

LARA WEISIGER

From: Trish Spencer
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 3:45 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER; Janet Kern
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Proposal

From: Fabbakergirl
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 3:17 PM
Subject: Sister City Proposal
To: Trish Spencer, Malia Vella, mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.go, Frank Matarrese, Jim Oddie

Dear Members of the Council:

I wanted to speak to you about the proposal the Alameda City Council will be considering to declare the West Bank village of Wadi Foquin a sister city. This proposal is being put forward by Reverend Michael Yoshii of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church.

I understand the intent of the Sister Cities organization to promote understanding of other cultures, however the recent activities appear to be part of a concerted religious and political agenda to increase sister city relationships between Palestinian cities and the United States, especially by the Methodist Church and Sister Cities International board member, John Dabeet, a Palestinian expat.

Currently there are only a handful of US cities, and only one here in California (Sacramento – but also has a sister city in Israel). There have been considerable conflict around these decisions – in Boulder, CO, it caused such dissent that they had to have mediators come in to help navigate the tears in the community.

The town of Wadi Foquin is currently part of the very controversial settlement zone. Articles about them speak of their “fight for existence” in occupied territories. Regardless of ANYONE’S geopolitical views, this is not a peaceful or stable government or area. Individuals have every right to lobby, protest, or support whichever side they wish. My problem is putting the City of Alameda and its residents in the middle of it – giving the impression of taking sides. Unfortunately, due to the current climate of our country, it is simple to see progressions of this relationship to anti-Israel and anti-Semitic behaviors.

There are already problems with anti-Semitism in Alameda, as seen with the vandalism of Temple Israel and the repeated anti-Semitic incidents in our schools. My daughter’s friend, Natasha, spoke to the city council in September about her struggles with anti-Semitism in our school district. She has been victim of multiple anti-Semitic threats, and subjected to other anti-Semitic incidents. Last Friday, my daughter and Natasha discovered more anti-Semitic graffiti in one of their classrooms.

According to a recent letter from the principal at Alameda High, there have been 14 reported cases of symbolic violence or acts of intolerance just since September 15, including numerous anti-Semitic incidents! I am proud of the work AHS is doing to handle these incidents and the subject overall. However, we need to be cognizant of repercussions for a sister city relationship that may accelerate these types of incidents.

Based on the research I’ve done, it seems that this resolution is largely being pushed by Reverend Yoshi and the Buena Vista United Methodist Church. If you were to check online, you will find that most, if not all Facebook pages for Palestinian Sister City projects (a step in the approval process) are formed in conjunction with the Methodist church. They also, interestingly, have only about 200 followers. I am concerned about the high involvement of a church into government decisions.

This is an extremely controversial issue and the city council should not be a stance. We don’t need another excuse for anti-Semitism in our city. However, if the city were to move forward with this proposal – since I have heard that there are members in favor of this proposal -- I would hope that they would also be as favorable with a Sister City proposal with Israel and would support efforts for a multilateral approach.

Thanks,

Alex Baker, Alameda resident

Sent on my Samsung Galaxy S7.

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:31 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City Wadi Foquin

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 9:32 AM
To: DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>; Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Wadi Foquin

----- Original message -----

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <MEzzyAshcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Date: 12/2/17 11:30 AM (GMT-08:00)
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Morton Chalfy <mchalfy@gmail.com>
Date: December 2, 2017 at 9:26:39 AM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Sister City Wadi Foquin

Dear Council Members and Mayor Spencer,

Regardless of any motivation on your collective parts voting in favor of this hamlet as a Sister City is a political act which is a slap in the face to the Jewish residents of Alameda. If the church which sponsors this resolution wants a relationship with Wadi Foquin they are free to have one just not in our collective names.

One wonders whether the church does as much for the homeless in our city as they do for the Palestinian town's residents. Resodding the soccer field half a world away may be laudable but feeding the poor and raising the downtrodden here at home is supposed to be their mission. As long as the official Palestinian line is that Israel's existence is unacceptable then actions which support them officially have an anti-semitic component and I personally don't want my city council making official statements in their support.

Sincerely,
Morton Chalfy

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:30 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 9:34 AM
To: DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>; Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City

----- Original message -----

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <MEzzyAshcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Date: 12/2/17 4:11 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City

fyi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Kofman <stmar27@yahoo.com>
Date: December 2, 2017 at 1:20:24 PM PST
To: "tspencer@alamedaca.gov" <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, "mvella@alamedaca.gov" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "joddie@alamedaca.gov" <joddie@alamedaca.gov>, "fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov" <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Sister City
Reply-To: Steve Kofman <stmar27@yahoo.com>

I am opposed to the Palestinian Sister City proposal being presented before the City Council.

The Middle East situation is tenuous at best, and we do not need any more anti-Israel recognition, for that is what it would represent.

Sincerely, Steve Kofman, 217 Oyster Pond Rd. Alameda, CA 94502 (510)522-2374

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:30 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: City Council - Wadi Foquin resolution

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 9:35 AM
To: DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>; Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: City Council - Wadi Foquin resolution

----- Original message -----

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <MEzzyAshcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Date: 12/2/17 6:59 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: City Council - Wadi Foquin resolution

fyi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: raviv moore <raviv.moore@gmail.com>
Date: December 2, 2017 at 6:27:06 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: City Council - Wadi Foquin resolution

Dear Honorable Mayor Spencer, Councilmember Vella, Councilmember Oddie, Councilmember Matarrese, and Councilmember Ezzy Ashcraft,

My family and I live in Alameda for the last 15 years.

I just learned about the proposal to establish a sister city with the city of Wadi Foquin.

While I general, I am not opposing forming sister relationship with a Palestinian city in the West bank, I believe that in this case it will be viewed as a political statement by the city of Alameda and will create an inflammatory environment for several reasons:

This proposal is being submitted by Rev. Michael Yoshii who chaired the United Methodists for Kairos Response, a group active in the Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) movement, which the Anti-Defamation League recognizes as anti-Semitic.

In addition, in the past months, we witnessed increased anti-Semitic activity in Alameda, including several incidents in AHS and Temple Israel.

Signing a sister relationship under these conditions will unintendedly send a negative message to Jews living in Alameda and I strongly propose to consider other options.

As an example, Alameda could establish and declare sister relationship with a Palestinian city and an Israeli city at the same time, under the same resolution. This will send a message of peace for everyone living in Alameda.

Sincerely yours,
Raviv Moore

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:25 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: eLetter in Opposition to the Palestinian Village Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 10:02 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: eLetter in Opposition to the Palestinian Village Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

fyi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kimberlee MacVicar <demodiva@yahoo.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 9:30:41 AM PST
To: "tspencer@alamedaca.gov" <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, "mvella@alamedaca.gov" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov" <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, "joddie@alamedaca.gov" <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: eLetter in Opposition to the Palestinian Village Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

Dear Mayor and Council,

I just learned that you are considering a sister city relationship with a Palestinian village. I ask you to please not do that. While I have long respected Rev. Michael Yoshi as a faith & community leader, I remain troubled by his involvement in the BDS movement to punish Israel, a nation constantly threatened from many directions, while not proposing the same to other nations who are also not perfect. Same could be said for the United State; we're clearly not a perfect nation but I digress. The BDS Movement is nothing more than a 21st Century Way to be anti-Semitic; don't be fooled.

As a 4th generation Alamedan and 4th generation member of Temple Israel (my great-grandparents, David & Diana Garfinkle, co-founded it in 1920), I ask for your continued support of the Jewish people by shutting down this proposal and not sticking Alameda's toe into such a difficult international relationship that would actually trouble your Jewish residents. You were all there for the vigil after the temple suffered vandalism; you know we do remain a threatened people. Jewish students within AUSD have been bullied, etc., and the Superintendent is weak on this issue. Please don't be weak here because the Reverend is a nice guy.

In my opinion, the BDS movement and efforts such as this proposal are ways for people to simply be anti-Semitic under another name. I am confident that should this proposal be passed, people will then use it as a way to bash Israel and more confidently be anti-Semitic

in the open. Please don't fall for this. While it may appear to look progressive or PC to recognize Palestine this way, the messenger of this request confirms to many that this is merely another way to slam Jewish people at home and in Israel.

While Palestinians definitely deserve to be treated better (doesn't everyone?), that is not what this sister city proposal is about or would accomplish; it's about sticking a thumb in the eye of Israel, her people and Jewish people in the Diaspora. Arab and Muslim leaders should step up and help Palestinians, instead they use the Palestinians as pawns to bash Israel or provide rockets to fire into Israel at whim; this sister city proposal is no different. Don't be played.

Please do not let this proposal go forward. Unless there is an offer for an Israeli sister city proposal at the same time, the City Council is better off staying away from this hot potato.

Thank you,

Kimberlee MacVicar
1209 Eagle Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:25 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: [TI-BOD] Email from the Middle East opposing the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 1:33 PM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: [TI-BOD] Email from the Middle East opposing the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin

fyi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <marilyn@marilynforalameda.org>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 10:23:01 AM PST
To: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <MEzzyAshcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: [TI-BOD] Email from the Middle East opposing the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin

Begin forwarded message:

From: Felice Zensius <felicez@ymail.com>
Subject: Fwd: [TI-BOD] Email from the Middle East opposing the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin
Date: December 2, 2017 at 7:41:35 AM PST
To: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <marilyn@marilyn4alameda.org>

Hi Marilyn, I'm just hearing about this proposal about naming a Palestinian sister city for Alameda. Do we have an Israeli sister city? Why are we even going in that direction? Don't we have enough issues to deal with in Alameda? Please remove this controversial proposal from Tuesday night's agenda. It is divisive and counter productive. Please let me know what you think. Philip Auerbach's attached email is lengthy

but expresses my concerns. Felice Zensius

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Philip Auerbach <philip@auerbach-intl.com>

Date: December 2, 2017 at 5:01:47 AM PST

Subject: Re: [TI-BOD] Email from the Middle East opposing the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin

For whatever it is worth, would someone please forward this email ASAP to the City Councillors not mentioned below. I will send it to the Mayor and the four listed members. Thank you.

Dear City Council,

Greetings from the Sultanate of Oman which I am visiting after a conference in the United Arab Emirates. Although I am Jewish, you can tell that I have no problem working or talking with Arabs per se. I have done so for over 40 years. Many Arabs, however, do have a problem with Jews and Israel as one can tell every day by reading the local press articles in English. Most of what they write is based in fact but are usually half truths. One such article this past week spoke about the corruption of the Israeli government. While that was true, the same article conveniently neglected to mention that Israel is a society of laws where corrupt politicians have been jailed and that before criticizing others, Arab societies should ask what would happen if they raised the same charges against their own leaders.

My very open-minded and world-travelled tour driver today told me that when he was in school 20 years ago, the Omani curriculum taught him that Jews are money-grubbing leaches who shoot Arabs and are totally untrustworthy. And this in one of the world's more liberal Arab countries. He is unaware of what current Omani students are being taught. However, mountains of documentary evidence shows that the Palestinian public school curriculum follows similar trends. For example, a math problem would ask, "If our martyrs ambushed ten Israeli soldiers and killed seven, how many Zionist pigs would remain alive for future confrontations?".

As do many liberal Jews, I totally support an independent Palestinian state and abhor Israel's settlement policies and land grabs. I totally and personally empathize with Palestinian anger at the daily frustrations and humiliations many endure. However, after 50 years of occupation, two intifadas, and Israeli offers of a political resolution in 2000 and 2003 and beyond, the status quo

remains. The issue ultimately becomes whether more of the same actions will generate a transformation or whether other, totally different alternatives can achieve the independence Palestinians seek.

Ultimately, the Palestinians focus on decades of injustices and Israelis focus on decades of insecurities. Both viewpoints are valid but a resolution can only start when both sides recognize the validity of the other's realities ... and change their behaviors.

I greatly applaud Buena Vista UMC's and Wadi Foquin's mutual efforts to improve that town's economic well-being. Those are critical steps to create prosperity and break the cycle. BUT no where does the resolution show Wadi Foquin's political actions.

To bestow the gift of a sister-city relationship, the Alameda Council should first ask what visionary, moral leadership Wadi Foquin's city council has demonstrated. Is Wadi Foquin taking a transformational path as Gandhi would have done? Or are they simply perpetuating Arab half-truths, lies and Israel-bashing? Are the town's schools and newspapers a mouthpiece for continued negativity? Or do they foster mutual understanding? What moral courage and leadership has its council shown to demonstrate a positive way out of the impasse? Or is WF's council perpetuating the Palestinian party line? **If you do not know, it is best to table your decision until you can find out.**

In general, Muslims and Arabs want the rest of the world to understand them but they do not seek to understand the world. And in Arab societies, questioning can be dangerous. With Israel-Palestine, you are not dealing with a simple, uncharged relationship as with Korea and the Philippines. Nice ceremonies and people-to-people exchanges in this case show legitimacy, not dismay. If Alameda City Council is not going to postpone a decision or refuses to take additional, costly actions to help Wadi Foquin break its ingrained mindset, I suggest that you deny this relationship.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Philip Auerbach
2137 Otis Drive, apt 306
Alameda 94510

On Dec 2, 2017, at 10:29 AM, Edward Kofman
<leadingedgealameda@comcast.net> wrote:

Good afternoon, Genevieve,

It was good talking with you this afternoon. As I mentioned, the folks I talked to at the city have told me that they have received **no letters in opposition** to the Palestinian Village Wadi Foquin sister city proposal that is going to be considered at the Council meeting this coming Tuesday. There are a number of letters supporting the proposal that are included in the council packet including one from Rabbi Brickner. I would hate to have the council and the community think that he is representing our community because he certainly doesn't represent me and many I have spoken to. A month or two ago when this first came up and the Temple Israel board voted to oppose the proposal, I conveyed that information to Mayor Spencer but I was under the impression that the board of directors was also going to follow up and send a letter to the city council members stating the position of the Temple. You know what they say about assuming and perhaps we could have coordinated that better but there is still time to act. As we discussed, **this weekend is the time to send such a letter** from the board to all of the council members and even encourage Temple members of like mind to send e-mails to all of the council members (and the city clerk) as well. I think the council members might be persuaded to oppose the proposal if they get enough letters in opposition and understand that there are community members that strongly oppose it. At this moment, there are no letters in opposition. It would also be helpful for those that can to come to the council meeting on Tuesday. It only takes 3 council members to approve it. For your information, I will send you a draft of the letter I am working on once it is completed and perhaps with enough of a response we can stop this.

My main concern is that when the chief proponent of the sister city proposal, Rev, Michael Yoshi, uses inflammatory language like Israel being responsible for the "theft of 94% of their land" and the "strangling" of their economy, it is less about building bridges of understanding and more about giving Israel bashers another platform for their propaganda. I will talk to you over the weekend. Please encourage those you know to send e-mails to the council members by Monday to be sure the council members see them.

Best regards,

Ed
510-909-4444

Mayor Trish Herrera Spencer, 510-747-4701, tspencer@alamedaca.gov
Vice Mayor Malia Vella, 510-747-4726, mvella@alamedaca.gov
Councilmember Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, 510-747-4745, mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov
Councilmember Frank Matarrese, 510-747-4722, fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov
Councilmember Jim Oddie, 510-747-4728, joddie@alamedaca.gov

City Clerk Lara Weisiger, lweisiger@alamedaca.gov

From: Temple Israel President
[<mailto:president@templeisraelalameda.org>]
Sent: Friday, December 01, 2017 2:14 PM
To: Board of Directors; Suzi Scher; Felice Zensius; Mary Gold; Edward Kofman; Brian Reich; Melissa Raber; Nicole Thresher; Howard Sidorsky; Sandy@sidorsky.com; michael riback; Eric Strimling
Subject: City of Alameda Council Mtg. Tues. 12/5/17
Consent Item: Sister City with Village Wadi Foquin

Dear Temple Israel Family,

Several months ago, Ed Kofman presented this possibility to the Temple Board as the Mayor asked for our community's input. Ed conveyed our input to not support this action as the TI Board voted against this Sister City status with Village of Wadi Foquin. Also, Walt Jacobs spoke with Melia Vela (Council member) stating his opposition to this action

This item is going to Council this coming Tues. and we need sincerely need Temple Israel representatives to be present and provide comment that Temple Israel does not support this agenda item. As soon as possible -
- Please share this email with others who can stand and support Temple Israel's position opposing this action.

The council meeting is on Tues. Dec. 5, 2017 @ 7 p.m.

City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue,
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, Alameda
CA 94501

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3210359&GUID=D8F359AC-FA97-47D0-8383-3861253AD12C>

Adoption of Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding Regarding the Formulation and Implementation of Sister City Relations Between Alameda, California, and Foquin, Palestinian Territories and the City of Alameda. (Community Development Committee, from November 21, 2017 to December 5, 2017)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jill Keimach, City Manager

RE: Adoption of Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding Regarding the Formulation and Implementation of Sister City Relations Between Alameda, California, and Foquin, Palestinian Territories and the City of Alameda

BACKGROUND

Alameda's Sister City program works to promote cultural understanding and cooperation around the world, and to strengthen international partnerships at the municipal and global levels. Alameda currently has three active Sister Cities, and one active Friendship City.

Sister Cities

- ☐ Jiangyin, China (2008)
- ☐ Dumaguete, Philippines (2015)
- ☐ Yeongdong-gun, South Korea (2017)

Friendship City

- ☐ Wuxi, China (2005)

The Sister City program is a partnership between the City of Alameda and the Alameda Association (ASCA), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in 2009. Prior to the Sister Cities program was facilitated by the Social Services Human Relations Board (SSHRB) workgroup. ASCA evaluates and recommends new Sister Cities for adoption, acts as a representative of the City of Alameda, organizes and supports all Sister City activities, fundraising and cultural events, economic exchanges, delegation visits, and human relations among other initiatives.

The relationship between Wadi Foquin and the Alameda community began in 2008. Buena Vista United Methodist Church (the “Buena Vista UMC”) established a partnership with Wadi Foquin. In 2015, the Buena Vista UMC hosted Mr. Ahmad Sokar, the Mayor of Wadi Foquin. Mr. Sokar visited Alameda and the Bay Area, and he expressed an interest in developing a Sister City relationship with the City of Alameda. In 2016, Mayor Sokar again visited Alameda. At that time, Councilmembers Matarrese and Ashcraft, as well as members of the ASCA Board, visited Wadi Foquin. In 2016, Ata Manasra, Coordinator for the Narjes Community Development project, visited the Youth Development Coordinator, also visited Alameda and met with ASCA Board members. At the September 19th, 2017 City Council Meeting, Mr. Manasra was introduced to the City Council during oral communications.

In October of 2016, ASCA approved the formation of the Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee, led by the Reverend Michael Yoshii of the Buena Vista UMC. Additional Committee members include Suzanne Yoshii, Paula Rainey, Austin Tam, Michi Yoshii, Judy Tam, Binh Nguyen, and Cynthia Bonta.

In February of 2017, ASCA recommended the adoption of three new Sister City relationships: Yeongdong in South Korea, Wadi Foquin in the Palestinian Territories, and Varazze in Italy. The relationship with Yeongdong was considered to be the most developed of the three. The City Council Cities, and the ASCA recommendation to adopt Yeongdong as a Sister City was approved. The recommendation to be forwarded to City Council. In June of 2017, City Council adopted a resolution to formalize the Sister City relationship between Yeongdong-gun and the City of Alameda.

In October of 2017, the City Council approved the Sister City Program Guidelines and the following criteria for establishing a new Sister City relationship:

- **Sustainability:** Support of a sizable, committed group of Alameda residents and community members willing and able to manage a long-term relationship.
- **Compatibility:** One or more similarities with Alameda, which may include, but are not limited to: population size, geography, culture, industries, academic institutions, historic or ancestral connections, peace efforts or other shared goals.
- **Opportunity:** Opportunities for mutually beneficial cultural, economic, social, humanitarian and educational exchanges and program activities between the two cities and their based organizations.
- **Financial Resources:** Adequate financial resources or fundraising efforts to support program activities, cultural exchanges, and maintenance of the relationship.

Reverend Michael Yoshii has indicated that officials from Wadi Foquin, including Mr. Manasra, are prepared to visit the City of Alameda in the spring of 2018. Based on this visit, and their adherence to the criteria described above, the Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee has asked that the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin be forwarded to the City Council for approval, so that the relationship can be formalized during this visit through a resolution.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Exhibit 1). Tonight's action is the next step in the Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin.

DISCUSSION

Wadi Foquin is located approximately five miles south of Bethlehem, in the Palestinian West Bank. It lies in a rich agricultural valley on the Green Line - the Israel-Palestinian border. The village has a population of approximately 1,300 people. Wadi Foquin is known for its natural beauty and agriculture, including olive trees, honey, fruits and vegetables.

The Buena Vista UMC has worked actively with the people of Wadi Foquin since 1998, focusing on projects of promoting economic prosperity in the village. Projects have included the funding of bee hives to enable the production and sale of honey; a Youth Leadership program to teach village youth the skills to succeed in a changing economy; and a Women's Initiative to train women of Wadi Foquin to harvest and sell honey, and sell hand-embroidered goods from the village. The Buena Vista UMC was also instrumental in the creation of a Community Center, which hosts these community programs and acts as a gathering space for the village. Recently, the Buena Vista UMC worked to re-sod a soccer field in the village. They also organize annual educational trips to Wadi Foquin.

The Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee has stated that the goals of a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin would be to develop people-to-people relationships, provide opportunities for education and cultural exchange, and to continue to support projects that promote the sustainability of daily life in the village. Potential projects identified by the Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee include the completion of the sodding of the soccer field and ongoing support for the soccer activities; making improvements in roads (including naming one after the City of Alameda); facilitating student exchange; establishing a guest house in the village to support both local and international tourism; and hosting delegations from Alameda to Wadi Foquin. These proposed Sister City activities will be refined and finalized in consultation with ASCA and representatives from Wadi Foquin, and the Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee will be responsible for planning and implementing all program activities.

Based on its adherence to the Sister City criteria described above, including the implementation of mutually beneficial activities and the formation and ongoing commitment of the Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee, as well as the support of Sister Cities International, as demonstrated by the letter of support, ASCA has evaluated Wadi Foquin and recommended it be designated as a Sister City. As a result, staff is moving forward with ASCA's recommendation that the City Council pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign an MOU regarding formulation and implementation of Sister City relations between Alameda and Wadi Foquin.

In addition to establishing formal Sister City relations, the proposed MOU calls for efforts to promote visits between their people and encourage exchanges in the fields of education, culture, and exchange, and the development of person-to-person relationships. The MOU also designates the Alameda Sister City Association as the City Council's designee responsible for implementing the friendly exchange and cooperation programs between the two cities, while leaving out the day-to-day work of a Sister City relationship.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

City funds in the amount of \$10,000 per fiscal year have been budgeted for maintenance of Sister City relationships.

MUNICIPAL CODE/POLICY DOCUMENT CROSS REFERENCE

This action is consistent with SSHRB Charter and Ordinance authority “to create which will encourage and bring about mutual understanding, respect, and goodwill among people in the community” (Alameda Municipal Code Section 2-11.5).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines section 15601(b)(3).

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing the Mayor to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the formulation and implementation of Sister City relations between Wadi Foquin, Palmdale and the City of Alameda.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Potter, Community Development Director

By:
Amanda Gehrke, Management Analyst

Financial impact section reviewed,
By: Elena Adair, Finance Director

Exhibits:

- 1) Exhibit 1 - Alameda - Wadi Foquin Memorandum of Understanding
- 2) Exhibit 2 - Sister City International Letter of Support

Thank you for your presence,

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Genevieve Pastor-Cohen
Board President
Temple Israel
3183 Mecartney Road
Alameda, CA 94502

(510) 522-9355

www.templeisraelalameda.org

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Board of Directors" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to bod+unsubscribe@templeisraelalameda.org.

To post to this group, send email to bod@templeisraelalameda.org.

LARA WEISIGER

From: Trish Spencer
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 12:29 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Cc: Jill Keimach; DEBBIE POTTER; Lois Butler
Subject: Fwd: Wadi Fouqin

From: Dcm -Consulate General of Israel - San Francisco
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 11:49 AM
Subject: Wadi Fouqin
To: Trish Spencer
Cc: Consul General- Consulate General of Israel - San Francisco, Community - Consulate General of Israel - San Francisco, Academic - Consulate General of Israel - San Francisco

Dear Mayor Herrera Spencer,

It is a pleasure to e-meet you, and I hope we can meet in person soon.

Thank you for reaching out to us about the topic of Wadi Fouqin, and explore about our approach to the matter. Here are some points that I believe should be considered by the city of Alameda before deciding on the matter:

1. Wadi fouqin is a tiny Palestinian village of around 1,000 people. The village has some zoning claims that go back many years and have been and still are considered by judicial authorities in Israel (you can see below some information on the matter).
2. In reality, this village has become in the last few years "the poster village" of anti-Israeli propaganda. A narrative of zoning claims is promoted by groups around the world. In our view, this narrative is shallow, fraudulent and deliberately misleading.
3. It seems to us that judging by the community activists promoting the sister city agreement, and our knowledge of the matter, that the reasoning behind creating the sister city, has nothing to do with actual exchange, but it will be used only for political purposes, in order to promote a political agenda.
4. It is obviously for the city of Alameda to determine its policy, but the middle east peace process is a topic of great complexity and nuances, and the US itself has a policy towards it. The city of Alameda should ask itself weather it needs to act in a manner that reflects a very clear political view in support of one side, one narrative. Is it the goal of municipalities to take stand on international affairs?. This topic is extremely complex, and I feel that the discussion at city level is not knowledgeable enough to bring about a good decision making.
5. Further, since the proposal is promoted by self declared BDS (A movement calling for the boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel) activists, we can assume that the sister city agreement will be used to promote BDS activity in the future, under municipal hospices. This might even be against California law, and I would direct you to California bill 2844 (https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2844)
6. Another issue that is worth considering is that BDS activity many times contains antisemite Components, and many times creates an atmosphere that is hostile to jews. This is something that is probably the most disturbing to us, and we worry when municipal bodies are uses in that manner.

I hope these points will help when discussion the matter this evening.
All the best,
Ravit Baer,

We understand that you've recently heard from residents of the Wadi Foquin Village. We are glad you're interested in our region, and we would like to add additional context to the narrative presented to you. In all matters regarding the contested area near Wadi Foquin, the Israeli government's involvement there was to enforce the law whenever and wherever it was violated. Even if you consider this to be disputed land you must recognize the need for law and order and all activity by Israeli forces in that area was carried out in order to uphold the law.

In September 2014, a 1000 Dunam (245 Acres) near the Wadi Foquin village, but outside its borders and without no known private ownership, was declared Israeli State Land after a thorough examination of the area using satellite imagery—a process which is used commonly to determine borders. After any such declaration, those who wish to protest have the option to submit an appeal for review. Such appeals for this plot of land have been submitted and are under legal deliberation at this time.

Residents of Wadi Foquin bypassed the legal appeal process and proceeded to illegally plant saplings in that plot of land. To make room for these saplings, the residents uprooted and destroyed 70 old oak trees which were part of the natural landscape and are considered a protected species making them illegal to destroy. Israeli law enforcement understandably became involved after these incidents which violated multiple laws.

Furthermore, the soccer field erected near Wadi Foquin was built at a time when an injunction against any such construction was in effect.

Additionally, the land selected by Wadi Foquin residents for this soccer field is over a kilometer away from the village and outside the approved and established boundaries of the village.

This declaration of state land was applied to land which was raw, unprocessed, and uncultivated. There are no known documents to support ownership claims of the land by the residents of Wadi Foquin. While Israel is acting within the law, the residents of Wadi Foquin are violating it. Again, there is an ongoing appeal process. If that process determines that the land belongs to Wadi Foquin then they will be able to plant saplings and build a soccer field there. The Israeli government simply requests that the residents of Wadi Foquin act within the boundaries of the law.

Unfortunately, the residents of this village are constantly being used by their leader to create provocations towards the Israeli authorities. No international law can allow this uninhibited breach of any law.

Ravit Baer
Deputy Consul General

Sent from my iPhone

LARA WEISIGER

From: Roger Becker <rbecker@beckermedia.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 11:19 AM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Sister city for Alameda

While the intentions are inevitably constructive and noble to have a Palestinian sister city for Alameda, please understand some issues to consider. To this day, the destruction of the state Israel is in the Palestinian Authority charter. To this day, the families of Palestinian suicide bombers are awarded financial compensation for the rest of their lives. Although it's tempting to think that the Palestinians want peace, Yaser Arafat walked away from a peace deal that Bill Clinton attempted to broker 20 years ago, which Clinton later blamed on Arafat.

To have a sister city in the Palestinian territories has ramifications that should be considered. This is a complicated issue.

ROGER BECKER



[510 465-6200, EXT. 101](tel:5104656200)
rbecker@beckermedia.net
beckermedia.net
144 Linden St.
Oakland, CA 94607

LARA WEISIGER

From: steven harris <calweasel@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 8:54 AM
To: Trish Spencer; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER
Cc: Temple Israel President
Subject: Re: [TI-BOD] Alameda City Council Tues. Dec. 5 Agenda Item: 6E. 2017-4867 Sister City MOU with Wadi Foquin

Dear Honorable Mayor Spencer and Councilmembers Ashcraft, Matarese, Oddie, and Vella,

I am a member of Temple Israel of Alameda's Board of Directors, and I write in strong opposition to the City of Alameda proposal to grant sister city status to Wadi Foquin.

On September 12, 2017, the Temple Israel Board of Directors voted in opposition of granting Sister City status to Wadi Foquin. This decision was made as we reviewed the chief proponent of the sister city proposal, Rev. Michael Yoshii, and his use of inflammatory language in the press of Israel being responsible for the “theft of 94% of their land” and the “strangling” of their economy. It is less about building bridges of understanding and more about giving Israel antagonists another platform for their propaganda. Although his humanitarian efforts are laudable, his inflammatory political rhetoric ignores the historical realities that have made this conflict so long, difficult, and complex as it is contrary to the objective of building bridges of understanding and cooperation. The sister city initiative appears to be a political move versus building cultural and commercial ties as is the definition of being a “sister city.”

In researching sister cities, I learned that a sister city has similar local and geographic characteristics. This definition harkens back to President Eisenhower's articulation of the term. Two of the three current City of Alameda sister cities are coastal cities while the third is situated on an island with thriving populations and commerce from which Alameda can benefit culturally and commercially. However, Alameda and Wadi

Foquin have nothing in common with respect to local and geographic characteristics. Wadi Foquin is located in a desert, it is entirely inland, and it is a small agrarian society. Alameda bears none of those characteristics.

In understanding the needs of Wadi Foquin, our former Rabbi Allen Bennett recently visited the village and provided his first-hand impressions. Yes, the villagers petitioned the Israeli government to return to their farmland to continue with their peaceful lives. The villagers accepted the fact that the Israeli government would provide them 10% of land to farm. Once settled and crops harvested, the villagers had problems getting their produce to market because of the “security checkpoints.” Rabbi Bennett was instrumental in arranging a regular farmers market for the villagers to market their produce. Rabbi Bennett learned that the people of Wadi Foquin would like nothing more than to grow their crops, educate their children, and live in peace. The villagers of Wadi Foquin have been pawns caught in the middle of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for decades. On the other hand, there are Israelis, too, who would like to live in peace and raise their children. However, Israelis are under constant vigilance with the real possibility that their families can be destroyed by someone who was taught to hate Jews from an early age.

One point worth making is that the situation that exists in the Middle East is a complex one and it is not productive to vilify one side without a sincere attempt to understand the complexities that led to that point. That certainly doesn't justify bad behavior on the part of the Israelis or the threat, and worse, inflicted on the Israelis from their neighbors. Most can agree that these people are neighbors and would benefit from finding a way to live in peace. We have no doubt that

many Israelis and their neighbors would much prefer open fields and roads between them rather than walls and security posts, but what has necessitated such security?

Additional points considered resulting in our opposition of this initiative:

- Although we are all in favor of progressive and economic relations with any community, Palestinian or otherwise, the position of the Buena Vista Methodist Church indicates an interest in a very one-sided platform, considering only the Palestinian propaganda of an unfair political fight.
- By creating this association only with a Palestinian city, advocating for the destruction of the only Jewish State in the world, Alameda sends a very one-sided and destructive message.
- Temple Israel of Alameda's Board and congregation strongly advocates for sister city relationships with Palestinian, as well as with Israeli cities, without supporting the animus that exists between these two communities. This proposed relationship only advocates for half the story. As Alamedans, we must advocate for the truth, and not take up only one side of this political quagmire.

Please note that, although former Temple Israel Rabbi Brickner approved the idea of a sister city relationship on this issue, he did so as an Alameda resident, not as a representative of our congregation. His association with Temple Israel ended on June 30, 2017.

I strongly recommend the City Council votes no on this initiative or pull the agenda item from the consent calendar for further research and deeper discussion as there are very intricate complexities which need to be thoroughly vetted and understood.

Thank you.

Steven Harris

Board Member, Temple Israel of Alameda
Alameda Resident

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jessica Lindsey <kookykitsch@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 11:43 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: I did not see this posted in the opposition letters

Hi Lara,

I did not see this posted in the opposition letters

-----Original Message-----

From: AskIsadora <AskIsadora@aol.com>
Sent: Sat, Dec 2, 2017 9:46 am
Subject: My letter to the council

Dear Mayor Spencer and Council Members,

The proposal put forth by the United Methodist Church to link Alameda with the Palestinian city of Wadi Foquin is ill-considered and insulting to Alameda's Jewish residents who have recently encountered an uprising in anti-Semitism. If the desire to connect with a Palestinian city is so strong in the United Methodist Church's Reverend Yoshi I suggest he undertakes that solely as a church matter. Alameda has other sister cities where there is no political agendas. Please consider connecting with another city elsewhere for the sake of Jewish residents and for all fair-minded Alamedans.

Isadora Alman, MFT, CST

www.askisadora.com

LARA WEISIGER

From: Walt & Judy Jacobs <jacobs@hbrinfo.com>
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 1:35 PM
To: tspencere@alamedaca.gov; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER
Cc: Steven Chester; 'Genevieve Pastor Cohen (genevieve@qibits.com)'; Reyla Graber (reylagraber@aol.com)
Subject: Wadi Foquin Potential Sister City To Alameda

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, Members Of The City Council And City Clerk

I am somewhat new to the conversation on this matter. I was only just advised that a vote would be taken shortly to create this sister city arrangement. I am sure you will be hearing from other concerned people on this matter. This town is located in the Territories referred by some as the West Bank and others as Samaria. The area seeks recognition as an independent country. However they have been consistently unwilling to recognize and accept the existence of the State of Israel. Granted that the Wadi itself seems not to care who the government is. They only want to farm in peace. Unfortunately they are part of a much bigger picture which has constantly been warring with Israel since. Further Israel has been under constant physical attack as well which continues to this day from Gaza, Lebanon and the Territories. The Palestinian Authority even pays the families of their quote 'martyrs' for their terrorist acts. Reverend Yoshi and his group may be doing a lot for this village but in the case of Alameda there is another view. The sister city program is supposed to be an economic mutual support system, but by making it a sister city you serve the cause of creating a political issue and that is how it will be viewed. Having just gone thru some Anti Semetic incidents in Alameda at Alameda High School and Temple Israel, I think any action on behalf of this arrangement is counter productive to the goals of our City. The whole point of this arrangement is a back door approach to establish the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause and put some kind of pressure on Israel, who by the way have given a lot more to the World than any or all countries in the middle east. Did you know about the medical economic help they provide in Africa. Did you know that they we3re present in Puerto Rico after the recent hurricane for search and rescue and economic and social aid? Israel is not perfect by a long shot. But why does Alameda need to be involved in this international challenge? The only way peace will be finally moved in the right direction is when the parties come to the table, recognizing that is their own self interest to have PEACE. IF you are really interested in peace then maybe you can find a better choice in Israel with a village or town where Jews and Muslims co exist.



Walt & Judy Jacobs

REALTORS® | CalBRE #00573189 / #00587690
Walt: 510 908-9025 | Judy: 510 908-9024 | Fax: 510 523-3652
Walt.Jacobs@bhhsdrysale.com | Judy.Jacobs@bhhsdrysale.com

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LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:59 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Please vote YES on sister city status for Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:52 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Please vote YES on sister city status for Wadi Foquin

Hi Jill,

We've recently received many e-mails supporting a Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin which I will forward fyi.

Marilyn

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: paula rainey <prainey@me.com>
Date: December 4, 2017 at 10:47:29 AM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, Frank Matarrese <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Please vote YES on sister city status for Wadi Foquin

Dear Mayor Spencer and Council Members:

My name is Paula Rainey and I urge you to vote YES on the Wadi Foquin sister city proposal that will come before the city council on December 5.

For more than 29 years I have been engaged in initiatives to help promote better understanding of the people and cultures of the Middle East. The Alameda Sister City efforts to promote cultural understanding and cooperation with cities around the world is a laudable project.

Many Palestinian Americans reside, work, and do business in our city. The conversations I have had with many of these individuals makes it clear to me that they would welcome having Alameda formally establish a sister city relationship with the village of Wadi Foquin. Many of these individuals have reported increased fear, especially since 9/11. Some have told me about incidents that they felt were meant to intimidate them from going about their daily lives.

Alameda is already a sanctuary city, which means that the city recognizes that all ethnicities are to be welcome and safe here. Forming a sister city relationship with Wadi Foquin can only serve

to promote better understanding of our Christian and Muslim Palestinian American neighbors, while at the same time helping to protect them from segregation, persecution and isolation. I firmly believe that knowledge is enlightenment. What an opportunity we have to learn about a people and a culture that is, in general, so poorly understood.

I sincerely hope that you will consider all the benefits the people of Alameda will enjoy if you vote YES for the Wadi Foquin sister city proposal.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Paula Rainey

Member of Wadi Foquin Sister City Committee

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:59 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Please support Wadi Foquin as a sister city

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:52 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Please support Wadi Foquin as a sister city

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
[\(510\) 747-4745](tel:5107474745)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Donna Khatib <djkhatib@sbcglobal.net>
Date: December 4, 2017 at 9:29:34 AM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, "<mvella@alamedaca.gov>" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>,"
<mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>" <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>,"
<fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>" <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>," <joddie@alamedaca.gov>"
<joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: "<michaelyoshi1@gmail.com>" <michaelyoshi1@gmail.com>
Subject: Please support Wadi Foquin as a sister city
Reply-To: Donna Khatib <djkhatib@sbcglobal.net>

Dear leaders of Alameda,

I am writing to encourage you to vote in favor of making Wadi Foquin a sister city with Alameda. Now more than ever I believe we should take any actions that supports strong connections and relationships based on cultural understanding and mutual cooperation. Endorsing Wadi Foquin as a Sister City will further efforts toward understanding a complicated story. Everyone has a story, and unless we understand these stories, we can not promote peace. The Middle East continues to be a center of conflict and tension - only by understanding all parties can we hope for resolution of these conflicts.

We moved to Alameda in 1984 and have lived there for over 30 years - we liked the small town atmosphere combined with a diversity of people from many economic, social and cultural backgrounds. Our two children went to Alameda public schools, and I believe benefitted strongly from the diversity and tolerant attitudes towards differences. Accepting Wadi Foquin as a sister city is in-line with this attitude of a tolerant, progressive city.

Over the past few years, we have had the pleasure to host Wadi Foquin Mayor Sokar and others in his delegation in our home when they visited in connections with events sponsored by the

Methodist community. We attended some of the events and heard Mayor Sokar tell his story. It was always of a peaceful nature, explaining the story of his community, supported by facts that can be verified from other sources. We also had the opportunity to hear in more detail the stories of Mayor Sokar and his delegation over meals in our home. As expected, their stories are similar to our own, we all just want to raise our families in safe, stable environments and have a means of supporting them.

Please vote in favor of Wadi Foquin as a sister city. Can there ever be harm from listening to the story of others and supporting relationships based on understanding and cooperation? I don't think so - we always need to be open to both sides of a story.

Thank you for considering this,

Donna Khatib

3121 Bayo Vista Avenue

Alameda

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:53 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Margarita Espiritu <marge.espiritu@gmail.com>
Date: December 4, 2017 at 2:37:24 AM PST
To: <TSpencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: <cynbonta@comcast.net>, <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

My name is Marge Espiritu and I am in support of the sister city proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing people to people relationships. Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. Do not let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in promoting global relationships and understanding.

Thank you.

Marge Espiritu

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City proposal with Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:53 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City proposal with Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Hans Kramer <hwk@hanskramer.net>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 10:38:04 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Sister City proposal with Wadi Foquin

My name is Hans Kramer and I am in support of the sister city proposal (on the December 5, 2017 agenda) between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing people to people relationships. Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. Do not let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in fostering global relationships and understanding.

Thank you,
Hans Kramer
1219 Walnut St.
Alameda, CA 94501

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Support for sister city proposal with Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:53 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Support for sister city proposal with Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: <nbalassi@aol.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 10:28:19 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: Support for sister city proposal with Wadi Foquin

To Mayor Spencer and members of the Alameda City Council:

I am writing to ask that you support the sister city proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing person-to-person relationships, and Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. I had the chance to meet some of them several years back and was so struck by their appreciation of the support they have received from Alameda. Please don't let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in fostering global relationships and understanding.

*Sincerely,
Nancy Balassi
2254 San Antonio Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501*

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: In Support of Sister City Proposal with Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:54 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: In Support of Sister City Proposal with Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Stephanie Pile <stephanielpile@gmail.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 8:31:08 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Michael Yoshii <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: In Support of Sister City Proposal with Wadi Foquin

Dear Mayor and City Council members,
My name is Stephanie Pile. I am an Alameda resident, and I am in support of the sister city proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing people to people relationships. Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. Do not let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in fostering global relationships and understanding.
Sincerely,
Stephanie Pile



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LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Letters needed re: Alameda sister city West Bank village of Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:55 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Letters needed re: Alameda sister city West Bank village of Wadi Foquin

Here's a letter in opposition, from a Piedmont resident.

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dan Fendel <dfendel@sfsu.edu>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 9:20:18 PM PST
To: "tspencer@alamedaca.gov" <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, "mvella@alamedaca.gov" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "joddie@alamedaca.gov" <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Letters needed re: Alameda sister city West Bank village of Wadi Foquin

Dear Alameda leaders,

I have become aware of an agenda item set for the Alameda City Council. I hope the Council will reject the proposal for a sister city arrangement with a West Bank village, being put forward by Reverend Michael Yoshii of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church.

This group has a strongly anti-Israel policy, supporting a complete boycott of Israel and endorsing groups which refuse to accept Israel in any form.

Action such as being proposed would exacerbate the problems of anti-semitism in Alameda, and I urge you to reject this proposal.

Sincerely,

Dan Fendel
Piedmont, CA

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:58 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Support for Wadi Foquin / Sister City

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:55 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Support for Wadi Foquin / Sister City

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steven C <drvagafu@yahoo.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 8:57:12 PM PST
To: "mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Support for Wadi Foquin / Sister City
Reply-To: Steven C <drvagafu@yahoo.com>

Dear Council Member Ashcraft-

My name is Steven Chen and I am a proud resident of Alameda.
I am writing to support the Sister City Proposal with the West Bank village of Wadi Foquin.
I was able to visit this village in 2011 and again this May with my family (including our almost 3 year old twins!).
It is my conviction that a sister city relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin will open important doors of understanding and engagement for both communities, and in its small way contribute towards a longed for peace in the region.
The sister city vision and mission is precisely to enable the formation of people to people relationships that move us towards understanding, break down walls of fear and assumptions, and contribute to genuine peace.
It is my great hope that our city council will support this unique and significant opportunity. My family and I fully support this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,
Steven Chen
1209 Sherman St.

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:57 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City Proposal

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:55 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Proposal

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
[\(510\) 747-4745](tel:5107474745)

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Marjorie W. Matthews" <revmarjorie@comcast.net>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 8:19:09 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzayashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>, <pastoremalee@gmail.com>, Bob Matthews <revbobmat@comcast.net>
Subject: Sister City Proposal

Dear Mayor Spencer and City Council Members Ashcraft, Matarrese, Oddie, and Vella:

I am writing in support of the sister city proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing people to people relationships. Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. Please do not let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in fostering global relationships and understanding.

In faith,

Rev. Marjorie Wilkes Matthews
1210 Ninth Street
Alameda, CA 94501

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:57 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Support Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:56 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Support Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Matthews Bob <revbobmat@comcast.net>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 8:12:57 PM PST
To: <mezzzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Yoshii Michael <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: Support Wadi Foquin

I urge you to support the sister city proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin. The sister city proposal is about establishing people to people relationships. Alameda has a unique opportunity to foster such relationships with the people of this wonderful village. Do not let politics or prejudices deter us from being a leader in fostering global relationships and understanding.

Please support the Wadi Foquin sister city proposal.

Rev. Bob Matthews
1210 9th St
Alameda CA 94501

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:57 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City Proposal - Rev. Michael Yoshi

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:56 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Proposal - Rev. Michael Yoshi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
[\(510\) 747-4745](tel:5107474745)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Gabrielle Dolphin <musyoka2004@gmail.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 7:49:54 PM PST
To: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, Frank Matarrese <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, Trish Spencer <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, Jim Oddie <joddie@alamedaca.gov>, Malia Vella <mvella@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: Sister City Proposal - Rev. Michael Yoshi

Dear Honorable Mayor and Council members:

In the spirit of Rick Steves, whose hand of friendship reaches across the globe as witnessed in his travel show, in this spirit I ask for your vote in support of the Sister City proposal brought before you by Rev. Yoshi.

This Sister City relationship won't have the scope and size other programs do, for Wadi Foquin's circumstances are meager indeed. But that does not mean the peaceful spirit of the program cannot and will not be fulfilled: offering the hand of friendship in a way that promotes peace through mutual respect and understanding - one individual, one community at a time.

As a Jew (non-practicing), offering the hand of friendship to the folks of Wadi Foquin does not translate to anti-Semitism. That is painful to hear and in my opinion, unnecessary. I share our community's concern over the rise of anti-Semitism and the need to be ever vigilant. I stand on the front lines in this fight. But let us weigh our words carefully. If you know Rev. Yoshi, and the community he represents, you know his request for Sister City status with Wadi Foquin has not a shred of anti-Semitism in it. The Sister City relationship with Wadi Fouquin is not in any way done to hammer away at the typical

divisive issues. This is simply to allow a representative portion of our citizens to reach out and befriend Wadi Foquin with your support and backing.

I humbly request you bring a particularly steady hand and even temper in your review of the proposal and, based on its merits, approve Rev. Yoshi's proposal for Sister City status with Wadi Foquin.

Thank you as always for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Gaby Dolphin

1009 Santa Clara

Alameda, CA 94501

510 846 8508

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:56 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Wadi Foquin

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:58 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Wadi Foquin

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
[\(510\) 747-4745](tel:5107474745)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Hee Won Kim <heewonkim23@gmail.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 6:09:27 PM PST
To: <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Michael Yoshii <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>, Derek Kim <dkcares@gmail.com>
Subject: Wadi Foquin

Hello Mayor Spencer and Council Members,

My name is Hee Won Kim and I am writing to you in support of a proposal to select Wadi Foquin as a sister city of Alameda. I learned about this small village in Palestine many years ago at the beginning of my residency in Alameda through the Buena Vista United Methodist Church.

It is important to me as a citizen, parent, and member of the community to be aware of the realities of every day life for people around the world and it is especially important to me to serve as an advocate for those whose voices have been hindered. The sister city relationship is a valuable source of increasing cultural understanding, political context, and most of all, our commonality and shared humanity.

There is an opportunity to develop a relationship between Alameda and this village and I urge you to vote in support of this proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Hee Won Kim

23 Oak Park Dr.
Alameda, CA 94502

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:56 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister City Proposal

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:58 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister City Proposal

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Patricia <patriciaandsharon@gmail.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 3:25:01 PM PST
To: <mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Sister City Proposal

Councilmember Ashcraft,

I am grateful for your service to the City of Alameda.

I support the Sister City proposal between the City of Alameda and the village of Wadi Foquin.

This proposal is about relationships; people to people, country to country. It's a very real expression of our global interdependence.

Alameda is in a position to foster such with the people of Wadi Foquin and to strengthen global relationships at just the right time.

My faith guides me in this support. We are all one in this community we call Earth and separateness from one another

is but an illusion. Relationships of mutuality and reciprocity WILL bring about a world of Peace, Justice and compassion.

I hope that we move forward with formally establishing a Sister City relationship with the people of Wadi Foquin.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Sister Patricia Nagle, IHM

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:56 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: sister city vote

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:59 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: sister city vote

In opposition.

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Maria Parker <mariamorningstarparker@yahoo.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 3:22:12 PM PST
To: "tspencer@alamedaca.gov" <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, "mvella@alamedaca.gov" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "mezzzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov" <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, "joddie@alamedaca.gov" <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: sister city vote
Reply-To: Maria Parker <mariamorningstarparker@yahoo.com>

I'd like to ask you to please postpone the Wadi Foqin sister city vote until the wider Jewish community has a chance to weigh in. As you know, the island has been plagued with anti-Semitism, and anti-Semitic vandalism. In the community at large, 2 other synagogues have been vandalized as well. While I appreciate the efforts of those writing in support of this resolution to moderate their tone and to avoid the hateful rhetoric that so often accompanies discussions of the Middle east, it hasn't escaped my notice that its the same people who push the Israel boycott that were involved in the drafting of this. I fear that if this passes, it will be used as a propaganda vehicle for Israel-bashing, and it will contribute to the uncomfortable climate the local Jewish community is experiencing today.

Thank you.

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:56 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Sister city issue

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 11:00 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Sister city issue

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Allen Bennett <allenbbennett@gmail.com>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 10:59:58 AM PST
To: Frank Matarrese <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, Malia Vella <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, Trish Herrera Spencer <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, Jim Oddie <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Sister city issue

Dear City Council Members,

I am the former rabbi of Temple Israel of Alameda, serving there from 1996 to 2012. During my tenure at the Temple, I led several interfaith tours to Israel in addition to taking some personal trips there as well. On one of my personal trips I had the opportunity to visit, tour, and learn extensively about Wadi Fuquin, the village in the Territories that is now a candidate for sister city status with Alameda. Rather than meeting with the Mayor on that trip, I was hosted by the sheikh of the village, the religious elder of the community, who walked me through the entire area, teaching me about the unique history of the village, from ancient times up to the (then) present moment.

It was there and then that I learned how challenging it had become to get the village's legendary produce to market in Israel proper. I had seen the remarkable quality of their produce and thought it was a shame for them to be unable to sell it profitably. As luck would have it, I happened to know the rabbi in the community immediately to the west of, and directly above, the village, and called her on the spot to ask if their community could become a market for the goods from Wadi Fuquin. Within hours they had set up a communication channel which enabled the two neighboring communities to have a regular farmers' market and for both communities to profit from the experience. That farmers' market continues to this day.

This village seems to be nothing special. But looks are deceiving. The residents here have been displaced/expelled at least once, if not twice, and have petitioned the Israeli government to be able to return to their homes and farmland. Despite the Israeli government's reluctance to re-admit them, in the end the government found no reason whatsoever that they should not be allowed to return to their homes, their land, and their lives. Although the land to which they returned was only 10% of the land they had left, they still came back happily and resumed farming.

These are farmers who have no particular political interest. Their interest, as they explained to me over and over again, is to be able to farm their land, sell their produce, educate their children, and live in peace.

While I do not see a great economic gain for the city of Alameda if you were to "adopt" Wadi Fuquin, what I do see is a recognition of the simple humanity of a group of people in that village who seek nothing more than to raise their families and live in their homes in peace. Their lives are not easy, and with the political situation unfolding around them, they are not sure what the future will hold for them. But I know for a certainty that they would be honored to be a sister city to a place that would acknowledge them and their humanity, would care about them, and would welcome cultural exchanges whenever possible. It seems to be a win-win situation.

I hope you will consider this letter of support favorably.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Allen B. Bennett

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:55 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: Support of Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 11:19 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Support of Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dan Wood <dan@gigliwood.com>
Date: December 4, 2017 at 11:17:55 AM PST
To: Trish spencer <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>, <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft" <mezzashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, Frank Matarrese <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, Jim Oddie <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Support of Wadi Foquin sister city proposal

Dear Mayor and City Council:

I would like to write in support of the proposal that Alameda become a sister city with the Village of Wadi Foquin in Palestine. From the <http://www.friendsofwadifoquin.com> website, it's clear that this village has had a special relationship with Alameda for a while now, and I would like to see that become official at the city level. In today's national political climate, I think it's important that we do what we can at the local level to foster personal connections across the world and across the cultural and political gaps that unfortunately seem to be widening in Washington.

Dan Wood
Alameda

--
Dan Wood

dan@gigliwood.com

Twitter: @dan94501 [local] @danwood [general]

LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/in/danwood94501>

* * * Support the Healthy California Act, SB 562 <http://healthyCA.org>

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jill Keimach
Sent: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:29 AM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: FW: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

Are you getting all these letters? Do you want me to forward them?

From: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 10:03 AM
To: Jill Keimach <JKeimach@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

fyi

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Councilmember, City of Alameda
(510) 747-4745

Begin forwarded message:

From: <cynbonta@comcast.net>
Date: December 3, 2017 at 9:02:25 AM PST
To: "Ashcraft, Marilyn" <MEzzyAshcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "Matarrese, Frank" <FMatarrese@alamedaca.gov>, "Oddie, James" <JOddie@alamedaca.gov>, "Spencer, Trish" <TSpencer@alamedaca.gov>, "Vella, Malia" <MVella@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Michael Yoshii <michaelyoshii1@gmail.com>
Subject: I support making Wadi Foquin an Alameda Sister City

Dear Mayor Trish Spencer, Vice Mayor Malia Vella and City Council Members, Ashcraft, Matarrese, and Oddie:

I am the proud Founding Chair of the Alameda-Dumaguete Sister City partnership and very thankful for the limitless opportunities and possibilities it has opened up for our city. I will always remember the steps that took two years - from confiding my wishes in 2013, to proposing, to courting, and to finally wed the sister city relationship in 2015 between my childhood home in the Philippines and my permanent family home in the U.S.

I am grateful for a global organization like Sister City International, created by U.S. President Eisenhower in the 50's who strongly and convincingly believed in ending wars and conflicts by bringing respect, understanding, and cooperation among peoples - the ordinary citizen, not kings, queens, presidents or governments. I am grateful for the individuals who were instrumental in organizing the Alameda Sister City Association: Jim Franz, Frank Matarrese, Michael Robles Wong, Stewart Chen, Mike Sorensen.

My attention in most of my adult life has been in bringing about peace and prosperity by striving for social justice. It has been most often adversarial in nature. The sister city concept appealed to me as a friendlier approach and a way to more quickly bring our youth and children in active participation. Our children have so much to teach us about love.

I was happy that a medical mission to Dumaguete was the first project Alameda was able to bring to our sister city. It was a pure service of love. What a first gesture of peace and love like no other. Alameda should be forever grateful to Alamedans: Cathy Nielsen and Dr. Maria Araceli de Guzman, for arranging to bring the Philippine Medical Society of Northern California Medical Mission to Dumaguete in 2017.

But the story does not end there. My grand daughter, Malaya Sumii (5th Grade), heard all my stories of miracles that involved babies and children and wanted to go on the next mission. She has been planning for a whole year now for the medical mission to the Philippines, saving up for cost of transportation, hotel, and food. She has set aside a bagful of stuffed animals for gifts. She was assigned to be mentored by a Dentist as she requested. and will be rotated to surgery, and others. She will be attending two days of classes at the same Elementary School I attended. This was her idea to be able to come back to her own class to talk about what was different as well as what was alike about school in Dumaguete. What her Alameda class can learn from the Dumaguete Class and what ideas she can share with the Dumaguete children. She also is offering her messenger services to our Penpal Exchange Project at Encinal 6th Grade to carry letters to Dumaguete.

Our Sister City program between Alameda and Jiangyin, Dumaguete, Yeong Dong, and now Wadi Foquin - and soon after, Varazze, Italy is to benefit our youth and our children to know what it is like to live in another country, in another culture. Our courageous attempts at building peace cannot be tainted with anything political. We will surely fail, in that case.

We have already established the ASCA Planning Team for our 2020 International Youth Peace Conference. It will gather high school youths from our sister cities to our city of Alameda to provide opportunities to practice respect, trust, openness, understanding, acceptance, cooperation. The youth from Wadi Foquin will have experiences to share that will enrich not only our Alameda youth but all our sister city youths. Alameda already has a large community of support for Wadi Foquin, by being a sister city, they are responding to the SCI call to U.S. cities to create sister city relationships with Palestine. Wadi Foquin's youth should also benefit from the experience of living in peace with other youths.

Please keep our youth and children in mind. They have so much to teach us about love and peace. We all need to learn how to be peacemakers especially in our present world of incessant conflicts.

Respectfully in Peace,

Cynthia Bonta

LARA WEISIGER

From: Trish Spencer
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 10:24 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Fwd: Fw: ASCA's recommendation (resend)
Attachments: image018.png; image020.png; image018.png; image011.png; image019.png; image012.png; image011.png; image010.png

From: Karen Fong
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 7:29 PM
Subject: Fw: ASCA's recommendation (resend)
To: Trish Spencer

Trish,

This is how we found out which sister city proposal would move forward.

Sincerely,
Karen Fong
510-821-1617

----- Forwarded Message -----

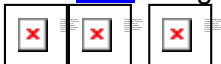
From: Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>
To: Karen Fong <karen.fong@sbcglobal.net>
Cc: Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>; DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Alex Chen <achen2@comcast.net>; Flor Ventanilla <fmventanilla@hotmail.com>; Mike Wong <bokjun@comcast.net>; Cynthia Bonta <cynbonta@comcast.net>; Susan Reyes <ssjreyes@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2017 8:52 AM
Subject: RE: ASCA's recommendation (resend)

We have decided to go with Wadi Foquin as the next Sister City. This is scheduled for the November 21st City Council meeting.

On another subject, Amanda will follow up with you regarding comments that we received from the City Manager's office on the Sister Cities Guidelines. The Guidelines report will be published today, so your expedited response would be appreciated.

Lois RP Butler
Economic Development Manager
City of Alameda
Community Development Department
Phone: 510-747-6894
Email: lbutler@alamedaca.gov

Click [here](#) to sign-up for business news from the island.



From: Lois Butler

Sent: Friday, September 15, 2017 4:02 PM

To: 'Karen Fong' <karen.fong@sbcglobal.net>

Cc: Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>; DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Alex Chen <achen2@comcast.net>; Flor Ventanilla <fmventanilla@hotmail.com>; Mike Wong <bokjun@comcast.net>; Cynthia Bonta <cynbonta@comcast.net>; Susan Reyes <ssjreyes@comcast.net>

Subject: RE: ASCA's recommendation (resend)

Thank you for the letter.

Lois RP Butler

Economic Development Manager

City of Alameda

Community Development Department

Phone: 510-747-6894

Email: lbutler@alamedaca.gov

Click [here](#) to sign-up for business news from the island.



From: Karen Fong [<mailto:karen.fong@sbcglobal.net>]

Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 10:36 PM

To: Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>

Cc: Amanda Gehrke <AGehrke@alamedaca.gov>; DEBBIE POTTER <DPOTTER@alamedaca.gov>; Alex Chen <achen2@comcast.net>; Flor Ventanilla <fmventanilla@hotmail.com>; Mike Wong <bokjun@comcast.net>; Cynthia Bonta <cynbonta@comcast.net>; Susan Reyes <ssjreyes@comcast.net>

Subject: ASCA's recommendation (resend)

Dear Lois,

Attached is the joint response from the ASCA Board of Directors to your request to provide direction on the next sister city to move forward.

We want to thank you for allowing ASCA to participate in the decision making process of the next sister city to go forward. As you know, ASCA functions as a federally recognized 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization established in 2009 and under the direction of Sister Cities International. These two governing bodies and our bylaws do not define any such participation that we have been afforded and we appreciate the opportunity to provide our input during this period of growth. However, we have found your request to select one sister city over another to be an area of contention on many levels that goes against our mission to bring communities together.

We hope that you understand and respect the position that the ASCA Board and respective committees have taken.

Sincerely,
Karen Fong
510-821-1617

LARA WEISIGER

From: Trish Spencer
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 10:23 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Fwd: Fw: ASCA's recommendation (resend)
Attachments: ASCA recommendation to City Staff page 1.pdf; ASCA recommendation to City Staff page 2.pdf

From: Karen Fong
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 7:33 PM
Subject: Fw: ASCA's recommendation (resend)
To: Trish Spencer

Hi Trish,

Below is the email and attachment that you were asking for.

Sincerely,
Karen Fong
510-821-1617

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Karen Fong <karen.fong@sbcglobal.net>
To: Lois Butler <lbutler@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Amanda Gehrke <agehrke@alamedaca.gov>; DEBBIE POTTER <dpotter@alamedaca.gov>; Alex Chen <achen2@comcast.net>; Flor Ventanilla <fmventanilla@hotmail.com>; Mike Wong <bokjun@comcast.net>; Cynthia Bonta <cynbonta@comcast.net>; Susan Reyes <ssjreyes@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 10:36 PM
Subject: ASCA's recommendation (resend)

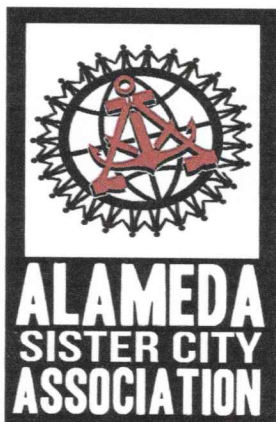
Dear Lois,

Attached is the joint response from the ASCA Board of Directors to your request to provide direction on the next sister city to move forward.

We want to thank you for allowing ASCA to participate in the decision making process of the next sister city to go forward. As you know, ASCA functions as a federally recognized 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization established in 2009 and under the direction of Sister Cities International. These two governing bodies and our bylaws do not define any such participation that we have been afforded and we appreciate the opportunity to provide our input during this period of growth. However, we have found your request to select one sister city over another to be an area of contention on many levels that goes against our mission to bring communities together.

We hope that you understand and respect the position that the ASCA Board and respective committees have taken.

Sincerely,
Karen Fong
510-821-1617



**ASCA
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

President:

Karen Fong

Vice President:

Cynthia Bonta

Treasurer:

Susan Reyes

Secretary:

Alex Chen

Members At-large:

Mike Robles Wong
Flor Ventanilla

Ex-Officio:

Mayor Trish Spencer

Media Correspondent:

Serena Chen

ASCA
P.O. 1293
Alameda, CA 94501

[www.alamedasistercity.
weebly.com](http://www.alamedasistercity.weebly.com)

**A tax exempt 501(c)3
Non-Profit
Organization**

September 13, 2017

Lois Butler, Economic Development Manager
Amanda Gehrke, Economic Development
Alameda City Hall
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Ms. Butler and Ms. Gehrke,

This is in response to your request for an opinion regarding the sequencing of the City Council's consideration for establishing Varazze and Wadi Foquin as Alameda sister cities. The ASCA board believes that it is the prerogative of the City to determine when and if such resolutions may be presented to and acted upon by the Council, but in the spirit of cooperation, we offer the following suggestions:

1. Simultaneously place one resolution to establish Varazze as a sister city AND place another resolution to establish Wadi Foquin as a sister city *on the same consent calendar before the end of 2017,*

and

2. On a multiple fiscal year(s) basis, dramatically extend the timeframes for the follow-up formalization process including preparing MOUs, MOAs, purchasing gifts and decor, planning delegation visits and implementing operational programs.

You have previously informed us that the City's interest in presenting one city at a time is necessitated by the limitations and/or the absence of funds available to accomplish the many steps associated with formalizing and celebrating each union. Our above referenced suggestion to greatly extend the timeframes for the execution of these formalization steps, will spread the cost to the City over more than one year, and allows ASCA time to fund-raise in order to meet our own as well as some portion of the City's funding challenges.

Inasmuch as we have tried to provide a constructive, practical and positive response to what we believe is a serious financial obstacle for the City and for ASCA as partners, we hope that the City can understand an equally challenging and long-term situation ASCA faces regarding your request to choose an order. The long-term health and success of our sister city relationships with Alameda, with ASCA, with members of our Alameda communities, and with each other is based upon respect, trust and mutual cooperation.

The internal discussion that we have had over the past several weeks and months in trying to determine which city and committee goes first,

has consumed a huge amount of time and has pitted ASCA members and committee members against one another. This competition is just the opposite of what we are striving to do, and we are determined not to normalize nor to make acceptable this manner of engagement with one another.

This discussion has also elicited, from both committees, that they have each invested a lot of time, effort and resources, developing and nurturing trust and a cooperative relationship with both prospective sister city mayors and council members. To push the initial vote for sister city hood back for either committee would be to lose the considerable energy and inertia that has been built up, and discourage a whole group of very active Alamedans that support and make up the affected committee, as well as the rest of us in ASCA.

We hope that you reconsider and put enabling resolutions recognizing both cities as sister cities on the same agenda.

Respectfully,

Board members of the Alameda Sister City Association



Karen Fong, President
Karen.fong@sbcglobal.net
(510) 821-1617



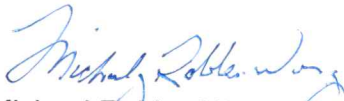
Cynthia Bonta, Vice President
cynbonta@comcast.net
(916) 952-6006



Alex Chen, Secretary
achen2@comcast.net
(510) 213-1622



Susan Reyes, Treasurer
ssjreyes@comcast.net
(510) 882-4536



Michael Robles-Wong, Board Member
bokjun@comcast.net
(510) 719-9107



Flor Ventanilla, Board Member
fmventanilla@hotmail.com
(510) 919-8894

LARA WEISIGER

From: Temple Israel President <president@templeisraelalameda.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 6:46 PM
To: Trish Spencer; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER
Cc: Rabbi Steven Chester at Temple Israel of Alameda; Board of Directors
Subject: Alameda City Council Tues. Dec. 5 Agenda Item: 6E. 2017-4867 Sister City MOU with Wadi Foquin

Dear Honorable Mayor Spencer, Councilmember Vella, Councilmember Oddie, Councilmember Matarrese, and Councilmember Ezzy Ashcraft,

As President of Temple Israel, I am writing you to convey our strong opposition to the City of Alameda granting sister city status to Wadi Foquin and urge you to vote no on this proposal.

On September 12, 2017, the Temple Israel Board of Directors voted in opposition of granting Sister City status to Wadi Foquin. This decision was made as we reviewed the chief proponent of the sister city proposal, Rev. Michael Yoshii, use of inflammatory language in the press of Israel being responsible for the “theft of 94% of their land” and the “strangling” of their economy, it is less about building bridges of understanding and more about giving Israel antagonizers another platform for their propaganda. His humanitarian efforts are laudable; however, his inflammatory political rhetoric ignores the historical realities that have made this conflict so long, difficult, and complex as it is contrary to the objective of building bridges of understanding and cooperation. The sister city initiative appears to be a political move versus building cultural and commercial ties as is the definition of being a “sister city”.

By all intents and purposes, a sister city has similar local and geographic characteristics. Two of the three current City of Alameda sister cities are coastal cities while the third is situated on an island with thriving populations and commerce from which Alameda can benefit culturally and commercially. When comparing Alameda and Wadi Foquin, there are no similar characteristics as they are situated in the desert, inland and is an small agrarian society.

In understanding the needs of Wadi Foquin, our former Rabbi Allen Bennett recently visited the village and provided his first-hand impressions. Yes, the villagers petitioned the Israeli government to return to their farmland to continue with their peaceful lives. The villagers accepted the fact that the Israeli government would provide them 10% of land to farm. Once settled and crops harvested, the villagers had problems getting their produce to market because of the “security checkpoints”. Rabbi Bennett was instrumental in arranging a regular farmers market for the villagers to market their produce. *Rabbi Bennett learned that the people of Wadi Foquin would like nothing more than to grow their crops, educate their children, and live in peace.* The villagers of Wadi Foquin have been pawns caught in the middle of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for decades. On the other hand, there are Israelis, too, who would like to live in peace and raise their children; however, Israelis are under constant vigilance with the real possibility that their families can be blown to bits by someone who was taught to hate Jews from an early age.

One point worth making is that the situation that exists in the Middle East is a complex one and it is not productive to vilify one side without a sincere attempt to understand the complexities that led to that point. That certainly doesn’t justify bad behavior on the part of the Israelis or the threat, and worse, inflicted on the Israelis from their neighbors. Most can agree that these people are neighbors and would benefit from finding a way to live in peace. We have no doubt that many Israelis and their neighbors would much prefer

open fields and roads between them rather than walls and security posts, but what has necessitated such security?

Additional points considered resulting in our opposition of this initiative:

- Although we are all in favor of progressive and economic relations with any community, Palestinian or otherwise, the position of the Buena Vista Methodist Church indicates an interest in a very one-sided platform, considering only the Palestinian propaganda of an unfair political fight.
- By creating this association only with a Palestinian city, advocating for the destruction of the only Jewish State in the world, Alameda sends a very one-sided and destructive message.
- Temple Israel of Alameda's board and congregation strongly advocates for sister city relationships with Palestinian, as well as with Israeli cities, without supporting the animus that exists between these two communities. This proposed relationship only advocates for half the story. As Alamedans, we must advocate for the truth, and not take up only one side of this political quagmire.

As a note, although Rabbi Brickner communicated his approval of a sister city relationship, he did so as an Alameda resident not as a representative of our congregation. His association with Temple Israel ended on June 30, 2017.

May I mention

, it was on August 18, 2017 when our whole Alameda community and our Mayor and Councilmembers stood together against hate after our synagogue was the target of a hate crime. Let's stand together on this issue at-hand, please.

In closing, we strongly recommend the City Council votes **no** on this initiative or pulls the agenda item from the consent calendar for further research and deeper discussion as there are very intricate complexities which need to be thoroughly vetted and understood. However, should the initiative pass, we strongly recommend that the City Council monitor the sister city activities extremely closely, so the relationship remains honorable; emphasizing positive moves to maintaining peace; for the villagers to accept diversity amongst all who live there; educate their children to accept diversity and embrace their Jewish/Israeli neighbors; and the relationship to exist NOT for political reasons that further divide the Israelis and Palestinians or bash Israel.

Respectfully,

--

Genevieve Pastor-Cohen

Board President

Temple Israel

3183 Mecartney Road

Alameda, CA 94502

(510) 522-9355

www.templeisraelalameda.org

William R. Delaney
1700 Dayton Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

TO: Mayor Spencer and Alameda City Council Members:

I was very pleased to hear that the small city of Wadi Foquin on the West Bank was approved and recommended by the Alameda Sister City Association. I have followed the efforts of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church over the past few years in helping them to survive the terrible actions they face by the Israeli government. Wadi Foquin can benefit from our support and our connections with them. They need help in many ways.

I believe that having a strong connection between Alameda and Wadi Foquin is in line with what Alameda stands for and believes in. Our city is about supporting those who face terrible circumstances from people who have greater resources and power. We help those who are less fortunate than we are.

We are a city that cares for others and we step forward when we view discrepancies between the haves and the have-nots.

Alameda would benefit by helping to offer insights to the world that Wadi Foquin lives in and gain insights to a community and country that we know very little about, but should. Our children must grow up knowing that they come from a city that cares and supports those who need it. Supporting a community that is so far away indicates that we think globally, as well as locally.

For the citizens of Wadi Foquin, being associated with Alameda, offers a wonderful connection to our state and our region. Their children will learn that America cares. That Americans care.

I do hope that you will vote to allow the city of Alameda and Wadi Foquin to become sister cities.

Sincerely,

Bill Delaney
1700 Dayton Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

LARA WEISIGER

From: Felice Zensius <felicez@ymail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 2:53 PM
To: Trish Spencer; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Alameda Sister City

To: Honorable Mayor Spencer and Councilmembers Vella, Ezzy Ashcraft, Matarrese and Oddie,

The issue of naming of Wadi Foquin, a Palestinian village in the West Bank, as a Sister City for Alameda is on your agenda Tuesday night December 5th. I wish you would remove this proposal for several reasons. I will keep it short as I know you have received several letters of opposition from others in the Temple Israel congregation.

1. The Board of our Congregation is opposed to this action and so are many individual members like myself.
2. No matter what, I believe choosing a Palestinian sister city to partner with Alameda will be divisive to many. We don't have an Israeli sister city so it looks like you are taking sides on a very hot issue. If you have to go in this direction at all, there are cities in Israel that are actively working toward Palestinian/Israeli peace and co-existence that would be much higher models for Alameda to choose.
3. Rabbi Brickner is wonderful in many ways but no longer can represent our Temple or Alameda's Jewish community, only himself.
4. Given the current anti-semitism running through our City and country, this issue can only further inflame the problem and doesn't do anything to further peace and cohesiveness in our City.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness regarding this difficult topic.

Felice and Wayne Zensius Members of Temple
Israel
Alameda

48 Sand Harbor Rd.

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jon_Spangler <jonswriter@att.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 03, 2017 12:43 AM
To: Trish Spencer; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER; Jill Keimach
Cc: michaelyoshii1@gmail.com; Paula Rainey
Subject: Item 6-E, December 5 City Council Meeting: I Support MOU to Establish Sister City Relationship with the Village of Wadi Foquin, Palestinian Territories

Dear Mayor Spencer, Vice Mayor Vella, and Council Members Ezzy-Ashcraft, Matarresse, and Oddie,

I urge you to approve the Memorandum of Understanding that would establish a Sister City relationship between the village of Wadi Foquin in Palestine and the City of Alameda. Our conflict-torn world needs more bridges and stronger global relationships between individuals and communities.

As an active and believing Christian, a supporter of international peace and improved relations between peoples, and as a person with many friends on both sides of the continuing conflict between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, it is my hope that this additional Sister City relationship will help bring peace and understanding a tiny bit closer to reality.

Please do not let fear or misunderstanding block this small but significant step towards a more peaceful and better-connected world with fewer conflicts, one community at a time.

Thank you for your heartfelt consideration in this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Jon Spangler

Writer/editor
Linda Hudson Writing
League Cycling Instructor #3175
Member, BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force

2060 Encinal Avenue
Apt B
Alameda, CA 94501

TEL 510-864-2144
CEL 510-846-5356
JonSwriter@att.net
www.LindaHudsonWriting.net
www.linkedin.com/in/jonmspangler

"Bicycling has done more to emancipate women than any one thing in the world. It gives her a feeling of self-reliance and independence the moment she takes her seat; and away she goes, the picture of untrammelled

womanhood."

— Susan B. Anthony

LARA WEISIGER

From: Jessica Lindsey <kookykitsch@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 02, 2017 9:51 PM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: concern about Wadi Foquin resolution

-----Original Message-----

From: Mel Waldorf <melrwaldorf@gmail.com>
To: tspencer <tspencer@alamedaca.gov>; mvella <mvella@alamedaca.gov>; mezzyashcraft <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>; fmatarrese <fmatarrese@alamedaca.gov>; joddie <joddie@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Jessica Lindsey <kookykitsch@aol.com>
Sent: Sat, Dec 2, 2017 2:03 am
Subject: concern about Wadi Foquin resolution

Dear Mayor Spencer, Vice Mayor Vella, Council Member Ashcraft, Council Member Matarrese, and Council Member Oddie,

My family and I just learned that the Alameda City Council will be considering a proposal to declare the West Bank village of Wadi Foquin a sister city. This proposal is being put forward by Reverend Michael Yoshii of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church has stated policies towards Israel, that while on the surface may seem to be based on social justice, have deeply problematic repercussions. Most notable is the demand that Israel withdraw to the 1948 ceasefire line, which would leave the holiest sites of the Jewish faith inaccessible to Jews, as they were during the Jordanian occupation of 1948 – 1967.

Reverend Yoshii himself is a former Co-Chair of the United Methodists for Kairos Response, a group active in the Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) movement, which the Anti-Defamation League recognizes as anti-Semitic. (see link below) Omar Barghouti, co-founder of the BDS movement, has said “No Palestinian will ever accept a Jewish state in Palestine.”

As much as the intent of Reverend Yoshii may be peace, the BDS movement is linked to increases in anti-Semitic incidents – an April 2017 study by the Amcha Initiative shows a direct correlation between BDS activities and increased incidents of anti-Semitism on US college campuses. (see link below)

There are already problems with anti-Semitism in Alameda, as seen with the vandalism of Temple Israel and the repeated anti-Semitic incidents in our schools. As you may remember, our daughter Natasha spoke to the city council in September about her struggles with anti-Semitism in our school district. She has been victim of multiple anti-Semitic threats, and subjected to other anti-Semitic incidents. In the past two weeks of school, Natasha has discovered multiple swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti. Today, on the walk home from school, she saw a swastika in the sidewalk near the corner of Encinal and Walnut.

Beyond that, it seems that this resolution is largely being pushed by Reverend Yoshii and the Buena Vista United Methodist Church. It is not appropriate for the city government to be acting on what is essentially the doctrine of a single Church.

This is an extremely controversial issue and the city council should not be taking a stance. We don't need another excuse for anti-Semitism in our city. I urge you, if only for the sake of our family, not to support this resolution.

Sincerely,
Mel Waldorf & Jessica Lindsey
Alameda, CA

The ADL explanation of the BDS movement:

<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/bds-the-global-campaign-to-delegitimize-israel>

Amcha Initiative report on BDS:

<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/bds-the-global-campaign-to-delegitimize-israel>

Natasha's City Council address, Sept 19, 2017

<https://youtu.be/LNP83FOOzuY>

LARA WEISIGER

From: Edward Kofman <leadingedgealameda@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, December 02, 2017 9:59 AM
To: Trish Spencer; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie
Cc: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Please vote NO on sister city status for Wadi Foquin

Dear Mayor Spencer, Vice Mayor Vella, Councilmembers Oddie, Matarrese and Ezzy Ashcraft,

I am writing to you to convey my strong opposition to the City of Alameda granting sister city status to Wadi Foquin and urge you to vote no on this proposal.

When I first heard of this proposal, I made the Temple Israel of Alameda board aware of it and asked them to take a position on it. Despite the fact that our former rabbi, Rabbi Brickner, wrote a letter in support of the proposal, I was pleased to learn the board representing the Temple community voted to oppose it. You will be getting a letter in opposition from them shortly. Rabbi Brickner was expressing his own personal opinion and certainly doesn't represent me in this regard nor many of the people in the community I have spoken to.

As a member of the American and Alameda Jewish communities I have had a keen interest in our hopes and prayers for the citizens of Israel and its neighbors to find a way to live in peace. Many Arabs and Jews want only to live a good life and raise their children in peace but the obstacles to peace are complex.

With the people of Israel surrounded by many neighbors that don't even acknowledge their right to exist and some even advocating for their extermination (again), that is hardly an environment conducive to living in harmony. If your neighbors set off bombs in public places like on busses and in restaurants, fire rockets from adjacent territories, teach their children hate, and even deny your right to exist, it is no wonder that such tension exists in the region.

One of my main concerns is that when the chief proponent of the sister city proposal, Rev. Michael Yoshi, uses inflammatory language in the press like Israel being responsible for the "theft of 94% of their land" and the "strangling" of their economy, it is less about building bridges of understanding and more about giving Israel bashers another platform for their propaganda. His humanitarian efforts are laudable, however, his inflammatory political rhetoric ignores the historical realities that have made this conflict so long and difficult and is contrary to the objective of building bridges of understanding and cooperation.

Rather than bringing people together at a time when our on society is already too divided, I suspect that if this action is approved, it will only exacerbate those feelings of division.

It is ironic that some of our political leaders that came together to support the Jewish community after some recent anti-Semitic attacks are now considering an action that is contrary to the interest of that community.

I urge you to vote NO on the proposal to make Wadi Foquin a sister city of Alameda.

Thank you for your consideration.

Edward Kofman

LARA WEISIGER

From: alhalameda@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, December 02, 2017 9:03 AM
To: tspenser@alamedaca.gov; Malia Vella; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Frank Matarrese; Jim Oddie; LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Sister city proposal with Wadi Foquin

Dear Mayor Spenser, Councilmember Vella, Councilmember Ashcraft, Councilmember Matarrese, Councilmember Oddie, and Clerk Weisiger:

It has come to my attention that you are considering a proposal for the City of Alameda to become a sister city to Wadi Foquin, in Palestine. I believe this proposal to be a mistake. By extending sister-city status to a Palestinian city, it appears that the government of the City of Alameda is making a political decision to support Palestine over Israel. While individually, as private citizens, you are all of course entitled to your own opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but as the city leaders, it should not seem to our citizens that one side is favored over the other by our government.

You are aware that anti-Semitism has been cropping up more frequently in our city, as well as in the rest of the country. Adopting a Palestinian city as a sister city is likely to further embolden the anti-Semites in our community. After the hate crime perpetrated at Temple Israel, the Jewish citizens of our city were heartened by the show of support from the rest of the community. Adopting as a sister city a municipality that is dedicated to eradicating Jews from the earth could be seen as a message to the Jewish community of Alameda that we are not welcome or wanted here.

Please consider carefully all the ramifications of this sister city proposal before making a decision. This is more than just exchanging certificates and perhaps making a visit to an exotic locale. There is a deeper message involved here.

Thank you,
Alison Harris

LARA WEISIGER

From: Philip Auerbach <philip@auerbach-intl.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 02, 2017 7:18 AM
To: LARA WEISIGER
Subject: Fwd: From the Middle East, opposing Wadi Foquin sister city resolution

Begin forwarded message:

From: Philip Auerbach <philip@auerbach-intl.com>
Subject: From the Middle East, opposing Wadi Foquin sister city resolution
Date: December 2, 2017 at 5:13:49 PM GMT+4
To: Trish Spencer <TSpencer@alamedaca.gov>, mvella@alamedaca.gov,
mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov, fmatarrrese@alamedaca.gov, joddie@alamedaca.gov
Cc: Genevieve Pastor Cohen <genevieve@qibits.com>, Rabbi Chester
<rabbi@templeisraelalameda.org>

Dear City Council,

Greetings from the Sultanate of Oman which I am visiting after a conference in the United Arab Emirates. Although I am Jewish, you can tell that I have no problem working or talking with Arabs per se. I have done so for over 40 years. Many Arabs, however, do have a problem with Jews and Israel as one can see every day by reading the local press articles in English. Most of what they write is based in fact but are usually half truths. One such article this past week spoke about the corruption of the Israeli government. While that was true, the same article conveniently neglected to mention that Israel is a society of laws where corrupt politicians have been jailed and that before criticizing others, Arab societies should ask what would happen if they raised the same charges against their own leaders.

My very open-minded and world-travelled tour driver today told me that when he was in school 20 years ago, the Omani curriculum taught him that Jews are money-grubbing leaches who shoot Arabs and are totally untrustworthy. And this in one of the world's more liberal Arab countries. He is unaware of what current Omani students are being taught. However, mountains of documentary evidence shows that the Palestinian public school curriculum follows similar trends. For example, a math problem would ask, "If our martyrs ambushed ten Israeli soldiers and killed seven, how many Zionist pigs would remain alive for future confrontations?"

As do many liberal Jews, I totally support an independent Palestinian state and abhor Israel's settlement policies and land grabs. I totally and personally empathize with Palestinian anger at the daily frustrations and humiliations many endure. However, after 50 years of occupation, two intifadas, and Israeli offers of a political resolution in 2000 and 2003 and beyond, the status quo remains. The issue ultimately becomes whether more of the same actions will generate a transformation or whether other, totally different alternatives can achieve the independence Palestinians seek.

Ultimately, the Palestinians focus on decades of injustices and Israelis focus on decades of insecurities. Both viewpoints are valid but a resolution can only start when both sides recognize the validity of the other's realities ... and change their behaviors.

I greatly applaud Buena Vista UMC's and Wadi Foquin's mutual efforts to improve that town's economic well-being. Those are critical steps to create prosperity and break the cycle. BUT no where does the resolution show Wadi Foquin's political actions.

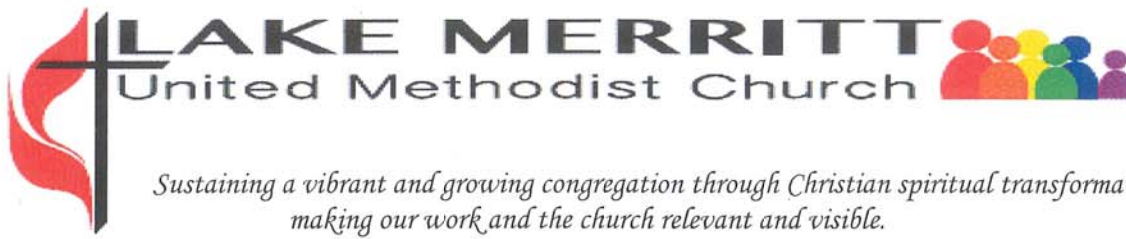
To bestow the gift of a sister-city relationship, the Alameda Council should first ask what visionary, moral leadership Wadi Foquin's city council has demonstrated. Is Wadi Foquin taking a transformational path as Gandhi would have done? Or are they simply perpetuating Arab half-truths, lies and Israel-bashing? Are the town's schools and newspapers a mouthpiece for continued negativity? Or do they foster mutual understanding? What courage and leadership has its council shown to demonstrate a positive way out of the impasse? Or is WF's council perpetuating the Palestinian party line? **If you do not know, it is best to table your decision until you can find out.**

In general, Muslims and Arabs want the rest of the world to understand them but they do not seek to understand the world. And in Arab societies, questioning can be dangerous. With Israel-Palestine, you are not dealing with a simple, uncharged relationship as with Korea and the Philippines. Nice ceremonies and people-to-people exchanges in this case show legitimacy, not dismay. If Alameda City Council is not going to postpone a decision or refuses to take additional, costly actions to help Wadi Foquin break its ingrained mindset, I suggest that you deny this relationship.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Philip Auerbach
2137 Otis Drive, apt 306
Alameda 94510



*Sustaining a vibrant and growing congregation through Christian spiritual transformation,
making our work and the church relevant and visible.*

November 27, 2017

Dear Mayor Spencer and Alameda City Council Members:

I write to you first as a resident of Alameda (Eugenia Ct.) and second as a clergy leader of Lake Merritt United Methodist Church. I am pleased and excited at the potential of the city of Alameda becoming a Sister City with Wadi Foquin in Palestine - West Bank, Israel.

I have long been engaged in building relationships with communities in other parts of the world. I joined a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with several other United Methodist members, including 3 members of my own congregation this past May organized by *Friends of Wadi Foquin* and *Buena Vista United Methodist Church*. I was deeply touched by the work and communal activities of Wadi Foquin villagers and others in the Holy Land to forge ahead with peace and justice relationships in this ancient region. I met several folks from Wadi Foquin, joined families and friends for home-cooked meals, and explanations of the ongoing work of the community. I witnessed the efforts of the community to build opportunities for education, independent economic growth and support for villagers, especially women and the children. I was inspired and encouraged by the desire of the citizens of Wadi Foquin to create space for people from around the world to stay in a community home to experience the ongoing life of Palestinian villagers. Wadi Foquin is a microcosm of a Palestinian village life and challenges.

This personal visit truly transformed my experience and understanding of the life and challenges of people living in this region where there is often misinformation and thusly misunderstanding of the both simple and complex communal relationships.

I believe a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Foquin forges the expansion of relationships between people and communities that foster clarity, hope, opportunity and inspiration, fulfilling the mission of Sister City International. It sets a wonderful example of citizen diplomacy first envisioned by President Eisenhower who himself saw much of the world through a different lens than is often presented through media and politics. I truly support the endeavor of building meaningful, open and honest community relationships with between our diverse communities. The more citizen engagement we have the more it encourages peaceful co-existence and reduces the opportunities for renewed or re-engaged conflicts.

I strongly support you as does my faith community, Mayor Spencer and Alameda City Council members, in affirming and building a Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin.

Shalom,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, Pastor

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, Pastor

1330 Lakeshore Avenue • Mailing & Office Address: 1255 First Avenue, Oakland, Ca 94606-2220
www.lakemerrittumc.org • Phone: 510-465-4793 • Fax: 510-465-6187 • office@lakemerrittumc.org

November 29, 2017

Mayor Trish Spencer and Alameda City Council
Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA

Alameda Sister City: Wadi Faquin

Honorable Mayor and City Council members,

I learned that the Council has under consideration a proposal to establish a Sister City relationship between Alameda and Wadi Faquin in the Palestinian Territories. In my personal capacity, I want to convey my support for the initiative, and my hope that the Council will approve the proposal.

My values and a basis of my support are influenced by my service with the United Nations for more than 30 years – including a six-month assignment in Gaza. This was followed since my retirement to Alameda 15 years ago by leadership responsibilities in the United Nations Association in the East Bay and in UNA-USA nationally.

I have been an advocate of efforts to promote international understanding and the development of links that foster enduring friendship and meaningful collaboration. This is important globally through the United Nations, at government levels, in commerce, as well as through academia, “citizen diplomacy” and non-governmental organizations. It’s also crucial that efforts are made locally, and that bridges are built for people of all generations to traverse. This of course includes the youth of Alameda whom, as future leaders and stakeholders, will hopefully contribute to make our community and the world better through peaceful, collaborative solutions to challenges and differences.

It’s praiseworthy that Alameda already has Sister City relationships.

With regard to Wadi Faquin becoming another Sister, I understand that leaders and residents of Wadi Faquin have already established cordial and informal relations with residents of Alameda. Moreover, it’s significant that this proposal receives the support of the Alameda Sister Cities Association as well as the endorsement of Sister Cities International. These are favorable foundations to build on.

Finally, it’s my hope that our Sister Cities Association and the City of Alameda will, when circumstances permit, proactively explore other Sister City prospects – perhaps in countries the Middle East as well as in other regions.

With respect,

Herb Behrstock
360 Channing Way
Alameda 94502
herb@behrstock.com
510-864-9005



Alameda City Council
Alameda, California 9450

November 12, 2017

Honorable Mayor and Members of the Alameda City Council,

My name is John Dabeet, I Serve on Sister Cities International Board of Director and I am also the Global Outreach Representative of Country Palestine on Sister Cities International, the national association of sister city programs representing over 560 U.S. communities with more than 2,300 partnerships in 150 countries. We were founded in 1956 by President Eisenhower to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation— one individual, one community at a time.

Sister Cities is a Peace Building Organization. I am sure that as a City, as individuals and as an organization, working toward building peace in our world is your priority, and what can be better than making Alameda-Wadi Foquin an official Sister City relationship to achieve that.

Every country in our world has its history - good and bad. The United States of America also has its own history. Throughout Sister Cities as a movement, citizens gain a sense of pride from being involved in solutions to global challenges by connecting with people from other cultures.

Muscatine, Iowa and Ramallah, Palestine signed a Sister Cities relationship in 2011 and since that date, both cities enjoyed several cultural and educational exchanges, also, Boulder-Nablu moved in that direction and made it happen. So we hope Alameda-Wadi Foquin moves in that direction and make it happen too.

The exchange of knowledge, culture, food, and every aspect of life will move both communities forward in a positive way as I have been seeing the same happening between Muscatine, Iowa and Ramallah, Palestine. I would like to offer my expertise and time with each one of you and want you to feel free to contact me any time if you have any questions.

Citizen Diplomacy is the concept that the individual has the right, even the responsibility, to help shape U.S. foreign relations, "one handshake at a time." So please let's start that handshake between the people of Alameda, California and the people of Wadi Foquin, Palestine. Each one of us can be Citizen Diplomats and help build a better future. Sister Cities work is NOT political by any mean and is based on people to people relationship.

I genuinely hope that the AlamedaCity Council will approve this relationship and take a courageous step towards promoting peace and understanding.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Dabeet". The signature is written in a cursive style.

John Dabeet
Sister Cities International Board Member
Global Outreach Representative of Country Palestine on Sister Cities International Board
Muscatine, Iowa Sister Cities President
563-554-1353
johndabeet@gmail.com

November 3, 2017

Dear Mayor Spencer and members of the Alameda City Council:

As a longtime Alamedan of Palestinian descent, I am delighted that Wadi Foquin has been approved and recommended by the Alameda Sister City Association. I am very supportive of this mission as I think such a partnership would be a great opportunity for both cities.

I believe that for Alameda, bridging our communities will be valuable as both a cultural and educational experience. In the spirit of the Sister City Association, I think it would be an honor to engage with and learn about another deserving community in a different part of the world.

For the citizens of Wadi Foquin, being associated with Alameda will not only give them access to educational opportunities and support that they may not otherwise have but also allow them to get to know the generous spirit of America, first hand.

Again, I'm very excited at the prospect of fostering a mutual respect and understanding for our two cities. Nurturing such goodwill will only enhance international citizen diplomacy for which we all strive.

I am proud of Alameda for considering Wadi Foquin as an Alameda Sister City and sincerely hope that the recommendation is approved.

Many thanks.

Respectfully yours,

Gina Jaber
700 Grand Street
Alameda, CA 94501

屋崙華人聯合衛理教會

www.chinesecommunityumc.org
321 Eighth Street • Oakland, CA 94607 • Ph: 510.452.1020



Oct. 19th, 2017

Dear Mayor Spencer, and members of the Alameda City Council -

I write to you first and foremost as a resident of Alameda to express my delight and excitement at the potential Sister City relationship you are considering with Wadi Foquin in Palestine.

I first visited Wadi Foquin as part of a Holy Land pilgrimage in 2011 organized by the Friends of Wadi Foquin and Buena Vista United Methodist Church. While there, we spent time at their community center, wandered through the village, ate a homecooked meal, and took in the ways that life in Wadi Foquin is truly a microcosm of life for Palestinians. It was transformative in so many ways, chief of which was enabling a much clearer understanding of a region of the world so often obscured by misunderstanding and misinformation. I was so inspired by what was happening in Wadi Foquin that when the opportunity arose, I committed to organizing another pilgrimage with members invited from 8 different churches, 3 of which are right here in Alameda. I returned to Wadi Foquin with my family - including my almost 3 year old twins - just this past May. This second trip was equally rewarding.

I believe a Sister City relationship with Wadi Foquin lives into the mission of Sister City International in the best way possible. It enables just the kind of "citizen diplomacy" that was first envisioned by President Eisenhower in that it creates an avenue for meaningful relationships with others that are perceived to be incredibly different from ourselves, steeped in misunderstanding, yet have such richness to offer. I have witnessed this "citizen diplomacy" already at work by those who have visited Wadi Foquin. It is exactly relationships with places like Wadi Foquin that build partnership "that would lessen the chance of new conflicts," the very hoped for outcome of President Eisenhower.

Thank you for considering Wadi Foquin as Alameda's newest Sister City relationship. My family and I fully support this.

Peace,

Rev. Emily Lin,
Lead Pastor

Home address: 1209 Sherman St., Alameda, CA 94501

Alameda City Council
2263 Santa Clara Ave
Alameda, CA 94501

October 24, 2017

Honorable members of the Alameda City Council

I write to support Reverend Michael Yoshi's intention, and the Alameda Sister City's endorsement, to formally establish the Wadi Faquin Sister City Committee and create a sustaining Alameda-Wadi Foquin Sister City relationship.

Reverend Yoshi first discussed this with me in February and a few weeks later arranged a Skype meeting with the Mayor of Wadi-Foquin and me. After our conversation with the Mayor I believe that such a relationship between our two cities will be good for us both. The intention is to build much needed bridges of understanding between our two cultures, provide opportunities for education and most important, it has the potential for creating meaningful relationships between two otherwise disparate peoples.

Reverend Yoshi's effort to bring this to fruition is to be applauded. The best way to show our appreciation is by granting this request and making our two cities "sisters".

Respectfully,
Rabbi Barnett J Brickner