

**MEMORANDUM**

**Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission  
Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. – Allison Conference Room (#225),  
401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana**

The Regular Session meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m.

**Commission members present in person:** Jason Michalek, Todd Mullins, Nejla Routsong, Tyler Shaffer, Jenna Buckner (arrived at 4:41)

**Commission members present over Zoom:** Kamala Brown-Sparks

**Commission members absent:** None

**Public present:**

Guest speakers: Aziza Khazzoom, Daniel Segal, Abdulkader Sinno

Public commenters: David Keppel, Hemayatullah Shahrani

**City staff present:** Ash Kulak

Also present were Councilmembers Isabel Piedmont-Smith and Courtney Daily

**I. ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS (4:35 p.m.)**

- Cm. Michalek moved and it was seconded to strike item II (election of second co-chair), items IV (A) through IV (C) (reports by co-chairs, individual members, and committees), item V (A) (budget request). Motion passed 5-0 (Buckner absent).

**II. ELECTION OF SECOND CO-CHAIR**

- Item stricken by earlier motion

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MEMORANDA/MINUTES (4:37 p.m.)**

**A. Regular Session Minutes – February 28, 2024**

i. Correct Name of Feb 28 Agenda Item in Minutes: “CAPS Letter in Support of BPAC’s Ceasefire Resolution”

- Cm. Routsong moved and it was seconded to approve the minutes from February 28, 2024, as corrected. Minutes approved 5-0 (Buckner absent).

**B. Possible Motion to Extend Meeting by 30 Minutes to 6:30 pm**

- Cm. Brown-Sparks moved and it was seconded to extend the meeting by thirty minutes to 6:30 p.m. Motion passed 5-0 (Buckner absent).

**IV. REPORTS (4:40 p.m.)**

- A. Co-Chairs – stricken by earlier motion
- B. Individual Members – stricken by earlier motion
- C. Committees – stricken by earlier motion

- D. Staff – staff liaison gave a brief report on the changed Commission membership and quorum and in-person numbers required to do business

V. OTHER BUSINESS (4:40 p.m.)

- A. Budget Requests – stricken by earlier motion
- B. Approval of Public Comment Procedures for This Meeting
  - Cm. Routsong requested to give a small report on this item. Cm. Routsong explained the rationale for a public comment policy at this meeting due to the recent “zoom bomb” at the Common Council meeting by online commenters who used slurs and hate speech. Cm. Routsong explained that city staff is working on the creation of a public comment form to verify that online speakers are actually city residents. Since that form could not be ready for this meeting, Cm. Routsong moved and it was seconded to only allow in-person public comments for this meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

VI. NEW BUSINESS (4:45 p.m.)

- A. Initial reading of “CAPS’ Statement on the IHRA’s Working Definition of Antisemitism” (4:45 p.m.)
  - Members of the CAPS Commission took turns reading the statement out loud
- B. Hearing remarks from CAPS’ invited guests as well as any public comments on the topic of the IHRA definition (4:58 p.m.)
  - Members of the CAPS Commission took turns reading a statement introducing guest speakers
  - Guest speakers presented on the IHRA definition of antisemitism
    - Aziza Khazzoom (5:07 p.m.) – compared IHRA definition with Jerusalem definition, noting where definitions agree and disagree especially on whether critiques of Israel are deemed antisemitic
    - Daniel A. Segal (5:25 p.m.) – explained difference between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, stating that opposing the Israeli state is anti-colonial and not anti-Jewish
    - Abdulkader Sinno (5:40 p.m.) – explained that the IHRA definition of antisemitism limits free speech by deeming all speech critical of Israel anti-Semitic
  - Questions from CAPS Commissioners (6:03 p.m.) – none
  - Public comment (6:03 p.m.)
    - David Keppel, speaking for Bloomington Peace Action Coalition – made comments on the Common Council’s resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza; the aid package Congress passed sending money to Israel, stating American citizens’ free speech rights are at stake; and further commending the CAPS Commission for its vigorous and articulate response to charges of antisemitism
    - Hemayatullah Shahrani – generally thanked CAPS Commission for its work in relation to calling for a ceasefire and standing against

genocide, stating that charges of antisemitism against CAPS for doing that work is hypocritical because attacks against Palestinians are motivated by racism and ethnic cleansing, generally applauding CAPS for its courage and sticking to its principles, also appreciated each presentation, made comments on Jerusalem definition of antisemitism and who can determine what is antisemitic

- Question from Cm. Routsong (6:15 p.m.)
  - Cm. Routsong asked Prof. Khazzoom to talk more about what the Jerusalem and IHRA definitions of antisemitism would have in common about what would be acceptable speech critical of Israel, including speech critical of Israel's policies.
  - Prof. Khazzoom answered that the Jerusalem definition is not clear and stated the idea of criticizing Israel is more complicated because it implies there is only one Israel when there are Israeli Jews who fit the whole spectrum on the conflict, so it is unclear which Israel is being criticized. The Jerusalem definition specifically mentions that Palestinians have many non-antisemitic reasons to criticize Israel but the question becomes how far do you extend that boundary?

C. Discuss and Vote on Statement (6:24 p.m.)

- Cm. Routsong moved and it was seconded to pass the CAPS Statement 2024-01 on the IHRA definition of Antisemitism. Motion passed 6-0.
- Cm. Routsong gave a brief statement about the specific task of the Commission and the work it is doing, thanking community members for their input.
- Cm. Buckner additionally thanked presenters and information shared.

VII. TOPIC SESSIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- None

Cm. Routsong moved and it was seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Memorandum prepared by:  
Ash Kulak, Staff