


Agenda Report Reviewed by:
City Manager: 

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM

Meeting Date: April 4, 2023
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Approval of Annual Peace Wall Nominees
Recommendation: Accept the Nominees
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No _____ N/A
Net General Fund Cost: \$0

Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget (if applicable) AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:

The item tonight is for Council acceptance of the Annual Peace Wall Honorees.

BACKGROUND:

The Sebastopol Living Peace Wall is located on City property, at the southeast corner of McKinley Avenue and Petaluma Avenue. The Peace Wall is intended to honor efforts to promote peace.

As approved by the City Council, the persons proposed to be honored on the Peace Wall are required to be reviewed by the City Council, since the Wall is located on public property.

DISCUSSION:

The Sebastopol Living Peace Wall Selection Committee was convened on March 1, 2023. The committee members present were:

Michael Gillotti, Chairman, Richard Retecki Vice Chairman, Alice Waco from the Sonoma County Peace and Justice Center, Charles Prickett

After a thorough review and discussion of the nominees, the following four persons and an alternate were selected to be honored for the year 2023. Upon your approval their names will be inscribed onto the Living Peace Wall and added to the roll of honorees on the peace wall web site, www.sebastopolivingpeacewall.com.

Thank you for your consideration and for your support in promoting the cause of peace and justice by honoring those who have who dedicated their lives to this cause.

1. David Hartsough
2. Susan Chunco
3. David Harris
4. Norman Soloman
5. Alternate, Amy Goodman

GOALS:

This action supports the following City Council Goals and General Plan Actions:

Goal 8 – Enhance and Maintain the Economic Vitality of the City.

8.1 - Promote the City of Sebastopol as the destination for slow travel, eco-tourism and supporting of bike activities:

8.1.2 - Support a Vibrant, Attractive and Accessible Downtown That Attracts Residents and Visitors.

7.2.1 Incorporate the Small Town Character values into the City's land use policies.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report. Such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was 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.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Council accept the Annual Peace Wall Honorees.

Attachments:

Proposed Annual Peace Wall Nominees.

Biographies

1. David Hartsough

David was strongly influenced by his Quaker parents and his father's work with the American Friends Service Committee.

At the age of 15 David met Dr. Martin Luther King 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 American war zones 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.

2. Susan Chunco

Susan has served for several years on the Board of Directors of the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County and also as its Treasurer. She is currently active in the center as a volunteer where she has worked tirelessly, without public recognition, promoting and working for peace and justice both behind the scenes and more visibly.

She is an active advocate for Camp Michela, a homeless encampment in Santa Rosa, where residents lovingly refer to her as "Mommy." There she continues to assist the residents in many ways by using non-violent resolutions of conflicts both internally and with the City of Santa Rosa. She drives residents to doctor appointments and makes sure the camp has necessary supplies.

Beginning with her protesting against the Vietnam war in the 60's and 70's, she continues her activism with her involvement in the Coalition for Immigrant Rights Annual May Day rally along with the committee for Immigrant Rights (Comite VIDA).

3. David Harris

David was a major leader in founding The Resistance during the Vietnam War years. Through 1967 and 1968 The Resistance staged a series of public draft cards returns at which some ten thousand young men confronted the government with their refusal to be drafted and sent to Vietnam and courted arrest. He himself was ordered to report for military service in January 1968 and refused. As a result, he was arrested by the FBI, tried and served two years of a three year prison sentence. After his release, he spent the rest of his life living and teaching the peace of Nonviolent Civil Disobedience.

He was briefly married to Joan Baez and together they traveled throughout the country encouraging resistance to participating in the Vietnam war. He is featured in the 2020 film, The Boys Who Said No. He passed away in February 2023.

4. Norman Solomon

Norman Solomon is a lifelong fierce and fearless activist for peace and social justice. It started when he was just 14 years old when he picketed in protest of a segregated Maryland housing complex. That was just the beginning of his peace activist life.

In the 1980's, as a spokesperson for the **Alliance of Atomic Veterans**, he bravely traveled to the Soviet Union several times, where he participated in a sit-in in front of the US Embassy in Moscow, to demand that the United States join the Soviet Union in an agreement to halt nuclear weapons' tests. In 2002 he traveled in Iraq just prior to the US invasion, a trip that gave him a unique perspective on the impacts of that invasion just months later. In 2016 Norman traveled in Afghanistan to see first hand the effects of US military action in that country.

Norman has written and co-authored numerous books that directly address the subject of peace and social justice. Notable among those books are **War Made Easy**, which was made into a film starring Sean Penn, and **Made Love, Got War**, the story of His activism.

5. Alternate: Amy Goodman

Amy Goodman is the host of "Democracy Now", The War and Peace Report, an independent nationally broadcast television and radio program on the air since 1996.

She has personally traveled to conflict areas and war zones to report on the reality and horrors of war and has relentlessly promoted peace and justice through her investigative journalism and truth seeking. Being part of the Pacifica Network, a non-commercial, listener supported network, allows her to unearth the truth, no matter who it might offend and is now syndicated on over 1400 stations.

Among many other awards, in 2012 Amy received the Gandhi Peace Award for a "significant contribution to the promotion of enduring international peace".

She coauthored the best-selling books *The Exception to the Rule: Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media That Love Them* (2004); *Static: Government Liars, Media Cheerleaders, and the People Who Fight Back* (2006); *Standing Up to the Madness: Ordinary Heroes in Extraordinary Times* (2008); and *Democracy Now!: Twenty Years Covering the Movements Changing America* (2016).