



CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: August 5, 2025

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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Interim City Manager
Responsible Department: Community Development
Subject: Annual Peace Wall Honorees

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RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Council approve the Peace Wall Honorees as nominated by the Sebastopol Living Peace Wall Selection Committee.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sebastopol Living Peace Wall began in 2015 and involves honoring selected individuals for their commitment towards peace. It is located on city property across from the Town Plaza, at the southeast corner of McKinley Avenue and Petaluma Avenue. Per Mr. Ghilotti, the founder of the Living Peace Wall, "In a nutshell, the purpose of the Living Peace Wall is to promote the cause of peace and justice by honoring the peacemakers among us. The item tonight is to review the nominees and approve their names to be inscribed on the Peace Wall.

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:

This item is a consent calendar item as there is no budget associated with this item, and this item is a routine item that comes before the City Council yearly. Mayor Zollman is a member of the Peace Wall steering committee and will recuse himself from voting on this consent calendar item. A separate vote will be required.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, a Selection Committee is convened to review and nominate individuals for inclusion on the Sebastopol Living Peace Wall. Because the Wall is located on public property, the City Council must formally approve the proposed honorees before their names can be inscribed.

Upon Council approval, the names will be engraved on the Living Peace Wall and listed on the official website: www.sebastopolivingpeacewall.com.

DISCUSSION:

The Sebastopol Living Peace Wall Selection Committee met on July 4, 2025 to consider nominations for the 2025 honorees. The committee members present were: Charles Prickett, Michael Gillotti, Stephen Zollman, and Alecia Sanchez.

After a thorough review and discussion, the committee selected the following four individuals for recognition:

1. Bob Alpern
2. Gerry Condon
3. David Hartsough
4. Alice Waco



Note: Bob Alpern and Gerry Condon were originally selected in 2024; however, due to the cancellation of last year's ceremony, they are included in this year's event.

Additional information about each honoree is included in the attached submittal. Upon approval by the City Council, their names will be added to the Peace Wall and published on the Peace Wall website.

STAFF (RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT) ANALYSIS:

City staff supports the recommendation of the Peace Wall Selection Committee. The Living Peace Wall serves as a symbolic and public affirmation of Sebastopol's values of peace, social justice, and community leadership. Honoring these individuals contributes to community cohesion and historical recognition of peace efforts both locally and globally.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

Support community events with city sponsorship and reduction of fees

Restoring public trust

Improve Public Communications

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date. The City has also used social media to promote and advertise the City Council Meeting Agenda Items.

As of the writing of this agenda item report, the City has not received public comment. If staff receives public comments following the publication and distribution of this agenda item report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting and will be posted to the city website.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no further fiscal impact associated with this item. The Living Peace Wall Committee covers all associated costs with the engraving and the City Council at their last City Council meeting, approved waiver of fees for the special event permit in the amount of \$450.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Council approve the Peace Wall Honorees as nominated by the Sebastopol Living Peace Wall Selection Committee.

OPTIONS: If the City Council does not approve the Peace Wall Honorees as submitted, the Council can:

1. Approve some but not all of the nominees, and provide direction to the committee as to whether to proceed with those approved or to provide further nominations; or
2. Decline to approve nominees, and provide direction to the Committee regarding nominations.

If the Council chooses to discuss Option Number 1 or 2 above, the item will need to be pulled from the consent calendar for discussion.

As noted earlier, if there is no request for Option 1 or 2 above; the item will remain on consent but will have a separate vote as Mayor Zollman will need to recuse himself from this item.



ATTACHMENTS:

Nominees Bios

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 7-22-2025

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 7-22-2025

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial): Approval Date: 7-22-2025

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: ☐ Yes ☐ No **XX N/A**

Account Code (f applicable) _____

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 7-22-2025

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 7-22-2025



BIOS:

1. Bob Alpern

After the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II, Bob came an active member of SANE, which was an advocate for banning nuclear testing and for nuclear disarmament. Later, during the Vietnam War, he joined Father Philip Berrigan and the Baltimore Interfaith Peace Mission opposing the war. From 1975 to 1995 he served as Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association Washington Office of Social Justice as a lobbyist to Congress. There he worked to normalize Israeli-Palestinian relations and advocated for Palestinian statehood. Finally, from 2014 to 2018, Bob participated in four non-violent direct actions at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to protest its nuclear research for developing new nuclear weapons.

2. Gerry Condon

While training as an Army Special Forces medic in 1968, Gerry refused orders to deploy to Vietnam and began speaking out against the war and the draft. He escaped from Fort Bragg N. Carolina and fled to Montreal, Canada. In 1969 he was court martialed and sentenced to 10 years of hard labor and a Dishonorable Discharge. He then fled to Stockholm, Sweden and, a few years later moved back to Canada. In 1977, Jimmy Carters first act as president was to pardon draft resisters. When Gerry returned to the U.S., he organized two Veterans for Peace delegations to Nicaragua opposing Reagan's support for the "Contras", who, at that point had killed 50,000 Nicaraguans. He later coordinated a Veteran's Peace Convoy to Nicaragua with 39 trucks of humanitarian aid. He became an active member of Veterans for Peace and served as President of Greater Seattle Veterans for Peace 2007-2009 and later served on the Board of Directors of Veterans for Peace, 2012-2020. His involvement in Veterans for Peace continues to this day.

3. David Hartsough

David was strongly influenced by his Quaker parents and his father's work with the American Friends Service Committee. At age 15 David met Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who became his hero and inspiration for a life of activism. In his 20's he participated in lunch counter sit-ins in the south and adopted a belief in the power of nonviolence to change peoples hearts and minds. Some of his many actions to promote peace and justice are: tried to block the aircraft carrier, USS America from departing for the Vietnam War; engaged in peace keeping Missions in Central America war ones in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua; led an interfaith delegation to Palestine and Israel. In his powerful book, Waging Peace, Global Adventures of a Lifelong Activist, he chronicles his life of activism and says, "We each need to ask ourselves, who is my family?" Who is my neighbor?" His activism is based on his belief that we are one human family.

4. Alice Waco

Alice Waco was an ex nun who dedicated her life to serving others. She was the co founder of the Peace and Justice Center in Santa Rosa and a continuous supporter of Friends of Cantera which supported education in Nicaragua, a tireless anti-war protester and advocate for all manner of human rights and nonviolence projects and much, much more. In 2003 she was on the front page of the PD for being arrested for blocking the intersection of College and Mendocino avenues in a protest against Iraq War. She was also a key player in the 1990 establishment of the sister city program between Santa Rosa and Cherkasy, Ukraine and was there in 1991 when Ukrainians voted for independence from the Soviet Union. She was also a founding member of the Living Peace Wall Selection Committee up until her passing in June, where she helped select worthy candidates to be honored on the Living Peace Wall. It seems only fitting that she herself be honored on the peace wall now!