

As you know, the City Council is on summer break and we will not be meeting until the end of August. Therefore, we cannot take action as the Council on any matters because any action of any kind requires a public meeting and discussion.

As always, individual CC members are free to express their own opinions about this issue.

When I received the news about the sermon I immediately reached out to leaders of both the Islamic Center and the Jewish community to understand the intent of the sermon and the harms that it has caused. I continue to be in touch with these leaders and understand that there are conversations taking place to address concerns raised. I support this dialogue.

I will not comment on the theological interpretations contained in the sermon nor the hermeneutical approach to the scriptures taken by the Imam because I do not understand them. I also recognize that, historically, debates about Israel and Palestine (the Middle East situation appearing to be the backdrop to this sermon) in this community have been extremely divisive and bitter. I am not prepared to enter into a debate about those issues.

I will say that over the past 6-8 months I have seen a great deal of fear and angst in both the Jewish and Muslim communities here. Acts of hate around the U.S. and in Davis have stoked that fear. In such an environment it behooves all of us to consider the impact of our words and actions and ask whether they lead to greater mutual understanding or greater fear and division.

Whether they were meant to hurt or not (or taken out of context or not), I believe the Imam must recognize that his words have caused harms in this community. We must ask what can be done to make the harms right.