at the heart of racist rhetoric; racism towards Arabs, and specifically Palestinians, continues to be fostered and encouraged by groups whose interests and politics align with that of a recognized apartheid state; projects like Sister Cities are needed for the development and growth of the community; he supports the Wadi Foquin Sister City proposal: Gabriel, Alameda.

Stated that she visited Palestine and Wadi Foquin when she was three; expressed her excitement about a Sister City in Palestine; stated that she hopes people from there could visit Alameda and Alamedans could visit them; people will definitely eat a lot of good food there; urged Council to please vote yes on the agreement: Imani Chen, Alameda.

Stated that he visited Wadi Foquin when he was three; he would like to be Sister Cities with Wadi Foquin because he has close friends living there and he would like his Alameda friends to meet them; he is excited to have Palestinian food and heard a soccer team might be able to come to Alameda; he really hopes Alameda and Wadi Foquin become sister cities: Milo Chen, Alameda.

Stated that he is an Arab-American resident of Alameda and supports the proposal to accept Wadi Foquin as a Sister City; there is a natural reaction to turn away from news and the real things happening in the world; the people of Wadi Foquin are a small part of Palestine, which is a small part of the Arab world, which is a small part of the whole world, just like Alameda; holding on to each other in this maelstrom is such an amazing way to lean into and support community; the Sister City program is meant to create and strengthen cultural interconnections between people around the world; Alameda has an opportunity to strengthen and officiate that bond in a way that will benefit everyone in the midst of all this chaos: Ramzi, Alameda.

Stated that she supports the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin; she has traveled to Israel Palestine; she has seen firsthand how global partnerships can enrich communities; she witnessed the power of resilience and the importance of international solidarity after years of hardship; communities continue to rebuild, not just through economic development, but through deep relationships that transcend borders and are built on mutual respect and shared values; those relationships are at the heart of transformation, whether within a congregation, a city, or across the world: Vathanak Heang, Buena Vista United Methodist Church.

Stated that she loves living in Alameda as both a mother and Jewish woman; she is thrilled for Alameda to form a partnership with Wadi Foquin and to build a bridge to the Palestinian town; most Jewish Americans have many personal connections to Israel and few opportunities to get to know and build relationships with Palestinians; building these bridges through a Sister City would deepen the commitment to all of humanity: Eve, Alameda.

Urged Council to approve the Sister City with Wadi Foquin; stated that he grew up in a conservative Jewish Zionist community in Chicago; his family owned a Kosher catering business and was front and center in the Jewish community; it has only been in his journey of developing relationships with Palestinian friends and colleagues that he has learned to let go of fear and embrace interconnectedness; urged Council to vote to build bridges: Garrett Jacobs, Alameda.

Urged Council to enter into the relationship-building process with Wadi Foquin; commended the City Council for building relationships over the past several years with underserved communities, unhoused persons with disabilities, women, and LGBT communities; stated just as other Sister City relationships have helped Alameda understand about people from other cities, she hopes a Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin will promote understanding: Wendy Horikoshi, Alameda.

Stated that he wonders if Alameda's motto of "Everyone Belongs Here" applies to him; the synagogue at Temple Israel is the only place he knows of that requires private security; antisemitism is surging in Alameda and the Bay Area; he appreciates people in the room who want to support other communities and have person-to-person diplomacy; he wholeheartedly supports them doing so as private citizens; if the City Council takes a position, it will be a dog whistle heard loud and clear by those whose intents are not as pure as the people in the room; the overwhelming majority of Alameda Jews are pleading for their safety; they are not asking for a proclamation or for Council to take an official position; they are asking for Council to please keep national politics national and to focus on local issues: Dan Laufer, Alameda.

Stated Alameda is a wonderful city to live in and that tonight's conversation is great, respectful, and dynamic; there is goodwill and good intentions, but also political and solidarity issues; suggested Council look for a third path and abstain from the vote; stated the City Council does not need to bring in international issues that are divisive nor take an official stance due to practical, legal, and personal issues; urged Council to keep a neutral position: David Nykin, Alameda.

Stated his organization is concerned that the proposal is not about authentic cultural exchange, but rather will be used to inject one-sided political narratives about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into City spaces; it appears the effort is being made quickly and key decisions remain; urged Council to receive community input, including from the mainstream Jewish community and asked what programs and initiatives will take place to make sure it is inclusive of all Alameda residents;

urged Council to take steps to ensure all Alameda residents are supported by its actions, especially given the political implications: Jonathan Mintzer, Jewish Community Relations Council.

Expressed support for the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin which reminds him of building relationships with other groups, such as Rotary International, Lions Club, Habitat for Humanity International, or Scouts; stated that he has worked on 35 medical missions around the world in the last 10 years, including in Bethlehem, near Wadi Foquin; his family was drawn to Alameda for its diversity, safety, nonjudgmental atmosphere and the rich array of multicultural activities; children and grandchildren will be more well-rounded and understanding of other people in Sister City relationships: Greg Shay, Alameda.

Stated that she is a proud Jewish American, raising her children in Alameda; clarified characteristics regarding Sister City relationships, including that a Sister City relationship is not, and has never been, an explicit or implicit endorsements of the laws, values, ethics, or cultural practices of another community; through the now 70-year history, Sister Cities greatest achievements are usually with countries with whom there are the greatest differences, from Germany and Japan, to China and the Soviet Union, to Iraq and Afghanistan; the Sister Cities movement has well-established principles which guide activities across all sectors and values that include a commitment to peace, a collaborative approach to engagement, a pursuit of mutual respect and understanding, and a long time commitment to communications: Deborah Goldberg, Alameda

Stated her family moved to Alameda from Lebanon; she enthusiastically supports establishing a Sister City relationship with the village of Wadi Foquin; the partnership embodies the true purpose of Sister Cities, fostering global understanding through cultural, economic and educational exchanges at a time when racism and isolationism are rising in the United States; a Sister City partnership can help bridge divides and make families feel more welcome and safe in Alameda: Brooke El-Amine, Alameda.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft called a recess at 9:28 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

(25-167) The City Clerk announced that the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan update [paragraph no. 25-174] was withdrawn from the agenda and would return on April 1, 2025.

Stated that she supports the Wadi Foquin Sister City proposal; read a letter from Sister Cities Internation written by the President, which was sent to different Sister City associations; stated that she believes citizen diplomacy works; she has had the privilege of living and working in the West Bank for four years with a nonprofit women's development and leadership organization with presence in dozens of West bank villages, including Wadi Foquin; the village is a beautiful place; she would love for Alameda residents to have a chance to build closer relationships with the incredible community: Sophia Ritchie, Alameda.

Stated that she is 100% in support of Alameda becoming a Sister City with Wadi Foquin; folks in Alameda have worked for a really long time at building a lovely, supportive, and deep, personal connection with many of the residents of Wadi Foquin; the relationship already exists; Sister Cities are very explicitly not political and are really about connecting humans; urged Council to support

Wadi Foquin becoming a Sister City with Alameda: Savanna Cheer, Alameda.

Stated that he supports a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin; the relationship is an expression of Alameda's inclusivity and values that he wants to teach his children and the community; he is concerned about the pushback; the con arguments sound like nimbyism and the redlining against African Americans and Asian Americans in Alameda's recent history; he worries that the compatibility guidelines at the beginning of the meeting are being weaponized against accepting Wadi Foquin as a Sister City and targets Palestinians; procedural blocks are often erected out of fear and exclusion, and lead to the erasure and dehumanization of Palestinian neighbors; urged Council to support the Sister City relationship so that Alameda continues to support dignity and care for each other: Steven Chen, Alameda.

Expressed support of designating Alameda and Wadi Foquin as Sister Cities; stated this type of coming together and peaceful community fosters cultural exchange; a supportive presence can bridge gaps across the global community; linking people with people across cultures is important work, especially as the national rhetorics and actions here and abroad continue to descend into further division and devastation; attending recent events by Friends of Wadi Foquin helped to expand her understanding and respect for the people living in the West Bank village and fostered an interest in wanting to learn more about the cultures, the region, and the ways people are furthering opportunities for connecting and learning: Naomi Vinbury, Alameda.

Expressed support for the Wadi Foquin Sister City proposal, which has been more than 10 years in the making; stated the federal government is pulling away from international connections; she is really excited that Alameda is looking to expand its successful Sister City program, which is a natural way for cities to express citizenship in a global community; Alameda and Wadi Foquin are a natural partnership that is supported by community connections that already exist, it also creates pathways for dialogue and cooperation around areas of mutual interest, including sustainable development, climate action, and humanitarian efforts; urged Council to vote yes: Jennifer Rakowski, Alameda.

Stated that he does not support the Sister City initiative; the City Council has a lot more important things to do: A A, Alameda.

Stated that he has been to the West Bank in the vicinity of Wadi Foquin and has seen firsthand what is happening there; he can say with confidence that Alameda should not be making this connection at this time; there are other better ways to support people-to-people interactions that can assist peace without dragging Alameda into the mire of controversy; speakers have talked about illegal actions and the encroachment of settlements and made accusations of racism and antisemitism; it is clear that Alameda citizens have incredibly strong, conflicting feelings about the situation; such comments reveal the true bias of support; oppositionist action is inherently political; urged Council to keep the conflict out of civic life and recognize that shared humanity starts with neighbors here: Jeremy Russell, Alameda.

Stated that she is having a hard time understanding why there is so much opposition to a program that enriches children and families; it is upsetting that people are so afraid of togetherness, culture, and building bridges; opposition denies children of opportunities; urged Council to consider doing the right thing and vote yes: Rilia Mendoza, Alameda.

Urged Council to fully support the Sister City proposal; stated her spirits were lifted after reading through the letters from the Boulder Sister City Association and the Sacramento Sister City Association, which pointed to the success with building bridges and increasing global understanding and affirms the importance of people in Alameda reaching out to people in the West Bank; it is time to hold on to humanity and create relationships, and build stronger bonds of friendship and understanding; ASCA offers a vehicle to do just that: Paula Rainey, ASCA.

Stated that she is a staunch supporter of Wadi Foquin and of collective liberation; the best possible Sister City relationships are those that invite people into new possibilities, challenge them to learn something, shed old frames and perspectives, and inspire who humanity can be together; so many things make Alameda and Wadi Foquin compatible and the partnership hopeful, transformative, and visionary; expressed concern about accusations that the proposal is a one-sided ploy, yet Council was flooded with letters just yesterday by Christians United for Israel, a national lobbying organization, with a clear, one-sided agenda; her organization was also accused of being divisive, but not a single letter use words like terrorist, dangerous, or had fake stories; tonight is not about choosing sides, making foreign policy, or about division; tonight is about choosing humanity: Emily Lin, Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee, Alameda.

Stated that she is a proud American Jew and enthusiastically welcomes Wadi Foquin as a Sister City; asked for a moment of silence in recognition of the 400 Palestinians who were murdered today by Israel; read a letter from Sacramento's Sister City of Bethlehem which describes efforts needed for a successful Sister City bond; stated the letter also talked about the opposition to the Sacramento-Bethlehem Sister City proposal 15 years ago by the Jewish Community Relations Committee and how the relationship prevailed; since then, the issue of Jewish community safety has never been linked to Sacramento's relationship to Bethlehem; the same happened in Boulder, Colorado, when sistering with Nablus, in Dayton, Ohio, when sistering with Salfit, and in Iowa, when sistering with Ramallah; no one has been harmed and every one of these relationships has brought immeasurable added value to their respective communities: Hilda Poulson, Alameda.

Expressed passionate support for the Sister City proposal; stated that she is proud Jewish mother and granddaughter of holocaust survivors; she lived in a Palestinian village called Haris, near Wadi Foquin when she was 24; it was a very meaningful experience and deepened her Jewish faith and her belief that another world is possible in which there are no enemies and all children are safer; the Sister City relationship opens the door to building relationships and understanding; those speaking against the proposal have not offered any explanation of how having a Sister City threatens their safety; the idea that her Jewish children would be denied the opportunity to connect with Palestinian children and told that remaining forever segregated from one another is for their own good, is unconscionable and dangerous; urged Council to vote for what will enrich and grow the community: Anna Piller, Alameda.

Expressed strong support for the proposal; stated that she is Jewish, lived in Israel for two years, and considered herself a Zionist in her twenties; the only path to real peace in the region is to recognize that both Israelis and Palestinians deserve self-determination, safety and a thriving future; the Sister City proposal does not harm Jews or Israelis, it reaches out a hand to a Palestinian village under great pressure, exposes them to American traditions of democracy and pluralism, and introduces Americans to their vibrant culture; urged Council to support the Sister City proposal and the human and cultural bridges it will build: Ilana DeBare, Oakland.

Stated the proposal is essentially bringing the conflict back and will create division in the City;

Sister Cities are supposed to be apolitical, but all the signs show it is clearly being used as a form of political activism, which does not align with the guidelines of Sister Cities not being political; political statements are only seen now that a Palestinian city is brought into the equation; the organization does not require City recognition to continue its operations; the community can still foster connections and have cultural exchange without the City recognizing it, which just creates more division; the organization did not survey Alamedans to get support or disapproval, nor demonstrate it would benefit the City in any way; City Council approval is not in the best interest of Alameda: Max Gurevich, Alameda.

Shared two Quranic verses that shape a Muslim view for human life and diversity; stated the idea of a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin and the West Bank has filled her heart with joy; it reflects a commitment to fostering dialogue between the people of both cities, bypassing politics and conflicts with the hope of creating a brighter and more peaceful future; she sees the Sister City relationship as an opportunity for future generations to gain alternative perspectives about a region that has often been misunderstood: Sarah Hussein, Alameda.

Stated it is a very difficult time for the Jewish community; no matter where one comes down on the Israeli Palestinian situation, it has been difficult; the anti-Jewish sentiment is rising; the situation is quite tense; she is not clear on what exactly costs and needs of having a Sister City at this time: Ivy Leichman, Temple Israel.

Stated Sister Cities exist to build people-to-people connections; they are not endorsements of any government or political movement; they recognize communities, their cultures, and humanity; Alameda already has Sister Cities in China and the Philippines, both places with complex histories and political issues, with their own federal government; it does not matter because the relationships are with the people of the cities, not their national governments; the idea that any community in Palestine should be excluded suggests that people there do not deserve that same dignity; it is deeply troubling to hear claims that recognizing a city in Palestine is inherently antisemitic; the people of Wadi Foquin exist; denying that connection to Alameda is an act of erasure, not really a defense against hate; antisemitism is real; it is unacceptable and should be confronted; opposing the Sister City relationship does nothing to address the problem; instead, it reinforces a false and dangerous idea that acknowledging Palestinian communities is an attack on Jewish people; Alameda can and must stand against antisemitism, but that does not mean refusing to recognize Palestinian communities; those two things are not in opposition; building connections, not walls, is what Sister Cities are about; this is an opportunity for Alameda to affirm its values of inclusion, peace and global solidarity: Zac Bowling, Alameda.

Stated regardless of Council's decision tonight, the seeds of solidarity, compassion, and human connection have already been deeply woven into the fabric that is Alameda; thanked community leaders for their strong and welcoming leadership that recently led her family to be new homeowners; stated that she learned about the rich history and about Japanese people through the strong, and one of the longest and first Sister City relationships between Kobe, Japan and Seattle when she lived there; Palestinians have long been dehumanized; she knows what that feels like as a Muslim American; she also knows the power of people getting to know and showing up for one another; guests visited her mosque and learned about Islam; those small acts of connection made all the difference; she strongly supports the Sister City partnership: Saara, Alameda.

Discussed her cousin, Jimi Hendrix, using music to build people-to-people connections; stated that her worldview and the importance of connecting on a personal level with others was deeply shaped when she was a docent for the Anne Frank exhibit in Seattle during high school; Miep Gies is another example of seeing the power of one by making a connection with the Frank family; inspired by that same belief, she stands in support of a partnership that can have a lasting impact on future generations; she advocates for a Sister City relationship between the City of Alameda and Wadi Foquin; the power of one thoughtful action, like forming a bond between two communities, can inspire understanding, strengthen relationships and move Alameda forward to a more connected future: Meleah, Alameda.

Thanked Council for the wonderful outreach; stated that she grew up in Hawaii as a minority with all kinds of different nationalities and food; there are good people everywhere; she lived in Israel and had Arab friends there; stated she believes in one-to-one context, but Alameda is not surrounded by hostile neighbors as is Wadi Foquin; urged Council to vote no on adopting a new Sister City at this time: Sharon Nunez, Temple Israel.

Stated that he has visited Palestine and Wadi Foquin three times; he supports the Sister City proposal; expressed appreciation and respect for the members of the Council and everyone who came tonight, and those who could not be here out of fear of being discriminated; urged Council to be supportive and vote yes: Austin Tam, Alameda.

Stated that he strongly supports the resolution, which calls for a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin for the purpose of promoting goodwill, mutual understanding, and friendship between the peoples of the two cities; stated that he was not planning on speaking, but was very bothered by speakers trying to confuse the issue by talking about how the resolution will promote antisemitism or force Alameda to take a stand on the Israel Palestinian issue; the resolution does nothing of the sort; urged Council not to be confused and vote yes: John Ota, Alameda.

Described a story in the 1970's about a Caucasian employer asking their African American maid why she fights to sit in front of the bus and walk three miles every day to take care of his children while no one takes care of hers; her reply was it is because she did not want his children to be afraid of hers; the spirit of the moment then and now is the same; he was welcomed when he visited Palestine and Israel in 2023; a Palestinian Christian neighbor of Wadi Foquin cherished farming olive trees and refused to be enemies; the Sister City resolution between Wadi Foquin and Alameda has nothing to do with anti-Jewish hate, but is the first step towards learning about Wadi Foquin, Palestine, and Israel; urged Council to vote yes because he does not want their children to be afraid on his: Ysrael Quezon, Alameda.

Stated that she supports the Sister City with Wadi Foquin, which promotes peace, diversity in shared humanity, and understanding conflict instead of blocking it out of fear or vilifying people; she is thankful for the Friends of Wadi Foquin and the events she has attended which are infused with love, music, culture, and its deep reverence of life; staying connected is worth it and relating with each other helps enrich lives and make space for safety and understanding; urged Council not to shrink, push others away, or foster fears of others: Cam Bui, Alameda.

(25-168) Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated a motion is needed to consider the Settlement Agreement with the Port of Oakland [paragraph no. 25-171] and Fernside Traffic Calming project [paragraph

no. 25-172] after 11:00 p.m.

Vice Mayor Pryor moved approval of considering the items.

Councilmember Boller seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote – 5.

Stated the City Council rejected the Sister City proposal with Wadi Foquin seven years ago; the no vote was based upon good, solid reasons which have not changed as of 2025; Wadi Foquin is being supported and promoted by Friends of Wadi Foquin, a group sponsored by Bay Area Methodist churches that have a long history of boycotting divestment and sanctions against Israel, which is illegal under State law; many members of the group merely want the best for Wadi Foquin, which is admirable, but the Sister City promotion has a strong political history and basis; it does not seem reasonable for Alameda to be involved in an international issue; urged Council to vote no: Reyla Graber, Alameda.

Vice Mayor Pryor stated, for transparency, she is Jewish and is not choosing sides; she is on the side of humanity; her mom is watching tonight and would support the endeavor for peace and understanding; her hope is not only to learn from one another, but to teach the next generation to be brave, and to find joy in the pursuit of peace and fellowship; she supports the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin; it is controversial, but it is for that reason that Council should act; as global citizens, the key to solving a complicated problem is listening; tonight's discussion is an excellent example, because in this safe space people have expressed their fears and their hopes in the pursuit of peace; through heartfelt, warm, ongoing cultural exchange, the residents of Alameda and Wadi Foquin can develop long lasting friendships, and learn as a community to have difficult conversations and build understanding.

Councilmember Daysog stated it has been said this issue about bridge building, which should not be controversial; it is clear there is a lot of opposition to the proposal, but there is also support, maybe in equal measure; it is unlike previous Sister City proposals which garnered basically no opposition even to this day; he does not feel Alameda has enough information about the Town of Wadi Foquin, its Town Council and Mayor to support the proposal; he does not know if they are open to bridge building; one fundamental questions is whether Wadi Foquin leaders acknowledge Israel's right to exist and if are they are open to accept a two-state solution; the reality is even the highest leaders of the Nation of Israel are beginning to express hostility to the notion of a two-state solution; if Alameda were to enter into Sister City relations with any town or city in that area, it is important to understand where people stand on this fundamental question; it is an unmistakable fact that the Sister City discussion is happening against the double backdrop globally of what happened on October 7th and domestically of the unrest across elite University campuses across the nation; each Councilmember can choose to acknowledge these backdrops or not; he can only speak for himself and he does acknowledge it.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she is fully in support of this; one of the speakers said it so well- -this is not a binary issue; if Alameda supports a people-to-people relationship with the village of Wadi Foquin, it is not supporting anti-Jewish hate; nothing could be further from the truth; as an Arab American, she is troubled by some of the things she heard said here tonight; the assumption that there are good Arabs and bad Arabs, and the Arabs in Wadi Foquin cannot be associated with because they have not taken a pledge to uphold the right; it is not for her to inject politics in

what is just a person-to-person relationship; she is also troubled by the disparagement of the United Methodist Church, whose members have stood for the rights of oppressed people everywhere; she is an Arab Orthodox Christian, lived in Lebanon for a year and has traveled in Israel; she has been to Palestine; her father's family is from Syria; living among people and having the chance to interact, one realizes that people are people, children are children, and all deserve to grow up and live in health and in happiness; this is something Alameda can do to say not to be afraid; she feels like there is an effort to suppress, so she very much hopes that there is a vote to move this forward; it would be very inspirational; the Wadi Foquin issue has been around for a decade; it was never voted on or rejected; the persistence is there; she is willing to fast track an Israeli Sister City; it could jump the queue ahead of others, as Varazze did; right now is Wadi Foquin's time; this is not a zero sum game; saying there is peace and understanding and humanity to be discovered everywhere in the world does not take away from anyone else; she will be the first to say that she does not feel unsafe because someone supports Palestinians; she firmly believes that this is the right thing for Alameda to do and hopes there is courage on the Council to do it.

Councilmember Jensen expressed her appreciation for ASCA and the Friends of Wadi Foquin for their work to support citizen diplomacy and international cultural exchange; stated that she has been to events in support of Wadi Foquin; support groups have been clear that recognition of Wadi Foquin is not political; all Sister City supporters who have spoken and shared emails have expressed belief that Alameda will benefit from this relationship; she has been a board member for both the Alameda Unified School District and Alameda Soccer Club and would love to see the image of Alameda youth sharing the soccer pitch with soccer players from the occupied West Bank; speakers have also expressed that an official partnership between Alameda and the occupied village of Wadi Foquin will make them feel unsafe, uncomfortable and even targeted; some of the images and words from Mr. Yoshi's presentation unfortunately suggest that might be the case with the occupation and the settlement, and the fact that Wadi Foquin is governed by Israel; all of these opinions have value and both groups have valid objectives; the Friends of Wadi Foquin, Buena Vista Methodist, and many members of the community will remain and continue to support the village, regardless of whether a Sister City MOU is signed tonight; Alameda can someday host Wadi Foquin soccer players, import Wadi Foquin olive oil, and take action to support the people of Wadi Foquin; goodwill, mutual understanding and friendship between members of our unique communities will continue regardless of any action tonight; last year, she listened to Alameda and led an amendment to eliminate investments in companies that make weapons of war; tonight, she listens to Alameda residents who feel strongly that a Sister City with Wadi Foquin will support peace and global understanding and also heard Alamedans who voiced concern that the action will make them less secure; this is a hard decision for her, but one that she can make by leaning on Alameda's motto of Everyone Belongs Here and the vision statement that Alameda is an inclusive community and Alameda government is committed to equity; she heard supporters and opponents describe those who disagree with their position as nimby, racist or insensitive, which leads to her conclusion that the proposal is clearly divisive and there is no evidence that it would improve the lives of either community; thus, she cannot support the proposal to recognize Wadi Foquin as a Sister City.

(25-169) Councilmember Boller moved approval of giving each Councilmember 3 more minutes to speak.

Councilmember Jensen seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote – 5.

Councilmember Boller stated the process been going on for more than 10 years; his concerns are about what has been happening recently; it is obvious that the Friends of Wadi Foquin and other proponents have good intent and are doing really good work; there is absolutely no reason why Alameda cannot have a good Sister City relationship with a community in Palestine; his question is whether Council should take formal action without having all of the information; he also questions whether this is the best that can be done in terms of building community consensus; he is concerned that there has not been recent conversations with the highest ranking officials in Wadi Foquin; the planning phase is important; Alameda's Sister City Guidelines say there should be a five year plan about what the community organizations are going to do and how it will be sustained; outreach and work has to be done ahead of time; he is not suggesting that it cannot happen, but he has observed conversations of people extending olive branches between people on both sides of the issue; he does not think he would be doing his job as a Councilmember if he did not try to continue those conversations to get to a stronger place to make this happen.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired whether Councilmember Boller would be willing to consider the proposal if he had more information.

Councilmember Boller responded there needs to be more conversations surrounding how the proposal meets the guidelines; stated that he definitely has an open mind, but does not want to answer the question directly right now because the information is not before Council; suggested making a motion that the hearing be continued for a few months to do more work and for more conversations among persons in this room to try to find a common ground that is stronger, and get a better picture of exactly what a Sister City looks like in terms of who its leaders are, what their position is on this Sister City proposal, and what organizations are involved.

(25-170) Vice Mayor Pryor moved approval of giving Councilmember Boller one more minute to speak.

Councilmember Daysog seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote – 5.

Councilmember Boller moved approval of directing staff to do some further work on the possibility of Wadi Foquin or a portion of Palestine that includes Wadi Foquin becoming a Sister City, asking the Alameda Sister City Association (ASCA) to report back and address some of the Council comments and questions that were proposed tonight, and considering some type of outreach so that Alamedans can weigh in.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer stated that with every Sister City relationship, the first step is to work with ASCA to develop the committee; then, a MOU is brought to Council; the MOU establishes that the City is interested in entering into a Sister City relationship; after the MOU is formed, then the work goes to develop the MOA; for example, Dumaguete did an MOU in June 2015; then, in November, 2015, the MOA was developed.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired whether the process could be a vessel for Councilmember Boller's

motion, to which the Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer responded in the affirmative; stated tonight's action is simply approving the MOU; then, an MOA would be brought back to define the Sister City relationship and complete the outreach being requested; the direction and next community outreach steps could be included in the efforts that go into the MOA.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, Councilmember Boller clarified his motion is to continue the posture for further workup before doing an MOU to be guided by Council's inquiries and comments.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired whether Councilmember Boller's motion is specific to Wadi Foquin and areas that include Wadi Foquin, to which Councilmember Boller responded in the affirmative.

The City Manager stated to temper expectations, staff is working on the budget right now and negotiations with seven bargaining; she does not know that staff will have a lot of time to focus on this matter; she prefers not to have a timeline if the work will be done by staff.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, Councilmember Boller stated he would be okay with the Sister City Association helping to gather some of the information.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated the Sister City Association has some connections and can help provide information, which might take some of the burden off staff.

The City Manager agreed; stated staff will work with ASCA.

Councilmember Jensen stated that one of the reasons she is not supportive is that she has heard from a lot of speakers about Boulder and Sacramento; both have a much more robust policy; it sounded like Councilmember Boller is pointing to Alameda's policy and asking if it meets the same robust requirements; Alameda's Sister City policy is very weak and may not address a lot of the things that people who are not supportive of the proposal would like to see; requested that the policy be reviewed; noted it was established about 8 to 10 years ago.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she would not support that at this time; a lot of time has been spent; Councilmember Boller has put together a very workable motion as is; it is better to keep things simple and straightforward.

Vice Mayor Pryor seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Councilmember Boller inquired whether Councilmember Jensen is making a motion about adding review of the policy, to which Councilmember Jensen responded that she is proposing to add guidance which the Mayor does not support.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated a policy review would take much longer and be more detailed; it could possibly to come back at another time; she would favor sticking to Councilmember Boller's original motion.

Councilmember Boller inquired whether Councilmember Jensen's comments were a request for a friendly amendment to the motion.

Councilmember Jensen stated her point and comments about the other policies, particularly in

Boulder, is that it includes provisions establishing the requirements that a Sister City relationship would not be used for any political means; Alameda's policy says nothing about politics or national or international advocacy; Alameda's policy could be strengthened tremendously, which could change her vote.

Vice Mayor Pryor stated when ASCA was speaking about the organizations, she thought it was already established that Sister Cities are cultural and not political.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she does not want to go through a whole survey of what Dallas, Sacramento or Boulder did in their policies; it could just be specified in Alameda's policy.

Councilmember Boller stated in the spirit of Councilmember Jensen's comments, there is no harm in consulting with guidelines from other cities as part of the process to try to get to more community support.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she thinks there is a lot of community support, but it is probably something the Sister City Association can do.

Councilmember Boller stated he would like to include that [Councilmember Jensen's suggestion] in the motion if possible.

Vice Mayor Pryor suggested amending the motion to include language similar to the existing language in the Sister City International Policy that Sister City relationships are non-political in nature.

Councilmember Boller accepted the amendment to the motion.

Councilmember Boller stated that he is willing to add Councilmember Jensen's comments about policy review to his motion as well, not from the standpoint of revising the whole policy, but simply consulting other policies.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated it would be direction to the Sister City committee and staff.

Councilmember Daysog stated his concerns about the lack of information on the Town Council of Wadi Foquin is still important to him; the two-state solution has always been a big concern of his since the first time he came into the City Council chambers as a senior in high school in April, 1984; he was asked to speak on the nation of Israel, for which he has great admiration; knowing where the Town Council of Wadi Foquin stands on a fundamental question is important so he will continue to vote no.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated a two-state solution or a one state solution for Israel and Palestine is beyond the jurisdiction of the Alameda City Council.

Councilmember Jensen expressed appreciation for the amended motion; stated, she wants to put into the record that Boulder's policy specifically says: "by entering into a Sister City affiliation, the City of Boulder does not recognize or endorse political actions of their respective Sister City government;" she wants to be clear that if this ever happens in Alameda, the policy would also be specified and very clear.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she also hopes to keep the Sister City relationship apolitical.

On the call for the question, the motion carried by the following voice vote: Ayes: Councilmembers Boller, Jensen, Pryor and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 4. Noes: Councilmember Daysog – 1.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

(25-171) Recommendation to Approve and Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Settlement Agreement between the Port of Oakland, the City of Alameda and Citizens League for Airport Safety and Serenity (CLASS) Regarding the Port of Oakland's Final Environmental Impact Report for the Oakland Airport Terminal Modification and Development Project.

The Planning, Building and Transportation Director gave a Power Point presentation.

Stated the Citizens League for Airport Safety and Serenity (CLASS) represents 3,000 homes of Harbor Bay Isle; CLASS was involved in a lawsuit 25 years ago which yielded a very good agreement; the Settlement Agreement (SA) before Council has enhancements; the noise abatement procedures become part of the official agreement to address noise impacts from flights; urged Council to approve the SA: Jon Hamilton, CLASS.

Urged Council to approve the SA, which is the result of intensive negotiations over two years; stated CLASS has been actively involved in working with the Oakland Airport for the past 30 plus years and have gained a lot of extensive knowledge and familiarity with aviation and its effect on noise and safety; the SA aims to mitigate external noise, safety, and pollution that could result from expansion: Matt Pourfarzaneh, CLASS.

Stated the Chamber stands in strong support of the Oakland Airport Terminal modernization project because of the significant economic benefits it will bring to Alameda; in November 2024 the Chamber formally signed a letter of support, recognizing the thousands of jobs and increase in business opportunities the project will generate; the Airport is already a key employer of Alameda residents; strengthening the Airport means strengthening Alameda's workforce; urged Council to accept the SA; stated doing so supports Alameda's future economic growth, job creation and business success: Madlen Saddik, Chamber of Commerce.

Stated that she is speaking on behalf of Supervisor Lena Tam; Supervisor Tam wants to express how cool it is that the City of Alameda, CLASS and the Port of Oakland were able to work together to make a good project even better; urged Council to support the SA: Julie Yim, representing Supervisor Lena Tam.

Councilmember Daysog quoted Ronald Reagan: "trust but verify;" stated the agreement has a process for reviewing what the Port of Oakland is doing regarding expansion, which he is very happy to see.

Vice Mayor Pryor stated everyone, especially representatives from CLASS, worked tirelessly on the agreement and the process, which was frustrating, slow and grueling at times; together everyone has shown tremendous tenacity and a commitment to Bay Area communities.

Councilmember Jensen stated that she echoes her colleagues' comments; she had some specific

concerns about the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and appreciates that the issues were addressed; a lot of the objectives CLASS has been working on for many years are now final thanks to the Oakland Airport expansion project; a lot of the things that have been discussed for many years are happening; she will definitely support approval.

Councilmember Boller stated living close to the airport is as pleasure since he flies often; he has had a home close to the airport since 1997 and knows all the hard work CLASS has done over the years; he is looking forward to being part of the Airport Noise Forum as the City's designee; he looks forward to Alameda building an even stronger relationship with the Port of Oakland on other projects going forward.

Councilmember Daysog moved approval of the staff recommendation.

Councilmember Jensen seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote - 5.

(25-172) Recommendation to Endorse Design Concepts for the Fernside Traffic Calming and Bikeways Project.

The Senior Transportation Coordinator and David Parisi, Parametrix, gave a Power Point presentation.

(25-173) Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated a motion is needed to allow additional time for the presentation.

Councilmember Jensen moved approval of allowing three more minutes.

Vice Mayor Pryor seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote – 5.

The Senior Transportation Coordinator completed the presentation.

In response to Councilmember Daysog's inquiry regarding daylighting at the intersection of Eastshore Drive and Fernside Boulevard, Mr. Parisi stated keep in mind the designs are schematic diagrams; the red zones will not be as far in real life; a bit of a transition will be needed to make sure nobody runs into a parked car; 20 feet long red zones will probably be a little bit longer near islands; the area will be determined and refined during design, similar with bulb outs; the design detail will try to at least achieve 20 feet and really good pedestrian crossings.

Councilmember Daysog inquired about the pedestrian refuge area influencing part of the bulb out.

Mr. Parisi responded it is a traffic calming measure and a pedestrian safety measure; to a driver in the middle of the street on Fernside Boulevard heading west, the design deflects the car by about three feet before getting to the intersection as a means to slow down the traffic; it also provides refuge for pedestrians in the areas; it is a little closer to the curb, but not too close to a parked car; balancing out the design is a fine line.

In response to Councilmember Daysog's inquiry, Mr. Parisi stated the pedestrian refuge will be a little off the crosswalk and raised about six inches; it will be a nice little island with special paving.

Councilmember Daysog stated that he would like details to be reviewed; he loves the idea of having the two bike lanes on one side of the street as the long-term solution; it is elegant to have the lanes going across the City of Alameda; a win-win for everyone would be great.

Councilmember Jensen stated there is nothing similar to the intersection of Gibbons Drive and High Street anywhere else in Alameda; there are two signals and an extra signal for the slip lane; inquired whether it is unusual to have such a configuration of stoplights at an intersection.

The City Engineer responded since existing traffic on Gibbons Drive northbound goes directly into the intersection, it must have its own signal; the extra light is angled at roughly 45 degrees specific for those northbound driving vehicles on Gibbons Drive; when the signal turns, that is the only movement that goes at that time; most northbound Gibbons drivers go straight across onto the High Street bridge; a small percentage turn right and go down Fernside.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry, the City Engineer stated there needs to be signal heads for each approach to the intersection; a five-legged intersection is uncommon in Alameda; other cities that have them, but Alameda tries not to have them because it means extra signal time; signal time is longer and also potentially more confusing.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry regarding the two pedestrian refuge areas at the crosswalk, the City Engineer stated the areas are a place where people can avoid cars; discussed the lack of a pedestrian countdown timer.

Councilmember Jensen stated the crosswalks seem to be relatively small and narrow for a bicyclist or wheelchair; inquired whether there is any City Code regarding the length or width of where people cross.

The City Engineer agreed the crossings are a little bit narrow and do not meet current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards; Alameda has 3,000 curb ramps; a number are nonconforming; staff is prioritizing upgrades, including at this intersection.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she did a site visit with three dads back in late February; the sidewalks are horrendously raised on the 3100 block of Gibbons Drive; addressing safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians is important; walking down the sidewalk should not be a hazardous activity; inquired what is the status.

The City Engineer responded Public Works has tried a variety of approaches regarding the Gibbons Drive sidewalks over the years, including asphalt, rubber mats and a lot of other things; stated the issue is the very beautiful, but very large trees with very large root crowns, are physically lifting up the sidewalk; removing and replacing the sidewalk probably has a life of five years, which is not a very good investment of resources; staff is looking at alternatives, including potentially winding or shifting the sidewalk further away from trees, which encroaches on people's landscaped areas within the public right of way; the sidewalks could also be widened towards the street, which would potentially lose a parking lane; either way, sacrifice would have to be made, which will entail public outreach to the Gibbons Drive community to understand the trade-offs; the game-plan would be to re-engage in the process again.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated the Gibbons Drive neighbors would want safe sidewalks; the trees are even older in the root structure; given trees are City street trees, she is concerned about the liability and does not want anyone to get hurt or the City to get sued; she realizes funds are in short supply now and is mindful of what is going on in Washington, DC.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, the City Manager stated the City is starting the conversation and is actively engaged in retaining consultants to do outreach; there are technical solutions, but community engagement on how to approach the solutions is needed; it is in the work plan and will move forward.

In response to Vice Mayor Pryor's inquiry about the driving route on Gibbons Drive, Mr. Parisi stated the outlet on Gibbons Drive would force drivers to turn right onto High Street.

Jimmy Jessup, Parametrix, stated vehicles traveling north on Gibbons Drive, looking for a way to access High Street, the freeway or Oakland would try to maximize right turns and minimize left turns; outlined the traffic pattern which would be studied further.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry regarding the classification of Gibbons Drive in the Alameda Transportation Plan, the Senior Transportation Coordinator responded it is designated as a local street and not intended for people to use to access the bridge.

Councilmember Boller stated there was some discussion about the intersection being a high injury corridor with a higher crash rate than similar corridors; inquired how vehicle crashes compare to other intersections in Alameda.

The Senior Transportation Coordinator responded the Vision Zero Action Plan identifies high crash intersections as well as high injury corridors; the Gibbons Drive/High Street intersection did not rise to the level of being labeled as one of the high crash intersections in the City; however, along Fernside is a high injury corridor and has the intersection with the most crashes.

In response to Councilmember Boller's inquiry about the benefit of a shorter signal time, the City Engineer stated about 25% of the timing sequence of the cycle length is dedicated to Gibbons Drive, which has a much smaller percentage of traffic; minimizing down to four legs gives more cycle time for Fernside and High Street and the approaches become more efficient and will have more green time; more vehicles will be able to get through the intersection, which should actually improve the overall function of the intersection, which would be defined and validated with the traffic study.

In response to Councilmember Boller's inquiry regarding other alternatives, the City Engineer stated that roundabouts were considered, but a roundabout would not fit.

Councilmember Boller stated there are other alternatives for pedestrian and bicycle safety, like adding pedestrian signals and a marked, controlled crosswalk; inquired how the benefit of just making that change compares to the overall proposed change.

The City Engineer responded a couple of big things are happening for pedestrians; stated the actual crossing length shrinks dramatically crossing High Street; the crosswalk going north across

Fernside becomes direct instead of being angled and becomes shorter; the crossings would both be signal controlled crosswalks with countdown timers; the crossing at Gibbons Drive right now is basically vehicles coming off the High Street Bridge at a relatively high rate of speed; there is no control and it is confusing for drivers; with the proposed sequence, the secondary Gibbons Drive crosswalk is further away from the intersection; more importantly, cars coming off the High Street Bridge are forced to make a sharper turn which will slow them down; the pedestrian improvements are pretty significant.

Councilmember Boller inquired whether the sentiment is that the overall change is a marked difference from simply adding better lights and controls to that portion, to which the City Engineer responded in the affirmative; stated it is a significant safety improvement, particularly for pedestrians, but also for bicycles as well.

In response to Councilmember Boller's inquiry, the City Engineer stated the staff recommendation is to continue to do further traffic analysis; when the study is done, staff will come back to Council for a final decision about the intersection.

The City Manager stated staff wants to do a traffic study to get more data; the updated recommendation is to try to do so as quickly as possible and to try to include the south leg of the intersection, not the full intersection, as part of the pavement management program next year.

Stated after the City spends \$15 million the Fernside Boulevard project, there will still be ways to speed; after the installation of a cement island in the late 1960s, he cannot recall any incidences of accidents on Gibbons Drive; there are no major traffic incidents or injuries along the 3,100 block of Gibbons drive to warrant spending taxpayer money to alter Gibbons Drive's access to High Street; City staff broke a promise not to make a recommendation to the City Council until after conducting traffic studies are done; the intersection design will increase greenhouse gases; changing Fernside is one project, changing the intersection without more public meetings is an outrage; Councilmember Jensen must recuse herself since she lives on Gibbons; the proposed design will divert traffic onto narrower side streets, such as Cornell, Yale, and Bayo Vista: Jim Strehlow, Alameda.

Stated that she agrees with everything Mr. Strehlow said; as a lifelong Cornell Street resident, she has a very good understanding of the traffic patterns in the area; she was surprised to see the intersection on the agenda tonight, because the City decided to do a traffic study before making any recommendations; Gibbons Drive may be considered a neighborhood Street, but it is an artery to exit the Island and access the High Street Bridge; hundreds of people continue to use that artery; eliminating bridge access will cause cars to speed down the narrow side streets not equipped to handle traffic; urged Council to do a traffic study before endorsing any plan: Cindy Mills, Alameda.

Stated that she supports a lot of the elements of the Fernside project; she is concerned about the recommendation; proper public engagement has not been completed; comprehensive analysis has not been completed to understand safety effects on the broader community; many residents, not living on Gibbons Drive, have been following the issue and have not been asked for more feedback; urged Council to do a full analysis before making a recommendation: Vickie Teng, Alameda.

Stated not having a left turn on Gibbons Drive will definitely create more traffic jams on Bayo

Vista; parents taking kids to school in the morning will have trouble backing out of driveways; she does not support the current plan; urged Council to study when boats cross under the Bridge and during the morning rush hour: Jenny Sui, Alameda.

Expressed concern about the process; stated neighbors were not notified; residents should have an opportunity to discuss concerns; there has never been an accident on Gibbons Drive; residents are trying not to have traffic on the last block of Gibbons Drive: Marilyn Bowe, Alameda.

Stated accidents definitely occur at the intersection, but it is not because of Gibbons Drive and is something to do with the High Street light; the project will not reduce the speed of cars on High Street; people will still accelerate down High street or down Gibbons Drive as they come off the Bridge; speed bumps could be used to slow things down for pedestrian crossings; closing the exit route onto High Street will push drivers onto smaller, more narrow streets that are not designed for traffic and will make things much less safe; he cares about safety; urged Council to pull out the intersection portion, not rush and prepare a study before making recommendations: Gordon Williams, Alameda.

Stated that he is the co-chair of the Edison Elementary Walk and Roll Committee; he supports Vision Zero and efforts to push for more bike and pedestrian friendly improvements to Fernside, and the simplification of the Gibbons Drive/High Street intersection for safety reasons; he wishes work on the intersection would happen today; he does not trust drivers to understand the non-standard signals and make safe choices; the infrastructure does not protect pedestrians and cyclists from drivers; people who are visually impaired, have mobility impairments, and children are unable to cross in the middle of the street where oncoming drivers are more visible and have to use the narrow, unsignaled, tiny island crosswalk; he supports a traffic study that weighs the benefits of pedestrian safety against the cons of driver inconvenience: Travis Morgan, Alameda.

Expressed support of the supplemental memo which focuses on the intersection portion of the project; discussed various viewpoints of the pedestrian crossings from Gibbons Drive, High Street, and Fernside, including controlled signals: William Morrison, Alameda.

Stated that she appreciates the improvements to Fernside, although the elimination of the middle lane is particularly dangerous; if Gibbons Drive is cut off, there is no safe place to wait to turn left; there are a number of issues with the proposed plan for Gibbons; she is not in favor of the proposed changes to Gibbons Drive, and is largely in favor of the changes to Fernside; she is very concerned about the lack of turn lanes for people who are trying to turn on and off Fernside from side streets, which she hopes the traffic study will review; she appreciates Council comments regarding the dangerous sidewalks: Lorre Zuppan, Alameda.

Councilmember Jensen left the meeting at 12:31 a.m. and returned at 12:33 a.m.

Expressed overall support for the proposed enhancements; stated the long term proposal of a two-way bikeway will complement and connect with other bike facilities well and will be important in the low stress network and Bay Trail; BikeWalk Alameda prefers the at-grade design over the sidewalk level design, because it is \$6 million cheaper, and also support staff's updated recommendation to study and improve the Gibbons/High/Fernside intersection sooner rather than later; urged Council to fully take advantage of the opportunity to make the community much safer

for years to come: Cyndy Johnsen, BikeWalk Alameda.

Stated the spillover impact on the little, narrow neighborhood streets adjacent to Gibbons Drive has not been addressed in any meaningful or substantial way; he is worried new safety concerns will be created elsewhere in the neighborhood; urged Council to conduct a study that includes other streets before making a decision: Brad Hayward, Alameda.

Stated that he strongly supports the safety improvements; shrinking lane widths for drivers will naturally slow traffic; Gibbons Drive is not meant to be a thoroughfare; the status quo is not good; starting on the improvements is important: Zac Bowling, Alameda.

Stated that he would like the traffic safety to be improved; the Gibbons Drive part of the plan does not eliminate traffic; cars will end up on the narrow side streets that are not designed to handle increased vehicular volume; the proposal would create significant safety issues for folks who live on or near those streets; he is also deeply concerned with how this has been handled and rushed; community input was predominantly against the proposal citing the safety concerns on side streets; strongly urged Council not to approve the Gibbons Drive portion of the project without a traffic study first: Matt Bartlett, Alameda.

Stated that he supports the 2026 plan for Gibbons/High/Fernside intersection improvement; staff's proposal would slow traffic inbound to Gibbons and eliminate outbound speeding; discussed his work on new transit oriented development and federal funding disappearing overnight; stated staff has put together a specific design for 2026 and have a clear and cogent path on how to get there; asked that Council not take future progress for granted: Andy Wang, Alameda.

Stated her three kids daily to Alameda public schools daily; she is very thankful for all the bike lanes and progress already done; she is concerned about the closure of Gibbons; stated traffic on very narrow streets will increase; urged the Council to honor the process and do a study: Anna Williams, Alameda.

Stated that she is not happy with the bike lane changes on Fernside; expressed support for the center islands and speed bumps on the Oakland side of High Street; stated that she is not happy with the other plans for the Fernside district, especially the Gibbons Drive portion; urged Council to look into it a little further, and also fix the sidewalks before approving the plan: Cheryl Martinez, Alameda.

Stated that he applauds efforts to try to keep pedestrians, bikes and cars safer on Alameda, but the project feels very rushed; a traffic study conducted should include times when the bridges are up, and also include times during Halloween and Christmas when there is an influx of extra traffic on the neighborhood streets; urged Council to ensure a thorough traffic study is done prior to moving forward: Glenn Yajko, Alameda.

Expressed concern that the proposal has been rushed; stated the process should be done the right way; a lot of kids walk to school using all the small streets that do not have stop signs; better signage and lights are needed to show people how to go because it is confusing; urged Council to do a traffic study before voting on the proposal: Jody Taylor, Alameda.

Stated Gibbons is an effective thoroughfare; side streets are not designed as thoroughfares; cars have to veer into driveways in order to allow opposing traffic to pass; diverting cars would cause

more safety issues; he does not see evidence that changing traffic from Gibbons Drive would address safety concerns at the intersection; there are alternatives to make the intersection safer, such as high visibility, speed bumps, and signage: Elliott Blake, Alameda.

Stated the proposal intervention for the Gibbons/High/Fernside intersection, but no changes to the corresponding intersection on Bayo Vista/Fairview/Southwood; the traffic normally going northbound on Gibbons would end up on Bayo Vista or Southwood: Jay Alden, Alameda.

Councilmember Daysog left the meeting at 12:53 a.m. and returned at 12:55 a.m.

Stated that he respectfully objects the proposal which unduly favors residents of Gibbons Drive at the expense of residents of the neighboring streets left to cope with diverted traffic; he and his neighbors do not understand the sudden rush to; Gibbons Drive was a designated thoroughfare; residents were led to believe there would be time to achieve consensus and readdress some serious shortcomings; respectfully requested Council to table the item; stated rushing the decision can only sow discord: Bobby Winston, Alameda.

Stated that he is thankful the City is making it a little safer for people who ride bikes and walk around the neighborhood; urged Council to remember California is supposed to reduce vehicles miles traveled by 25% by 2030, which is unrealistic at this point; stated traffic and pedestrian safety is not the only issue; achieving moral responsibility to address the climate crisis is an issue; urged the City to stop running every bike project through Council; expressed appreciation for making the right decision on bike lanes: Tommaso Boggia, Alameda.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, the City Attorney stated State law specifically provides that the public generally exception would apply to a member of the legislative body if the project at issue is essentially a roadway safety project that encompasses more than 50 residential properties, such as this project; recusal is not required under State law.

Councilmember Jensen inquired whether a traffic study will be done before any project or any changes are approved at the intersection of Gibbons Drive and High Street, to which the City Manager responded in the affirmative; stated the study will be brought back to the Council.

In response to Councilmember Jensen's inquiry about the fiscal ramifications of completing the Gibbons Drive portion of the project later, the City Manager stated if the traffic study comes back and Council decides not to move forward with the Gibbons Drive intersection, there would have to be additional and further study; the intent is to try to get the data to see if the project can be kept on schedule with the 2026 Pavement Management Plan; it may feel rushed because there is some time sensitivity; the City is already spending millions of dollars to improve the area and adding the intersection project would be a very efficient use of City resources; if the desire is not to move forward, the future intersection changes would be part of the 2030 project and would be significantly delayed; staff is trying to be efficient with resources and address safety concerns; staff would like to make some changes and address safety issues in the near term, if possible; traffic study data is needed.

Councilmember Jensen stated the intent of the staff recommendation is to improve safety and be

fiscally responsible; expressed appreciation for the City Attorney's comments regarding recusal; stated that she lives on Gibbons Drive; there are children in all parts of the neighborhood; the speeding cars on any part of Gibbons Drive are dangerous; her goal is to protect all of the pedestrians, kids, adults, seniors, and bicyclists throughout the neighborhoods; there are accidents on Gibbons Drive, which is not the safest street in Alameda; it is not the least safe, but cars drive unsafely on that block of Gibbons Drive; because of safety and fiscal responsibility, it is a good time to do a traffic study and look at potential improvements on Gibbons Drive.

Vice Mayor Pryor stated doing a traffic study makes sense; she often drives on Gibbons Drive as her commute route; a traffic study is important; she would like to have speed bumps; she agrees with Councilmember Jensen and the City Manager about efficiency with resources and safety implications.

Councilmember Boller requested the Fernside neighborhood receive the study well in advance of any meeting where a decision is made if direction to complete the traffic study is approved tonight.

Councilmember Daysog stated the he would like different pedestrian islands configurations in effort to be reviewed to save one or two parking spaces that might be lost; parking is everything to all residents, not just between Liberty and Eastshore Drive on Fernside; a traffic study definitely has to be done first; concepts along the length of Fernside are strong; there is a lot that the City can sink its teeth into; the City needs to honor the residents that stayed late; everyone loves neighborhood to be calm and safe; staff needs to get a firm grip as to what will be studied; residents want to understand the extent to which traffic would be diverted.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated the City needs to figure out a way to balance competing interests; on a site visit in February, she noticed there were a lot of cars quickly come around the Gibbons Drive corner; experts have shown the intersections would not pass muster today; she hears the residents of Bayo Vista and Cornell; during her walk, one of the things that that came to mind is speed bumps, which are necessary sometimes; one-way streets could also be considered, since some folks indicated two cars cannot pass on the narrow streets; the study needs to address what happens on those streets; discussed notification requirements; stated it is impossible to over communicate; notification should include side streets; everyone should be included in the conversation; plans are better when everyone is heard from; accidents and near misses are some of the things she wants studied; if the City waits too long, funding may be lost; nothing is being etched in stone tonight; the plans are just among the concepts; she would like to hear from more people and work together to see how the project can be made better and safer; if the City does not move forward now, the chance of losing funding is a true risk; discussed learning about federal funding for certain projects going away; stated there needs to be a balance and a way to address competing interests; there might be a little pain for everybody, but streets safer for all users could be accomplished without burdening anyone; people appreciate being a part of the conversation and feeling they were included from the beginning.

The City Manager stated staff is asking of Council to endorse both the near term and long term concept for Fernside; staff will conduct a traffic study before making any final decision on the intersection improvements on Gibbons/High/Fernside, which would be part of the 2026 Improvement Plan; the study would be brought back; endorsing the near and long term concepts is two different actions.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft noted nothing is moving forward at the Gibbons Drive intersection until the

traffic study is done.

The City Manager concurred with Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft; stated the timeline is tight; as soon as staff does the traffic study, it will be shared with the public prior to being brought back to Council for another hearing.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, the City Manager stated the timeline will be fast and include the request to extend notification to the side streets.

Councilmember Jensen moved approval of the staff recommendation outlined by the City Manager with the additional direction to extend public notification.

Councilmember Daysog seconded the motion; stated that he would like to make a friendly amendment to the motion to include further analysis regarding the pedestrian islands and daylighting around the areas at Liberty and Eastshore.

Under discussion, Councilmember Jensen accepted the friendly amendment to the motion.

The City Manager inquired whether Councilmember Daysog's request for additional analysis can be done as part of the next engineering to get ready for the pavement management plan, to which Councilmember Daysog responded in the affirmative.

On the call for the question, the motion carried by unanimous voice vote - 5.

(25-174) Adoption of Resolution Adopting the 2025 Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) Mid-Cycle Update and Accept the 2024 Annual Report. Not heard.

(25-175) Recommendation to Accept the Economic Development Status Update and Provide Feedback Regarding Economic Development Efforts and Activities. Not heard.

CITY MANAGER COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

None.

COUNCIL REFERRALS

None.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

(25-176) Mayor's Nominations for the Commission on Persons with Disabilities and Golf Commission.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft nominated John Lipp for appointment to the Commission on Persons with

Disabilities and Lily Boris and Hamill Serrant for appointment to the Golf Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft adjourned the meeting at 1:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Weisiger
City Clerk

The agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the Sunshine Ordinance.

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY- -MARCH 18, 2025- -5:30 P.M.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call – Present: Councilmembers Daysog, Boller, Jensen, Pryor and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 5. [Note: Councilmember Daysog arrived at 5:36 p.m. and Councilmember Jensen arrived at 5:44 p.m.]

Absent: None.

The meeting was adjourned to Closed Session to consider:

(25-144) Conference with Labor Negotiators (Government Code Section 54957.6) City Negotiators: Jennifer Ott, City Manager, Jessica Romeo, Human Resources Director, and Doug McManaway, Deputy City Attorney; Employee Organizations: Alameda City Employees Association (ACEA), Alameda Police Management Association (APMA), Alameda Police Officers Association (APOA, Alameda Police Officers Association - Non-Sworn (PANS), Electric Utility Professionals Association (EUPA) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), and Management and Confidential Employees Association (MCEA); Under Negotiation: Salaries, Employee Benefits and Terms of Employment

(25-145) Public Employee Performance Evaluations Pursuant to Government Code § 54957; Positions Evaluated: City Clerk – Lara Weisiger

Following the Closed Session, the meeting was reconvened and the City Clerk announced that regarding Labor, staff provided information and Council provided direction with no vote taken; and regarding Performance Evaluations, Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft announced that the City Council discussed the City Clerk performance review process with no vote taken.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Weisiger
City Clerk

The agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the Sunshine Ordinance.