

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:33 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette;Nicole Trifone
Subject: FW: Please do not cancel the Channukah celebration

From: Pesia Stempel <pesiastempel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:36 PM
To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Please do not cancel the Channukah celebration

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

I read in the social media that "Williamsburg, Virginia - 'LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony this year scheduled for December 10th, claiming it did not want to appear to chose sides in the Israel-Hamas conflict." Shirley Pierson Vermillion is who made this decision.

Canceling this event is an anti-Semitic act in support of the horrible Hamás terrorist attacks against civilians in Israel on Oct 7th. Cancelling it is taking a position in favor of the evil. The celebration of Hannukah only brings light to the world and must not be cancelled.

Please support the light, let it prevail over the darkness, and take any action intended to have the celebration of this important holiday taking place.

Thank you!

Pesia Stempel

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:33 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette;Nicole Trifone
Subject: FW: Visiting the area, will I be lynched?

From: danny f <ydf26@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:09 PM
To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Cc: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Visiting the area, will I be lynched?

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Hi,

I plan on visiting your city at some point in the next few months, but i read in the NY Post your city is attempting to be judenrein (<https://nypost.com/2023/12/04/news/virginia-jewish-group-slams-art-festival-over-hanukkah-lighting/>).

As i am Jewish, can you assure me that i will be safe and that i will not be banned, or worse lynched, as I celebrate Hanukah?

Danny

Christina Shelton

From: allan aprigalassociates.com <allan@aprigalassociates.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer; Pat Dent; Doug Pons; Barbara L. Ramsey; Caleb Rogers
Cc: vpdevelopment@cwf.org; jsolomon@cwf.org; krichardson@cwf.org; eedwards@cwf.org; shart@cwf.org; fjohnson@cwf.org; jwallace@cwf.org; kwolfe@cwf.org; ceo@cwf.org; president@cwf.org
Subject: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Good afternoon. I am writing to you because I just found out that the 2nd Sundays Arts and Music Festival have cancelled the Hanukkah celebration and the Jewish symbols have been removed from the holiday light displays.

As an American Jew, I am horrified that the festival and you by association would cancel all aspects of a Community celebration of ANY religion. You must understand that as an American Jew, I have no control or say in how the State of Israel responds to the horrific terrorist attack and continuing holding hostage innocent people.

Regardless of your personal opinion to what is or is not happening in the Middle East, you have no right to exclude us from the community.

My wife and I have been visiting Williamsburg at least annually (sometimes more) for the last 45 years. We always stay in Colonial Williamsburg and make annual donations to Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. We always considered Williamsburg to be our own "special place". Now, with these actions, I don't feel welcome there.

Your actions are contradictory to what this country was founded on. I am sure you understand that religion and government are two different things. However, by removing the celebration or by allowing it to be removed it can be perceived that you are perpetuating antisemitism.

To quote the United Jewish Community of the Northern Peninsula - "We should be very clear: it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively accountable for Israel's policies and actions, and to require a political litmus test for Jews' participation in community events that have nothing to do with Israel."

This war in Israel is not a "Jewish" war it is an Israeli war.

I welcome your response(s) and am happy for further discussion either by email or phone.

Thanks for taking the time.

Allan
Allan Prigal - Associate Broker
"Your Personal Real Estate Consultant for Life"
RE/MAX Realty Group
mobile 240-475-0660
office 301-258-7757

Selected Best by Washingtonian Magazine - 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

Christina Shelton

From: Molly Frank <mollyfrnk@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:13 PM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer;2ndsundayswb@gmail.com
Subject: Menorah lighting cancellation

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To the festival organizers and elected officials,

I am quite confused about the cancellation of the menorah lighting for the 2nd Sundays festival. What does a menorah lighting in Virginia have to do with a war in the Middle East? Why are American Jews being stripped of holiday traditions? The cancellation of anything Jewish in America is shocking "due to the war in Israel". Is the Jewish people's existence too uncomfortable at your festival?

It is concerning to cancel Jewish traditions due to a war in the Middle East. This conflation is dangerous and leads to antisemitism and hatred.

Molly F

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:40 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: LoveLight Placemaking Menorah Cancelling Menorah Lighting Ceremony

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

From: Sherry Heyman <srheyman@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 11:46 AM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: LoveLight Placemaking Menorah Cancelling Menorah Lighting Ceremony

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

I am disgusted by the cancellation of the menorah lighting on the public streets of your historic city. By your tacit approval of this decision you are depriving Jews of the area of their freedom of religion. Perhaps you should cancel Christmas too because moral Christians everywhere decry the brutality of the Palestinians/Hamas against Israel. Remember that 70% of the Palestinians voted in Hamas so you are deferring to murderers & rapists. Show some backbone!

Sherry Heyman
Beverly Hills, CA

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:39 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony

From: Deyanira Prastein <dprastein@me.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:31 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Re: LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Council members,

I am writing to express my disappointment in the decision to discriminate against a religious group, Jews. I came to America as a refugee and I grew up in Fairfax, VA. I felt welcomed and safe in this amazing country. Most of my family still lives in Virginia. I went to college and medical school in Virginia, and moved to other States for specialty training. After a decade, I finally came back home to live the DMV area. Please do not allow the bigotry of some people to tarnish the image of Williamsburg and the State of Virginia, the land that welcomed my family with open hearts and showed me the beauty and privilege of being an American.

Sincerely,
Deyanira Jerez Prastein

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:39 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Hanukkah lighting

Dustie McCay

Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Clerk of Council

dmccay@williamsburgva.gov
757-220-6101
401 Lafayette Street
Williamsburg, VA 23185



From: Leslie Young <leslieyoungla@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:26 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Hanukkah lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons and City Council,

I am very disturbed to learn that you have canceled the annual Hanukkah lighting ceremony. It is my understanding that Shirley Vermillion is responsible for this, And agreed only to allow it if the Jewish community called for a ceasefire in Israel's war against Hamas.

This is unacceptable. The Jewish community in Williamsburg has nothing to do with the war in the Middle East. Hanukkah is a Jewish tradition celebrated annually like Christmas. There should be no precondition to the community being able to have a lighting ceremony. This action is anti-Semitic.

My father was a graduate of Randolph Macon military Academy and I have visited Williamsburg all the way from California. He was a Jew very proud of his military schooling and later service in the U.S. Army as an officer. He loved his time in Williamsburg. This turn of events would disappoint him as his career in the public domain involved educating people about Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. See: Dr. Joseph Louis Young, artist.

I urge you to have the Hanukkah lighting ceremony as has been a tradition in Williamsburg.

Sincerely,

Leslie Young

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:38 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Not allowing public celebration of Hanukkah

From: Emily Braley <emilymbraley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:19 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Not allowing public celebration of Hanukkah

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi Williamsburg Council-

I am a Virginia Jew and I was shocked to see your local Jewish federation report that a menorah lighting was now allowed to proceed in your city without a banner for ceasefire. Surely this would be a ceasefire on Israel's part. Hamas is a terrorist organization that holds civilian infant captives and has publicly promised to commit more civilian atrocities.

Putting aside this nonsensical request, holding tidewater area Jews responsible for the actions of a foreign government is abhorrent. Do we cancel Christmas because there is a war between Ukraine and Russia ? Diwali because there is a border conflict in Kashmir? You are engaging in classic antisemitism. Every generation that seeks to harm Jews does so under the language of "justice" and it is always wrong.

While Jews are a tiny minority fighting against grave injustice, we hold onto hope. Hanukkah is the 2,000 year old celebration of our freedom to be Jews, and you will not take that from us.

Warmly,
Emily Braley
Proud Jew

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:36 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Hanukkah

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

From: Wigberto Santiago <wigsan56@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:34 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Hanukkah

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

It has come to my attention the Hanukkah menorah lighting is being canceled. Are the Christmas celebrations also cancelled ?

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Andrew Trivette
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:33 PM
To: City Council Group
Cc: Executive Team;Nicole Trifone;Sarah N Smith;Dustie McCay
Subject: Lovelight Decision - Email Response

Good Afternoon Everyone:

Lovelight Placemaking is scheduled to host Second Sundays this weekend. Apparently they received a request to also have the event be host to a local Hanukkah celebration, which they decided not to accept.

The decision has gotten a lot of local and national attention and many are confusing the decisions made by Lovelight Placemaking with the view, opinions, and decisions of the City of Williamsburg. The City was not consulted on the proposed Hanukkah celebration and had no role in the decisions made by Lovelight Placemaking.

To help respond to the emails, phone calls, and messages we have all received, we have prepared this message as a response. Feel free to use it for your responses as needed or you may choose to forward emails to citycouncil@williamsburgva.gov and we will respond.

Suggested Response:

Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

Our city is committed to our vision of One Williamsburg, where all people who live, work, and visit have the opportunity to thrive. Compassion and empathy are at the heart of our core values, and we remain dedicated to serving and engaging the community to achieve the One Williamsburg ideal.

Thanks,
Andrew Omer Trivette; AICP, ICMA-CM
City Manager
Williamsburg, Virginia
(757) 220-6106 Office

This email was sent from my mobile office so please pardon any typos.
Sent with Spark

Christina Shelton

From: Dov <goldman.dov@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 11:52 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: tips@pilotonline.com;news@roanoke.com
Subject: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items

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FYI - Based on the information from the Newsweek letter.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dov** <goldman.dov@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 11:03 AM
Subject: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items
To: <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>

Dear 2nd Sundays Williamsburg Organizers,

I am writing to express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the recent decision to cancel only the Jewish Chanukah items at the upcoming Art & Music Festivals. While I understand that event planning involves various considerations, I believe it is crucial to address the potential implications of such a decision.

It is disheartening to observe the cancellation of religious items associated with Chanukah, which, by its nature, is a festival of light, peace, and joy. These items have deep cultural and religious significance for the Jewish community and are not inherently tied to any geopolitical conflict. By singling out Chanukah items, you are contributing to antisemitism and fostering an atmosphere of discrimination. It is essential to uphold the principles of inclusivity and diversity that cultural events should represent.

In the words of Elie Wiesel, "Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil." Canceling Chanukah items sends a message of indifference to the concerns of the Jewish community and may continue to encourage more harmful stereotypes. We must remember the lessons of history and strive to build a society that celebrates our differences rather than fostering division.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and embrace an approach that truly reflects the spirit of inclusivity and understanding. By doing so, we contribute to a world where diversity is celebrated, and events like 2nd Sundays Williamsburg become true beacons of unity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will consider the broader implications of your decisions and work towards creating an environment that fosters inclusivity and acceptance.

Sincerely,

Dov Goldman

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:45 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Reinstate the Menorah lighting

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

From: Joanne Silberg <jrsilberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:10 AM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Reinstate the Menorah lighting

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Even the most obvious antisemites always insist that they're anti-Zionist, not anti-Jews. But canceling the menorah lighting to punish Williamsburg Jews for your personal feelings on a conflict between Israel and Hamas serves no purpose other than to punish Williamsburg Jews. And just to remind you, there was a humanitarian pause, and Hamas violated it. Several times. If you'd like to put blame somewhere, place it where it belongs - on Hamas.

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:43 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Menorah lighting

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

From: Colleen Ryan <tweety1566@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 6:39 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Menorah lighting

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Are you all just this stupid or all you all just this anti semitic? Guess where I won't be going on vacation? That's right, I wouldn't expose my kids to your bigotry to see a fake historical town. Maybe you could learn from history about how to treat others.

Merry CHRISTmas.
Sent from my iPad

Christina Shelton

From: City Council
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:42 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Barbara L. Ramsey;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: you need to reconsider the cancellation of the menorah lighting

From: Steve Shapiro <steve.shapiro31@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 9:53 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: you need to reconsider the cancellation of the menorah lighting

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In 1776 in Williamsburg, the Virginia Declaration of Rights was enacted. Among its provisions was the "free exercise of religion". Your city's decision to cancel the menorah lighting next Saturday is a shameful capitulation to misguided antisemitic reasoning and perceived threats. Equating the celebration of the Jewish holiday with the controversies related to the Hamas/Israeli conflict, shows poor judgement. I hope you reconsider your decision.

--
Steve Shapiro

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:23 AM
To: jackie@jackiealdridge.com
Subject: Re: Israel attempts to punish US citizens

Ms. Aldridge, good morning -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. I have read your email on this event's cancellation in full. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

Our city is committed to our vision of One Williamsburg, where all people who live, work, and visit have the opportunity to thrive. Compassion and empathy are at the heart of our core values, and we remain dedicated to serving and engaging the community to achieve the One Williamsburg ideal.

Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 5, 2023, at 8:33 AM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

From: Jackie Aldridge <jackie@jackiealdridge.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 6:53 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Israel attempts to punish US citizens

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Israel hires propagandists to harass and intimidate Americans in our own country. They try to cost people their jobs for daring to say something they don't want said. Or for not saying what Israel wants said.

Israel is a state, a government. They have attempted to get us to back Netanyahu's plans for war. Look up Likud, revisionist zionism and Greater Israel. Those are the beliefs of Netanyahu and his war cabinet.

Today it was noted that someone bet on a stock crash five days before the Hamas Massacre. The same kind of bets were made before COVID 19 and 9/11. Three thousand Hamas participants and no Israeli intelligence knowledge? I don't think so.

Yours,
Jackie Aldridge

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:21 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Re: Please do not cancel the Channukah celebration

Hello Pesia, good morning -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. I have read your email on this event's cancellation in full. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Canceling this event is an anti-Semitic act in support of the horrible Hamás terrorist attacks against civilians in Israel on Oct 7th. Cancelling it is taking a position in favor of the evil. The celebration of Hannukah only brings light to the world and must not be cancelled.

Please support the light, let it prevail over the darkness, and take any action intended to have the celebration of this important holiday taking place.

Thank you!

Pesia Stempel

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:20 AM
To: ydf26@hotmail.com
Subject: Re: Visiting the area, will I be lynched?

Mr. Danny, good morning -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. I have read your email on this event's cancellation in full. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

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Subject: Visiting the area, will I be lynched?

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Hi,

I plan on visiting your city at some point in the next few months, but i read in the NY Post your city is attempting to be judenrein (<https://nypost.com/2023/12/04/news/virginia-jewish-group-slams-art-festival-over-hanukkah-lighting/>).

As i am Jewish, can you assure me that i will be safe and that i will not be banned, or worse lynched, as I celebrate Hanukah?

Danny

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:47 PM
To: allan aprigalassociates.com
Subject: Re: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

Mr. Prigal, good evening -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. I have read your email on this event's cancellation in full. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

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With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 5:02 PM, allan [aprigalassociates.com](mailto:allan@aprigalassociates.com) <allan@aprigalassociates.com> wrote:

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Good afternoon. I am writing to you because I just found out that the 2nd Sundays Arts and Music Festival have cancelled the Hanukkah celebration and the Jewish symbols have been removed from the holiday light displays.

As an American Jew, I am horrified that the festival and you by association would cancel all aspects of a Community celebration of ANY religion. You must understand that as an American Jew, I have no control or say in how the State of Israel responds to the horrific terrorist attack and continuing holding hostage innocent people.

Regardless of your personal opinion to what is or is not happening in the Middle East, you have no right to exclude us from the community.

My wife and I have been visiting Williamsburg at least annually (sometimes more) for the last 45 years. We always stay in Colonial Williamsburg and make annual donations to Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. We always considered Williamsburg to be our own "special place". Now, with these actions, I don't feel welcome there.

Your actions are contradictory to what this country was founded on. I am sure you understand that religion and government are two different things. However, by removing the celebration or by allowing it to be removed it can be perceived that you are perpetuating antisemitism.

To quote the United Jewish Community of the Northern Peninsula - "We should be very clear: it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively accountable for Israel's policies and actions, and to require a political litmus test for Jews' participation in community events that have nothing to do with Israel."

This war in Israel is not a "Jewish" war it is an Israeli war.

I welcome your response(s) and am happy for further discussion either by email or phone.

Thanks for taking the time.

Allan

Allan Prigal - Associate Broker

"Your Personal Real Estate Consultant for Life"

RE/MAX Realty Group

mobile 240-475-0660

office 301-258-7757

Selected Best by Washingtonian Magazine - 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:14 PM
To: Robin Peters
Subject: Re: I am not alone.

Thanks for your thoughtful reply, Robin. I am hopeful the decision will be reversed as I recognize the celebration of Jewish holidays should not be seen as a political position, no matter where they happen in the world.

We will be in closer communication with the Lovelight company so that no group feels their beliefs are not welcome.

All the best,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 2:02 PM, Robin Peters <robinpeters1584@gmail.com> wrote:

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It is disturbing to see this Hanukkah celebration canceled in my district – everyone deserves to practice their religion freely without facing intolerance. I stand with the Williamsburg Jewish community, and I urge the event organizers to reverse course.



Rep. Rob Wittman (@RobWittman) on X
x.com

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:13 PM
To: Dov
Cc: Root, Kimberly
Subject: Re: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items

Thanks for your thoughtful reply, Mr. Goldman. I am hopeful the decision will be reversed as I recognize the celebration of Jewish holidays should not be seen as a political position, no matter where they happen in the world.

We will be in closer communication with the Lovelight company so that no group feels their beliefs are not welcome.

All the best,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 2:00 PM, Dov <goldman.dov@gmail.com> wrote:

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mr. Caleb,

I appreciate your prompt response and the effort you put into addressing community concerns. However, I remain troubled by the recent developments surrounding the Lovelight Placemaking event on Sunday, December 3.

While I understand that the City of Williamsburg claims no involvement in the organization's decision-making process, it is crucial to recognize that such events reflect upon the community as a whole. The decision to exclude only Jewish items and the bias in content selection will tarnish the image of Williamsburg.

As someone deeply invested in the well-being of the community, I urge you to consider the potential long-term impact on the city's reputation. In today's interconnected world, information lives forever on the internet, and any association with an event that appears to be anti-semitic could have lasting consequences.

I also acknowledge the city's commitment to the vision of One Williamsburg, where inclusivity and diversity are valued. Given the circumstances, it would be beneficial for the city to address this matter publicly, reinforcing its dedication to fostering a community that embraces all religious practices.

While I understand the city may not have an active role in Lovelight Placemaking's decisions, I believe it's essential to explore any connections, such as permits and requirements, that may indirectly tie the city to the event. This could help clarify the extent of the city's involvement and demonstrate a commitment to transparency. It can also put pressure on to remove continued anti-semitism at the event.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I hope that you will work to ensure Williamsburg continues to be a place where all individuals feel welcome and respected.

Sincerely,
Dov Goldman

On Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 1:47 PM Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:
Mr. Goldman, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

Our city is committed to our vision of One Williamsburg, where all people who live, work, and visit have the opportunity to thrive. Compassion and empathy are at the heart of our core values, and we remain dedicated to serving and engaging the community to achieve the One Williamsburg ideal.

Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 11:51 AM, Dov <goldman.dov@gmail.com> wrote:

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system --
DO NOT CLICK on **links** or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

FYI - Based on the information from the Newsweek letter.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dov** <goldman.dov@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 11:03 AM

Subject: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items

To: <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>

Dear 2nd Sundays Williamsburg Organizers,

I am writing to express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the recent decision to cancel only the Jewish Chanukah items at the upcoming Art & Music Festivals. While I understand that event planning involves various considerations, I believe it is crucial to address the potential implications of such a decision.

It is disheartening to observe the cancellation of religious items associated with Chanukah, which, by its nature, is a festival of light, peace, and joy. These items have deep cultural and religious significance for the Jewish community and are not inherently tied to any geopolitical conflict. By singling out Chanukah items, you are contributing to antisemitism and fostering an atmosphere of discrimination. It is

essential to uphold the principles of inclusivity and diversity that cultural events should represent.

In the words of Elie Wiesel, "Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil." Canceling Chanukah items sends a message of indifference to the concerns of the Jewish community and may continue to encourage more harmful stereotypes. We must remember the lessons of history and strive to build a society that celebrates our differences rather than fostering division.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and embrace an approach that truly reflects the spirit of inclusivity and understanding. By doing so, we contribute to a world where diversity is celebrated, and events like 2nd Sundays Williamsburg become true beacons of unity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will consider the broader implications of your decisions and work towards creating an environment that fosters inclusivity and acceptance.

Sincerely,

Dov Goldman

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:53 PM
To: srheyman@msn.com
Subject: Re: LoveLight Placemaking Menorah Cancelling Menorah Lighting Ceremony

Ms. Heyman, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

> On Dec 4, 2023, at 1:40 PM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Sherry Heyman <srheyman@msn.com>

> Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 11:46 AM

> To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>

> Subject: LoveLight Placemaking Menorah Cancelling Menorah Lighting Ceremony

>

> [NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

>

> I am disgusted by the cancellation of the menorah lighting on the public streets of your historic city. By your tacit approval of this decision you are depriving Jews of the area of their freedom of religion. Perhaps you should cancel Christmas too because moral Christians everywhere decry the brutality of the Palestinians/Hamas against Israel. Remember that 70% of the Palestinians voted in Hamas so you are deferring to murderers & rapists. Show some backbone!

>

> Sherry Heyman

> Beverly Hills, CA

>

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:52 PM
To: dprastein@me.com
Subject: Re: LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony

Deyanira, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

> On Dec 4, 2023, at 1:39 PM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

>

> From: Deyanira Prastein <dprastein@me.com>

> Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:31 PM

> To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>

> Subject: Re: LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony

>

> [NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

>

> Council members,

>

> I am writing to express my disappointment in the decision to discriminate against a religious group, Jews. I came to America as a refugee and I grew up in Fairfax, VA. I felt welcomed and safe in this amazing country. Most of my family still lives in Virginia. I went to college and medical school in Virginia, and moved to other States for specialty training. After a decade, I finally came back home to live the DMV area. Please do not allow the bigotry of some people to tarnish the image of Williamsburg and the State of Virginia, the land that welcomed my family with open hearts and showed me the beauty and privilege of being an American.

>

> Sincerely,

> Deyanira Jerez Prastein

>

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:51 PM
To: leslieyoungla@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Hanukkah lighting

Ms. Young, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 1:38 PM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

<image001.png>

From: Leslie Young <leslieyoungla@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:26 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Hanukkah lighting

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons and City Council,

I am very disturbed to learn that you have canceled the annual Hanukkah lighting ceremony. It is my understanding that Shirley Vermillion is responsible for this, And agreed only to allow it if the Jewish community called for a ceasefire in Israel's war against Hamas.

This is unacceptable. The Jewish community in Williamsburg has nothing to do with the war in the Middle East. Hanukkah is a Jewish tradition celebrated annually like Christmas. There should be no precondition to the community being able to have a lighting ceremony. This action is anti-Semitic.

My father was a graduate of Randolph Macon military Academy and I have visited Williamsburg all the way from California. He was a Jew very proud of his military schooling and later service in the U.S. Army as an officer. He loved his time in Williamsburg. This turn of events would disappoint him as his career in the public domain involved educating people about Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. See: Dr. Joseph Louis Young, artist.

I urge you to have the Hanukkah lighting ceremony as has been a tradition in Williamsburg.

Sincerely,

Leslie Young

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:50 PM
To: emilymbraley@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Not allowing public celebration of Hanukkah

Ms. Braley, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 1:37 PM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

From: Emily Braley <emilymbraley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:19 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Not allowing public celebration of Hanukkah

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi Williamsburg Council-

I am a Virginia Jew and I was shocked to see your local Jewish federation report that a menorah lighting was now allowed to proceed in your city without a banner for ceasefire. Surely this would be a ceasefire on Israel's part. Hamas is a terrorist organization that holds civilian infant captives and has publicly promised to commit more civilian atrocities.

Putting aside this nonsensical request, holding tidewater area Jews responsible for the actions of a foreign government is abhorrent. Do we cancel Christmas because there is a war between Ukraine and Russia? Diwali because there is a border conflict in Kashmir? You are engaging in classic antisemitism. Every generation that seeks to harm Jews does so under the language of "justice" and it is always wrong.

While Jews are a tiny minority fighting against grave injustice, we hold onto hope. Hanukkah is the 2,000 year old celebration of our freedom to be Jews, and you will not take that from us.

Warmly,
Emily Braley
Proud Jew

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:48 PM
To: wigsan56@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Hanukkah

Wigberto, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

> On Dec 4, 2023, at 1:35 PM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Wigberto Santiago <wigsan56@gmail.com>

> Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:34 PM

> To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>

> Subject: Hanukkah

>

> [NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

>

> It has come to my attention the Hanukkah menorah lighting is being canceled. Are the Christmas celebrations also cancelled ?

> Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:47 PM
To: Dov
Subject: Re: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items

Mr. Goldman, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 11:51 AM, Dov <goldman.dov@gmail.com> wrote:

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FYI - Based on the information from the Newsweek letter.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dov** <goldman.dov@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Dec 4, 2023 at 11:03 AM
Subject: Concerns Regarding Cancellation of Jewish Chanukah Items
To: <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>

Dear 2nd Sundays Williamsburg Organizers,

I am writing to express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the recent decision to cancel only the Jewish Chanukah items at the upcoming Art & Music Festivals. While I understand that event planning involves various considerations, I believe it is crucial to address the potential implications of such a decision.

It is disheartening to observe the cancellation of religious items associated with Chanukah, which, by its nature, is a festival of light, peace, and joy. These items have deep cultural and religious significance for

the Jewish community and are not inherently tied to any geopolitical conflict. By singling out Chanukah items, you are contributing to antisemitism and fostering an atmosphere of discrimination. It is essential to uphold the principles of inclusivity and diversity that cultural events should represent.

In the words of Elie Wiesel, "Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil." Canceling Chanukah items sends a message of indifference to the concerns of the Jewish community and may continue to encourage more harmful stereotypes. We must remember the lessons of history and strive to build a society that celebrates our differences rather than fostering division.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and embrace an approach that truly reflects the spirit of inclusivity and understanding. By doing so, we contribute to a world where diversity is celebrated, and events like 2nd Sundays Williamsburg become true beacons of unity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will consider the broader implications of your decisions and work towards creating an environment that fosters inclusivity and acceptance.

Sincerely,

Dov Goldman

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:47 PM
To: jrsilberg@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Reinstate the Menorah lighting

Ms. Silberg, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

> On Dec 4, 2023, at 9:44 AM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Joanne Silberg <jrsilberg@gmail.com>

> Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:10 AM

> To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>

> Subject: Reinstate the Menorah lighting

>

> [NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

>

> Even the most obvious antisemites always insist that they're anti-Zionist, not anti-Jews. But canceling the menorah lighting to punish Williamsburg Jews for your personal feelings on a conflict between Israel and Hamas serves no purpose other than to punish Williamsburg Jews. And just to remind you, there was a humanitarian pause, and Hamas violated it. Several times. If you'd like to put blame somewhere, place it where it belongs - on Hamas.

>

Christina Shelton

From: Caleb Rogers
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:46 PM
To: steve.shapiro31@gmail.com
Subject: Re: you need to reconsider the cancellation of the menorah lighting

Mr. Shapiro, good afternoon -

I first want to thank you for reaching out to Williamsburg's City Council. Whether you are a resident or concerned citizen of the country, I appreciate your engagement on our acceptance of religious practices locally.

After looking more into this issue this morning, I wanted to let you know what I learned. Sunday, December 3 we became aware that a community organization made a decision regarding the content of its planned event. Lovelight Placemaking's decision was theirs alone. The City of Williamsburg has no role in curating the artists, vendors, or participants of 2nd Sundays.

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Thank you again for being in touch. I hope you have a restful end to the year.

With gratitude,
Caleb

On Dec 4, 2023, at 9:41 AM, City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:

From: Steve Shapiro <steve.shapiro31@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 9:53 PM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: you need to reconsider the cancellation of the menorah lighting

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

In 1776 in Williamsburg, the Virginia Declaration of Rights was enacted. Among its provisions was the "free exercise of religion". Your city's decision to cancel the menorah lighting next Saturday is a shameful capitulation to misguided antisemitic reasoning and perceived threats. Equating the celebration of the Jewish holiday with the controversies related

to the Hamas/Israeli conflict, shows poor judgement. I hope you reconsider your decision.

--

Steve Shapiro

Christina Shelton

From: Sean Dunn
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:29 PM
To: Shirley Vermillion
Cc: Andrew Trivette; Larry Snyder; Michele DeWitt; Ashley Nichols; Casey Butler; Doug Pons
Subject: RE: We will be canceling 2nd Sundays for December 10 due to an extremely wet & windy weather forecast but I have not let the Artist know yet. Just wanted to give you all a heads up .

Thanks for the notice, Shirley.

Best,

Sean L. Dunn
Chief of Police
City of Williamsburg
425 Armistead Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Office (757) 259-7201

From: Shirley Vermillion <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:22 PM
To: Andrew Trivette <ATrivette@williamsburgva.gov>; Casey Butler <wcpb757@gmail.com>; Larry Snyder <LSnyder@williamsburgva.gov>; Michele DeWitt <MDeWitt@williamsburgva.gov>; Sean Dunn <sdunn@williamsburgva.gov>; Ashley Nichols <ANichols@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: We will be canceling 2nd Sundays for December 10 due to an extremely wet & windy weather forecast but I have not let the Artist know yet. Just wanted to give you all a heads up .

I will be emailing the artists tonight or in the morning. I know you don't do a public announcement- I am working on a letter with some professionals.

Doug & I spent several hours on Tues (Doug called & Rabbi invited him over - stayed for 3 hours or so then we both went over after I got off work & stayed for another 2-3 hrs- they insisted on feeding us dinner) at Rabbi Mendy & Esther's house - they love 2nd Sundays & are devastated at how things went down. We'll see ... hoping the love can repopulate where hate ran rampant.

Sincerely,
Shirley Vermillion

Christina Shelton

From: Nova <novacrystalcat@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:38 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah celebrations

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

I'm deeply disappointed to see that the Hanukkah celebration has been cancelled. I myself do not support Israel or it's actions (although sadly many Jews do) and am Jewish. Hanukkah is a story about resistance against oppression (the story of the Maccabees) and of hope and commitment to G-d (the miracle of the oil). Antisemitism is also rising heavily during this time, and part of the reason the Jewish people has survived is because our holidays regularly remind us that our people have been through persecution but have found ways to survive. There are more Zionist Christians than Jews in the world, and Christians have put far more money into funding Israel. But Christmas celebrations were not cancelled. This is discrimination. I know this email may be disregarded since I don't live in Williamsburg, but this hasn't just affected the local Jewish community. It's also something that is being discussed by Jews around the world. I've wanted to go to Colonial Williamsburg since I first heard about it, but I'm starting to think that will happen no time soon as I worry for my safety, when you, the mayor hold some obvious bias towards Jewish people. I'm not saying to cancel Christmas celebrations to make it equal (after all I want all religions to be able to publicly celebrate their religious holidays) and I know it's probably far too late to bring back the Hanukkah celebration, but please take some time to educate yourself on antisemitism and unlearn your subconscious biases. I also encourage connecting to the local Jewish community and work of plans for one of the more religiously important Jewish holidays such as Passover, Yom Kippur, or Rosh Hashanah.

Happy holidays.

Sincerely,
Nova Brannigan

Christina Shelton

From: Shirley Vermillion <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:22 PM
To: Andrew Trivette; Casey Butler; Larry Snyder; Michele DeWitt; Sean Dunn; Ashley Nichols; Doug Pons
Subject: We will be canceling 2nd Sundays for December 10 due to an extremely wet & windy weather forecast but I have not let the Artist know yet. Just wanted to give you all a heads up .

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I will be emailing the artists tonight or in the morning. I know you don't do a public announcement-
I am working on a letter with some professionals.

Doug & I spent several hours on Tues (Doug called & Rabbi invited him over - stayed for 3 hours or so then we both went over after I got off work & stayed for another 2-3 hrs- they insisted on feeding us dinner) at Rabbi Mendy & Esther's house - they love 2nd Sundays & are devastated at how things went down. We'll see ... hoping the love can repopulate where hate ran rampant.

Sincerely,
Shirley Vermillion

Christina Shelton

From: Dustie McCay
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:20 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Menorah Illumination Day Proclamation and Pronunciations
Attachments: Menorah Illumination Day 2023.docx

Doug,

I have attached the draft proclamation and Michele will bring the final copy this afternoon for your signature. Below is a message from Nicole to you.

Hello,

Below are some pronunciations that might be helpful as you read the proclamation tonight. I've spelled them out but also linked to places where you can hear them being pronounced. I may be overdoing it on this list, but I figured I'd try to cover all bases just in case you were unsure about anything.

Chanukah = haa-nuh-kuh

Maccabees = ma-kuh-beez

Chabad = huh-baad

Lubavitch = loo-buh-vitch

Rebbe = reh-buh

Menachem Schneerson = Meh-nah-chem Shneerson

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,



Nicole Trifone
Communications Director
City of Williamsburg
Office 757-220-6197
Cell 757-707-0478

Dustie McCay

Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Clerk of Council

dmccay@williamsburgva.gov
757-220-6101
401 Lafayette Street
Williamsburg, VA 23185



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Chanukah celebrates the victory in the year 165 BCE of a small yet determined army of Maccabees against their Syrian-Greek oppressors, and Chanukah has come to represent the victory of right over might, light over darkness, and freedom over oppression; and

WHEREAS, Chanukah, known as the Festival of Lights, is among the most widely celebrated of the Jewish holidays and is a time for joyous family gatherings and the kindling of the Menorah; and

WHEREAS, the central tenet of Chanukah is to publicize and celebrate the miracle that occurred over 2,000 years ago in the Maccabees' heroic battle to preserve their religious liberty; and

WHEREAS, the message of Chanukah resonates powerfully with the fundamental values of American life and culture and the great principles of equality and religious freedom upon which was founded this great nation; and

WHEREAS, this year's celebration comes as so many will be isolated at home amid these difficult times and with the recognition of the crucial need for a message of hope and healing, and

WHEREAS, centers of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement in the Virginia Commonwealth have initiated a series of safe events, as a part of the worldwide Chanukah campaign launched in 1973 by the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory to highlight the enduring message of Chanukah and its message of religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, events in the City of Williamsburg occur during the Chanukah festival, coinciding this year from December 7-14, 2023.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Douglas G. Pons, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the City of Williamsburg, do hereby proclaim December 7th, 2023 as

Menorah Illumination Day

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Williamsburg, Virginia, to be affixed, this Seventh day of December, Two Thousand and Twenty-Three.

Douglas G. Pons, Mayor

Christina Shelton

From: Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:51 AM
To: Doug Pons;Dustie McCay
Subject: Re: Invite to Menorah Lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mr. Mayor Doug Pons, and copied Dustie McCay,

Thanks for calling me this morning, and we look forward to having you this evening at the menorah lighting.

Here is a proposed proclamation, This would give tremendous Support to our Jewish community here in Williamsburg during the event and these difficult time.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Rabbi Mendy Heber
Chabad Williamsburg VA
757-929-4999

WHEREAS, Chanukah celebrates the victory in the year 165 BCE of a small yet determined army of Maccabees against their Syrian-Greek oppressors, and Chanukah has come to represent the victory of right over might, light over darkness, and freedom over oppression; and

WHEREAS, Chanukah, known as the Festival of Lights, is among the most widely celebrated of the Jewish holidays and is a time for joyous family gatherings and the kindling of the Menorah; and

WHEREAS, the central tenet of Chanukah is to publicize and celebrate the miracle which occurred over 2,000 years ago in the Maccabees' heroic battle to preserve their religious liberty; and

WHEREAS, the message of Chanukah resonates powerfully with the fundamental values of American life and culture, and the great principles of equality and religious freedom upon which was founded this great nation; and

WHEREAS, this year's celebration comes as so many will be isolated at home amid these difficult times and with the recognition of the crucial need for a message of hope and healing, and

WHEREAS, centers of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement in the Virginia Commonwealth have initiated a series of safe events, as a part of the worldwide Chanukah campaign, an initiative launched by the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory, in 1973, highlighting the enduring message of Chanukah and its message of religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, events in the City of Williamsburg, occur during the Chanukah festival, coinciding this year from Dec 7th to Dec 14th.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Doug Pons, Mayor OF THE City of Williamsburg OF Virginia, do hereby proclaim Dec 7th, 2023

In the City of Williamsburg.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the City of Williamsburg, this [Date] day of [Month], [Year]

On Thu, Dec 7, 2023 at 5:41 AM Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org> wrote:
Amazing, looking forward to the call

On Thu, Dec 7, 2023, 6:39 AM Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:
Yes Sir!

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:37:34 AM
To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Re: Invite to Menorah Lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

What around 10:15am work for you?

On Wed, Dec 6, 2023, 8:57 PM Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov> wrote:
Good evening,

I look forward to attending. May I call you tomorrow? When is best for you?

Doug

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:24:22 PM

To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>

Subject: Re: Invite to Menorah Lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mr. Douglas,

Kindly let me know if this event fits your schedule and when would be best to discuss the messaging over the phone,

I look forward to hearing from you,

Rabbi Mendy Heber
Chabad Williamsburg VA
757-929-499

On Wed, Dec 6, 2023 at 2:00 PM Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org> wrote:

Dear Mr. Douglas,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to you as Rabbi Mendy Heber from Chabad of Williamsburg, VA. We fondly recall your valuable contribution last year during the holiday season when you graciously addressed our community at the menorah lighting ceremony.

We are organizing this year's Menorah Lighting event which we are excited to share with you.

Event Details: Date: December 7th **Time:** 5:00 PM **Location:** Sunken Garden at William & Mary.

We would be greatly honored if you could join us once more and share a few words with the Jewish community at this event. Your presence and insights were immensely appreciated last year, and we believe your participation this year would add significantly to the spirit of the occasion.

Please let us know at your earliest convenience if you can accept this invitation. We look forward to the possibility of welcoming you again.

Warm regards,

Rabbi Mendy Heber Chabad Williamsburg, VA 757-929-4999

Christina Shelton

From: Rabbi Heber <rabbi@jewishwilliamsburg.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:42 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Re: Invite to Menorah Lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

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To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Re: Invite to Menorah Lighting

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Dear Mr. Douglas,

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I look forward to hearing from you,

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Chabad Williamsburg VA
757-929-499

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Warm regards,

Rabbi Mendy Heber Chabad Williamsburg, VA 757-929-4999

Christina Shelton

From: Christin Nielsen <christin@thetriangle.news>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:36 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Media inquiry: 2nd Sundays menorah lighting cancelation

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Good morning, Mayor Pons,

This is Christin Nielsen, publisher of *The Triangle*, a Williamsburg-based local newsletter that is sent out to thousands of Historic Triangle residents every week.

I'm reaching out regarding the far-reaching backlash that has happened in response to LoveLight Placemaking's decision to block a menorah lighting from being held during the 2nd Sundays event scheduled to take place on Dec. 10.

As you may be aware, this story has gained traction on a national and even international scale, prompting what many locals feel is a great deal of negative publicity for Williamsburg.

One headline in a national Israeli news source reads, "Williamsburg, Virginia, cancels Menorah lighting due to war."

Given the growing backlash, I'm wondering if your office would like to respond to this situation.

Do you plan on issuing a statement to clarify that the City of Williamsburg has not been involved in the decision to block the menorah lighting?

Best,

Christin Nielsen
Publisher, *The Triangle*
vatriangle.com

Christina Shelton

From: psydoc27 <drlniles@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:07 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah Cancelled

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Ponds:

I understand that your town has cancelled this years Hanukkah celebration, but I can't

understand why. Is it because of the current war against hamas that would

somehow imply a pro Israel stance? Is there some other reason?

Please let me know your thoughts.

Sincerely,
Dr. Leland Niles

Christina Shelton

From: Sharon Causey <slrc66@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:02 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Menorah

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

How dare you treat Jews and hamas equally??? You must stand up against Hate and Cruelty and Murder.
You are just afraid of the Muslims and their protests. Be BRAVE Otherwise We Christians are next

♥ us 🇺🇸 🇮🇱 ♥ IL 🇺🇸 ♥ 🙏 🙏 🙏 🙏

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Suzy England <fitgroovesuz@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:54 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Kindly Reconsider the Decision on Menorah Lighting

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Shalom Mayor Pons,

I hope you're well. I'm writing to kindly request you reconsider your position on canceling the Menorah lighting for this year and continue with the tradition. Celebrating all holidays in this period of conflict can actually help to strengthen bonds and reduce barriers to productive communication.

Warmly,
Suzy England from New York

Christina Shelton

From: TGWMPE <tgwmpe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:49 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah Menorah

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor,

Please allow the Hanukkah menorah to be displayed in public.

Warm regards

Mark Eckstein

Christina Shelton

From: Eliana Gordon <edevgordon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:29 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: 2nd Sunday festival antisemitism

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons,

As I'm sure you were aware the 2nd Sunday Festival which is a public event has told Jewish community that we will not be allowed to light a menorah or have a visible presence at the festival on the 10th. The festival said that this is because they did not want to take sides in the Israel/Hamas war. However, organizers of the festival have said that the Jewish community will be allowed to participate should we light the Menorah under a banner calling for a ceasefire which is clearly taking sides in the conflict.

As per the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)'s, working definition of antisemitism, "Holding all Jews collectively responsible for the actions of Israel" constitutes antisemitism. The Commonwealth of Virginia recognized this definition in HB 1606 which Governor Yongkin signed into law this year. The state department has also acknowledged the definition and the White House issued an executive order accepting it in 2019.

Given that the festival is engaging in what both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Federal Government define as antisemitism it is inappropriate to allow them to continue. Furthermore using public resources such as the police and permits as well as to shut down city streets would be to use tax dollars to subsidize said discrimination. As such I urge you to pull all publicly funded support including but not limited to any permits, street closures, and police presence at the festival.

My great grandfather fled antisemitic persecution and he chose to settle in Hampton Roads because he was promised that he and his children would be safe and welcome in Southeastern Virginia. It is time for the city of Williamsburg to live up to that promise.

Sincerely,

Eliana Gordon

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2023/february/name-994238-en.html>

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism/adoption-endorsement>

<https://www.state.gov/defining-antisemitism/>

Christina Shelton

From: Sharon Scruggs <sascruggs119@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:42 PM
To: Andrew Trivette; Billy & Sharon Scruggs; Doug Pons
Subject: 2nd Sunday

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Don't know if you are aware of this article. Sent to me by a Williamsburg native who is active in the Jewish community.

<https://www.jta.org/2023/12/04/united-states/virginia-cultural-festival-says-it-wont-hold-a-menorah-lighting-due-to-israel-hamas-war>

Christina Shelton

From: David Harsanyi <dharsanyi@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:38 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons,

Though I've spent 20 years writing about anti-Semitism, I was still completely taken aback by Shirley Vermillion's rejection of menorah lighting. It is utterly disgraceful. My wife and I moved to this community two years ago, and we still believe Williamsburg to be an outstanding place that takes its historical heritage seriously. But this incident is stain on that reputation. I'm no fan of crowds or tourists, to put it mildly, but even I enjoy attending 2nd Sunday. I would never go now. And I will urge everyone I know not to attend.

Vermillion says the "concern is of folks feeling like we are siding with a group over the other." This morall confused comment says a lot about her. Vermillion claims Christian requests were denied in the past. I doubt this is true -- Christmas imagery is plastered everywhere, as it should be. But if it is, that's also despicable. A person who excludes religious groups from holiday festivals should not be allowed to operate on public property.

It turns out that Vermillion also told Rabbi Heber that board members would be OK with proceeding with the lighting if the event was held "under a cease fire banner." That is outrageous, as well. What does this all look like if Vermillion held Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of Hamas? Imagine if Vermillion demanded Muslims hold up signs condemning al Qaeda? Vermillion is either an anti-Semite or an ignoramus -- though, there is a not small chance she is both.

I'm not sure if you've commented on this outrage or not. But are you doing something to rectify the situation?

Curious,
David

--
David Harsanyi
Columnist/Author
202.805.2024 c
@davidharsanyi

Christina Shelton

From: marcnodell@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:29 AM
To: Doug Pons
Cc: glenn.youngkin@governor.virginia.gov
Subject: 2nd Sunday Event and their support of Antisemitism

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons,

I am sure you are aware of the decision made by the 2nd Sunday Event to not allow the lighting of a Menorah to celebrate the festival of lights called Hanukkah.

I doubt that the organizer Shirley Vermillion realizes the negative impact that this has had on the Jewish community not only in the Williamsburg area but all through the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Jews are under attack everywhere in this country. Our campuses are now incubators of the disease of Jew hatred including the venerable William and Mary. We see Jews being intimidated on the streets, having their homes defaced, and their businesses vandalized.

Hanukkah is a celebration of the success of freedom of religion over tyranny. What we are seeing from the 2nd Sunday Event, their board, their organizers is cowardice at best, and true antisemitism at worst.

I realize that you have no say in what the 2nd Sunday events do, nor their agenda or rules, however your voice must be present to make it clear that the City of Williamsburg does not agree with their position and that you stand against antisemitism.

This event's actions have actually cast a negative view of Williamsburg which is a shame, given the history of Williamsburg and frankly the incubator of freedom and civility.

Thank you
Marc Nodell, proud resident of Virginia

Christina Shelton

From: Don Bolen <cwo4usmc@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:22 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: LIGHTING OF THE MENORAH

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hello Mayor. I do not live in Williamsburg and I am not Jewish, but not lighting the menorah with the reasoning you provided is hogwash and everyone knows it. If you were fair and truthful, you would also not display Christmas decorations and celebrate Christmas. Those who now celebrate another embarrassment for the Jewish people in your community will soon push for other changes of traditions and celebrations they oppose. I will not be visiting Williamsburg again since by not taking sides in the Hamas-Israel war, you have done exactly that. America used to stand for all its people. Now we're cowards and succumb, instead of doing the right thing.

Don Bolen

Christina Shelton

From: Sally Markowitz <swmazul@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:49 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah celebration

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Sir,

It is my understanding that Williamsburg's Hanukkah celebration was canceled because Muslims won't have "equal time". This is a ridiculous excuse.

This is not about taking sides. Do you not understand what happened in Israel in early October? Have you not seen the pictures of the raped women and murdered babies? It seems to me it is time to stand with your Jewish citizens against terrorism. They should feel confident that they can practice their faith in peace and security.

And if you are worried about Hamas sympathizers attacking the celebration, you aren't wrong. That concern should tell you all you need to know about the pure evil that these people represent. There is no moral equivalency here.

So move the Hanukkah celebration to a more secure area. Bring in more law enforcement. If you cancel the event, the terrorists win.

S. Webb

Great Falls, VA

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Laura Tusa <mrstusa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 11:41 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: A complaint of Anti-Semitism

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

What you are doing is appalling. You are condoning Anti-Semitism by canceling the menorah candle lighting. You are sending a clear message to your Jewish community members. Shame on you that you will bend the knee to Hamas supporters.

Your actions are clearly seen,
Mrs. Tusa

Christina Shelton

From: danny f <ydf26@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:09 PM
To: Doug Pons
Cc: City Council
Subject: Visiting the area, will I be lynched?

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi,

I plan on visiting your city at some point in the next few months, but i read in the NY Post your city is attempting to be judenrein (<https://nypost.com/2023/12/04/news/virginia-jewish-group-slams-art-festival-over-hanukkah-lighting/>).

As i am Jewish, can you assure me that i will be safe and that i will not be banned, or worse lynched, as I celebrate Hanukah?

Danny

Christina Shelton

From: patricia henry <trish.henry525@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 8:19 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Menorah lighting

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

I am disgusted by Williamsburg's cancellation of the annual Menorah lighting ceremony. You should be ashamed of this act of antisemitism. I graduated from William and Mary in 1985 and visit annually. My daughter is a Commonwealth Attorney who resides in Williamsburg. The country, particularly college campuses are experiencing a 400% increase in antisemitism including calls for the destruction of the state of Israel and death to Jews worldwide. Celebrating the holidays of all religions is something I thought all liberal minded people support but apparently not the City of Williamsburg when the holiday is a Jewish one. Hanukkah is a happy holiday that celebrates the resilience of Jews. Surely that is something people of all faiths should be able to celebrate. Shame on you, Patricia Henry

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Pesia Stempel <pesiastempel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:36 PM
To: Doug Pons;City Council
Subject: Please do not cancel the Channukah celebration

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

I read in the social media that "Williamsburg, Virginia - 'LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony this year scheduled for December 10th, claiming it did not want to appear to chose sides in the Israel-Hamas conflict." Shirley Pierson Vermillion is who made this decision.

Canceling this event is an anti-Semitic act in support of the horrible Hamás terrorist attacks against civilians in Israel on Oct 7th. Cancelling it is taking a position in favor of the evil. The celebration of Hannukah only brings light to the world and must not be cancelled.

Please support the light, let it prevail over the darkness, and take any action intended to have the celebration of this important holiday taking place.

Thank you!

Pesia Stempel

Christina Shelton

From: Pesia Stempel <pesiastempel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:36 PM
To: Doug Pons;City Council
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Please support the light, let it prevail over the darkness, and take any action intended to have the celebration of this important holiday taking place.

Thank you!

Pesia Stempel

Christina Shelton

From: Paul Rein <paulrein1@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 3:49 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: 2nd Sunday

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Mr. Pons,

I have lived in Kingsmill for 36 years, and while officially not Williamsburg, in reality it's like living in Williamsburg. I truly love the area and usually refer to life here is like living in oasis of the USA. Then alongs comes this coming weekend, more specifically 2nd Sunday.

I am a Jewish American, and was truly stunned by the decision made by Ms. Vermillion when she vetoed the Hanukkah lighting of the menorah on Sunday. This Sunday being 2nd Sunday. I have attended this event numerous times, and now I'm done with the event. I am ashamed that the City is allowing her to do this. People throughout our country have emailed me asking what's up with your town? Why would they allow this to happen?

I have no answer for them, but like I said I'll never go to 2nd Sunday again. This is a blatant anti-Semitic decision and how is this allowed? Will there be no Christmas trees? Perhaps she should educate herself about the charter of Hamas, that calls for the killing of everyone who is not a Muslim.

If it stays like this I'll start to feel like the Jews in Europe for hundreds of years who were discriminated just for being Jewish. I am curious to know what your thoughts are on this subject. Thanks.

Paul Rein
409 Moodys Run
757-880-6115

Sent from my iPad

Christina Shelton

From: Michael Finfer <finfer@swbell.net>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:43 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah Celebration

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Good afternoon, Mayor

Allowing a single person the authority to cancel your community event is inappropriate and I am sorry that you and the council won't stand up to unwarranted hate.

Regards,

Mike Finfer

Sent from my iPad

Christina Shelton

From: in_bar 998 <ruslanina0345@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:12 PM
To: City Council; Doug Pons; hello@norgedental.com
Subject: Shirley Pierson Vermillion fascist
Attachments: GAhCIYiXIAAm0In.jpg; GAhAVIPXkAAJJX4.png; GAhBLI5XkAA-734.jpg

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Williamsburg, Virginia - **'LoveLight Placemaking' has cancelled a Menorah Hanukkah lighting ceremony** this year scheduled for December 10th, claiming **it did not want to appear to chose sides in the Israel-Hamas conflict**. Meet the woman behind 'LoveLight Placemaking' - **Shirley Pierson Vermillion**. What sort of person is on the side of genocidal Hamas maniacs who butcher, rape, and sodomize innocent civilians?!

Christina Shelton

From: Robin Peters <robinpeters1584@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:04 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: I am not alone.

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

It is disturbing to see this Hanukkah celebration canceled in my district – everyone deserves to practice their religion freely without facing intolerance. I stand with the Williamsburg Jewish community, and I urge the event organizers to reverse course.



Rep. Rob Wittman (@RobWittman) on X
x.com

Christina Shelton

From: Robin Peters <robinpeters1584@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:59 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Policy

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

It sounds like you do not care, but if you allow antisemitism like this in Williamsburg, we will never again give you our tourist dollars. Sadly, my family used to love Williamsburg!

The menorah lighting in Williamsburg, Virginia was cancelled because organizers claimed it would send a message that the festival was "supporting the killing/bombing of thousands of men, women, and children." Jews have been celebrating Hannukah for more than 2,000 years. The holiday commemorates a time when enemies tried to deny Jews their religious freedom. Don't let the irony get lost on you.

Anyone who cancels a Jewish holiday is an antisemite. There are no possible other explanations.

I would not be doing my job as a mother if I continued to let my children visit Williamsburg, until I see a statement from you issuing a version of what I wrote above. The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing. First they came for the Jews...

Sincerely,
Robin Peters

Christina Shelton

From: Leslie Young <leslieyoungla@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:26 PM
To: City Council; Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah lighting

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons and City Council,

I am very disturbed to learn that you have canceled the annual Hanukkah lighting ceremony. It is my understanding that Shirley Vermillion is responsible for this, And agreed only to allow it if the Jewish community called for a ceasefire in Israel's war against Hamas.

This is unacceptable. The Jewish community in Williamsburg has nothing to do with the war in the Middle East. Hanukkah is a Jewish tradition celebrated annually like Christmas. There should be no precondition to the community being able to have a lighting ceremony. This action is anti-Semitic.

My father was a graduate of Randolph Macon military Academy and I have visited Williamsburg all the way from California. He was a Jew very proud of his military schooling and later service in the U.S. Army as an officer. He loved his time in Williamsburg. This turn of events would disappoint him as his career in the public domain involved educating people about Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. See: Dr. Joseph Louis Young, artist.

I urge you to have the Hanukkah lighting ceremony as has been a tradition in Williamsburg.

Sincerely,

Leslie Young

Christina Shelton

From: Janice Yanofsky <janyanofsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:06 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: This is disgraceful

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Statement on Second Sunday's Cancellation of Hanukkah Celebration

December 3, 2023 | Press Release

"We should be very clear: it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively responsible for Israel's policies and actions, and to require a political litmus test for Jews' participation in community events."



The Jewish Community of the Virginia Peninsula is shocked and alarmed at LoveLight Placemaking's decision to cancel a menorah lighting scheduled for the Second Sundays Art and Music Festival on Dec 10 in Williamsburg -- claiming it did not want to appear to choose sides in the Israel-Hamas conflict. To be clear, the menorah lighting, which was to be led by a local community rabbi, had nothing to do with Israel or the conflict.

Yet, appallingly, the event organizer claimed that a Chanukah celebration would send a message that the festival was "supporting the killing, bombing of thousands of men, women, and children" -- and even went a step further, by offering to reinstate the event if it was done under a banner calling for a ceasefire.

We should be very clear: it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively responsible for Israel's policies and actions, and to require a political litmus test for Jews' participation in community events that have nothing to do with Israel. Those standards would never be applied to another community.

Since October 7th, we have repeatedly seen cases of Jewish people and institutions -- including synagogues, Jewish homes and businesses -- being targeted, sometimes violently, by those opposed to Israel or its actions. At a time of well-documented, rising antisemitism, the singling out and targeting of Jews is dangerous and harmful, serving to further exclude and alienate our community.

The Second Sundays Art & Music Festival has been a meaningful and important community event that brings people together under a powerful message of unity, love and light. Excluding Jewish participation from a festival that should welcome everyone undermines its very message. We call on LoveLight Placemaking to reconsider our request to engage in dialogue, educate themselves on the harmfulness of their decision, and reinstate the apolitical Menorah ceremony at the event.

According to Shirley Pierson Vermillion, holding a Hanukkah celebration would send a message that the festival was "supporting the killing/bombing of thousands of men, women, and children". She DID however agree to put the event back on if there was calls for a ceasefire....



StopAntisemitism (@StopAntisemites) on X
x.com

What gives this woman the right to cancel a Holiday celebration based on another country's war? Jews in America are being punished for her pro Hamas leanings? In NYC they tried to ruin the Christmas tree lighting at Rockefeller Center? Next you know we will have Sharia law. Fix this now!
Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Sue K. Levine <chukosh@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:03 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Cancellation of Menorah Lighting

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi there, Mr. Mayor

My husband and I spent our honeymoon in Colonial Williamsburg over 36 years ago. We have been back over a dozen times since then, bring friends and family with us to introduce them to your welcoming and beautiful town. Had we had the money, we would have bought a house there because we love your town so much.

But from here on out, we will find other places to vacation. Your town has become an indicator of just how anti-semitism is rearing its ugly head these days. Might I suggest that you watch Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer's recent address on anti-semitism? You will have a better understanding of what I mean.

Cancelling a Menorah lighting (it's actually called a Hanukkiyah...which shows how ignorant the organizer is) because of what is going on 6,000 miles away does what racists want to achieve. It removes all context from what is happening there. And it puts some imagined collective guilt on ALL Jews...especially those in your community.

We are well aware that Jews in Williamsburg and its surroundings are few and far between. But we are Americans. And allowing this organizer to do this makes you and your city council collaborators in spreading anti-Jewish hate.

It's been swell visiting Williamsburg.

But there are lots of towns that are more welcoming than yours and we will spend our money there.

Have a lovely day.

Sue K. Levine
Chukosh@mac.com

Sent from my iPad

Christina Shelton

From: Lisa Seltzer <lisaseltzer@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:56 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Hanukkah

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Not lighting the Traditional Hanukkah Menorah this year is a disgrace. Holiday is a time of year where we, as a nation, come together. You are a voice for division & hate I come every year to Colonial Williamsburg. NEVER AGAIN Shame on this horribly antisemitic decision which you have embraced Merry Christmas & Happy Hanukkah Lisa Seltzer Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Mark H <dumbox1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:21 AM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: 2nd Sundays

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Mayor Pons:

It looks like Shirley Vermillion is in over her head with the menorah controversy, and it's going a little bit viral. Can the City give her some help with crisis communications? From the Daily Press story it sounds like there may be a couple valid explanations for their decision, but those are getting lost in the shuffle because of her other unfortunate comments.

As a Williamsburg native (long ago), I'd hate to see this reflect negatively on the City or on CW. If you have a lifeline you could throw her, I think that might be a good idea.

Good luck and best wishes,

Mark Herrmann

(P.S. - I think you were 2-3 years behind me at Lafayette - your name is very familiar).

Christina Shelton

From: Andrew Trivette
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 8:51 AM
To: Doug Pons
Cc: Nicole Trifone; Sean Dunn
Subject: Fwd: Emergency meeting please re' LoveLight Placemaking's decision to not move forward with menorah lighting being labeled antisemitic !

FYI

Thanks,
Andrew Omer Trivette; AICP, ICMA-CM
City Manager
Williamsburg, Virginia
(757) 220-6106 Office

This email was sent from my mobile office so please pardon any typos.

Sent with Spark

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Shirley Vermillion <2ndsundayswb@gmail.com>

Date: Dec 4, 2023, 7:48 AM -0500

To: Andrew Trivette <ATrivette@williamsburgva.gov>, Casey Butler <wcpb757@gmail.com>, David Jay <DJay@williamsburgva.gov>, Michele DeWitt <MDeWitt@williamsburgva.gov>, Ryan Palmer <ryan@iwgproductions.com>, Cary Middlebrook <CMiddleb@williamsburgva.gov>, Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>

Subject: Emergency meeting please re' LoveLight Placemaking's decision to not move forward with menorah lighting being labeled antisemitic !

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on **links** or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi, all, I am getting ready for work... I'm not even sure when my last patient is today, but I will try reaching back to this group with a potential time that I will be coming to the police department right after work today. I was trying not to reach out to any of you all last night and I don't have all of the proper emails on this email Anyway. I am so sad that misinformation is being given out to the public and the Jewish community are leading up all over the country and probably World. The Daily Press released an article without speaking to me, making it seem like a menorah lighting has been a regular occurrence at Second Sundays... You all know that we have never done that... When we chose to not take sides, religious or culturally and go forward with Rabbi, Mendy Heber's request to add it to Second Sundays and wanted to include a firetruck doing a geld drop they decided to get really ugly. Clearly, his event needed to be a separate one... He wanted to tagalong to our event because there are thousands of people as a target audience for the menorah, celebration and geld drop Already in place of our 14 yrs of hard work building the festival. Where he was wanting to have the firetruck and the lighting area has to be kept open for cars entering and exiting that parking garage next to the community building... And just in general, the festival is absolutely full of patrons, especially this time of year... we have never chosen sides and truly it was my mistake to even seem open to the discussion in the beginning. I am not a TV or

news watcher at all... I knew that there was a conflict going on... I have seen no footage, and when I presented it to my board , family and significant others. They quickly said have you lost your mind we absolutely are not going to two sides in anyway... We are sticking to our mission of only promoting Music & arts that we have done for 14 years. I am very sad that all of the comments are also now involving the city... It's so blown out of control that nothing I or we say as an organization will make a difference. I need help and we need a plan because I am pretty sure that the Jewish community will show up in Forss on Sunday to protest... and I have received threat which is why I called the nonemergency number last night and said that I would come in today after talking to the police officer and let them see my phone and the messages .

So very sorry to involve you. I'm so sad that my event and nonprofit, that we work so hard at keeping, inclusive and welcoming to all cultures, and people is being targeted in such an evil way.

Shirley

Christina Shelton

From: Paula Bienenfeld <paula_bienenfeld@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 9:33 PM
To: Doug Pons
Cc: glenn.youngkin@governor.virginia.gov
Subject: Menorah cancellation

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on **links** or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi Mayor Pons,

I understand the Williamsburg menorah lighting has been cancelled this year at the Second Sunday Art and Music Festival. Jews across the United States are finding out about this now. We are shocked and saddened.

Chanukah is a celebration of religious freedom, of light over darkness. I live in Maryland, not Virginia, but have been to Williamsburg many times. I never felt antisemitism there before. I have taken my children there many times and enjoyed visiting the city.

Please put up the menorah this year and celebrate the universal freedom of religion. There is no reason a celebration of a universal holiday Jews have celebrated for over a thousand years cannot be celebrated in Williamsburg this year. If the menorah is not there it sends a terrible message to Jews.

Thank you,
Paula Bienenfeld

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Christina Shelton

From: Douglas Fisher <cddfischer@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 8:04 PM
To: Doug Pons
Subject: Re: LoveLight Placemaking canceling hannukah

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Worse is when authorities cancel. This city outside London canceled our of fear. We wrote thousands of letters and it got put back on. The London Council of Havering has decided to enable Hanukkah celebrations to proceed, after announcing on Thursday the cancellation of plans due to the 'conflict in the Middle East,' following a discussion with the London Jewish Forum.

The Hanukkah celebrations will now proceed as planned on December 12.

On Sun, Dec 3, 2023, 7:45 PM Douglas Fisher <cddfischer@gmail.com> wrote:

As an American and oft visitor to your area I will never come again. If jewish I guess no place in the community. Canceling hannukah is despicable and anti Semitic. Hamas attacked israel. Killed and kidnapped. Hamas Violated cease fires. Israel Out of gaza 20 yrs. Have a moral backbone on good and evil for the holiday

DOUGLAS FISHER
BOSTON MA

Christina Shelton

From: Nicole Trifone
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:24 PM
To: Doug Pons; Stacy Kern-Scheerer; Caleb Rogers; Barbara Dameron; Pat Dent
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

Hello,
Since you all initially received this email, I thought you all might want to see our response.

Thank you,
Nicole

From: City Council
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:23 PM
To: hello@dirtyfloorfibers.com
Subject: FW: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

Ms. Dynia,
Thank you for your email. We understand the difficult position the vendors are now in because of this situation, and we are empathetic to the decision you now must make for your business. A large number of special events take place in the City of Williamsburg every year that feature local and national artists. A good example is the Christmas Market that is currently underway. While these are private events much like 2nd Sundays and the City is largely unaware of how the vendors are selected, we would encourage you to consider those opportunities as possible solutions to the current dilemma.

In addition, as you have expressed interest in perhaps starting your own event, the City's process begins with a special event permit. A good place to begin your research on launching an event is to review the requirements for the City's special event permits, which you can find in our [City Code](#). The application form is also on our website.

We wish you the best of luck and much success as you pursue further opportunities.

Sincerely,

City of Williamsburg

From: Kimberly Dynia <hello@dirtyfloorfibers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:10:39 PM
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer <SKernScheerer@williamsburgva.gov>; Barbara L. Ramsey <BRamsey@williamsburgva.gov>; Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; Pat Dent <PDent@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

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Hello,

I sent the following message to the City Council email address, but I was worried about it being buried- I can only imagine the emails that are flooding in, despite the City of Williamsburg not being affiliated with the Lovelight Placemaking nonprofit. I don't want to bother everyone, but I thought that putting it in everyone's inbox stood a better chance of being heard:

I am sure you are painfully aware of the blowup over the turned down request for a menorah lighting at 2nd Sundays.

I absolutely agree that you should not hold a whole group accountable for the actions of a few. That includes both holding Jewish Americans accountable for a war in Israel/Palestine, but also vendors at a market for the actions and words of the nonprofit organizer.

I ask that the city step in and back the vendors of 2nd Sunday. Please organize a Williamsburg Holiday event - reach out to Colonial Williamsburg to use the Art Museum lawn if need be- to give small local businesses a chance to make up their missed income, and to distance the city of Williamsburg, Colonial Williamsburg, and other local art nonprofits from this horrible mess. Even if it couldn't be organized for this week, delay to the following Sunday. Please do something to stand by these local small businesses. Don't make us choose between supporting an event that has received global backlash and being able to pay the bills. I would be happy to spearhead the event, if you give me permission.

This is a time of year we need to be supporting local small businesses and artisans, when people flock to big box stores for cheap deals. Many of these small businesses rely on income for these markets, and December crowds help get these businesses through the off season.

If Lovelight Placemaking doesn't issue a heartfelt apology, or if the organizer isn't asked to step down by the board, by the end of this week, there is an impossible decision ahead for 150+ small businesses and organizations.

If I choose to participate in 2nd Sunday this week, I take the risk of backlash against my business. I risk angry people on the streets. I risk looking like I am against the local Jewish community, which is completely untrue.

If I don't participate, I risk not being invited back to 2nd Sundays next year. More imminently, I was counting on income from this market to pay the bills this month. It's too late to sign up for any other holiday markets to compensate- applications were due, and spaces filled, months ago.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read and consider this proposal.

Kimberly Dynia

Dirt Floor Fibers
Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Pat Dent
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:34 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Fwd: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: allan aprigalassociates.com <allan@aprigalassociates.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer <SKernScheerer@williamsburgva.gov>; Pat Dent <PDent@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; Barbara L. Ramsey <BRamsey@williamsburgva.gov>; Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>
Cc: vpdevelopment@cwf.org <vpdevelopment@cwf.org>; jsolomon@cwf.org <jsolomon@cwf.org>; krichardson@cwf.org <krichardson@cwf.org>; eedwards@cwf.org <eedwards@cwf.org>; shart@cwf.org <shart@cwf.org>; fjohnson@cwf.org <fjohnson@cwf.org>; jwallace@cwf.org <jwallace@cwf.org>; kwolfe@cwf.org <kwolfe@cwf.org>; ceo@cwf.org <ceo@cwf.org>; president@cwf.org <president@cwf.org>
Subject: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

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Good afternoon. I am writing to you because I just found out that the 2nd Sundays Arts and Music Festival have cancelled the Hanukkah celebration and the Jewish symbols have been removed from the holiday light displays.

As an American Jew, I am horrified that the festival and you by association would cancel all aspects of a Community celebration of ANY religion. You must understand that as an American Jew, I have no control or say in how the State of Israel responds to the horrific terrorist attack and continuing holding hostage innocent people.

Regardless of your personal opinion to what is or is not happening in the Middle East, you have no right to exclude us from the community.

My wife and I have been visiting Williamsburg at least annually (sometimes more) for the last 45 years. We always stay in Colonial Williamsburg and make annual donations to Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. We always considered Williamsburg to be our own "special place". Now, with these actions, I don't feel welcome there.

Your actions are contradictory to what this country was founded on. I am sure you understand that religion and government are two different things. However, by removing the celebration or by allowing it to be removed it can be perceived that you are perpetuating antisemitism.

To quote the United Jewish Community of the Northern Peninsula - "We should be very clear: it is antisemitic to hold Jews collectively accountable for Israel's policies and actions, and to require a political litmus test for Jews' participation in community events that have nothing to do with Israel."

This war in Israel is not a "Jewish" war it is an Israeli war.

I welcome your response(s) and am happy for further discussion either by email or phone.

Thanks for taking the time.

Allan

Allan Prigal - Associate Broker

"Your Personal Real Estate Consultant for Life"

RE/MAX Realty Group

mobile 240-475-0660

office 301-258-7757

Selected Best by Washingtonian Magazine - 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

Christina Shelton

From: Pat Dent
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:33 PM
To: citycouncil@
Subject: Fwd: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: allan aprigalassociates.com <allan@aprigalassociates.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer <SKernScheerer@williamsburgva.gov>; Pat Dent <PDent@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; Barbara L. Ramsey <BRamsey@williamsburgva.gov>; Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>
Cc: vpdevelopment@cwf.org <vpdevelopment@cwf.org>; jsolomon@cwf.org <jsolomon@cwf.org>; krichardson@cwf.org <krichardson@cwf.org>; eedwards@cwf.org <eedwards@cwf.org>; shart@cwf.org <shart@cwf.org>; fjohnson@cwf.org <fjohnson@cwf.org>; jwallace@cwf.org <jwallace@cwf.org>; kwolfe@cwf.org <kwolfe@cwf.org>; ceo@cwf.org <ceo@cwf.org>; president@cwf.org <president@cwf.org>
Subject: 2nd Sundays Art and Music Festival

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Selected Best by Washingtonian Magazine - 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

Christina Shelton

From: Barbara L. Ramsey
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:27 AM
To: Doug Pons;Pat Dent;Caleb Rogers;Stacy Kern-Scheerer
Cc: Andrew Trivette
Subject: RE: Menorah cancellation

Upon receipt of the various e-mails, I googled and found this article: <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-776407>
Wonder if Shirley is receiving the same e-mails or if the readers just assumed this was a City action

Barbara Ramsey ... 757-229-5109
Williamsburg City Councilwoman

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

From: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:41 AM
To: Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; Pat Dent <PDent@williamsburgva.gov>; Barbara L. Ramsey <BRamsey@williamsburgva.gov>; Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>; Stacy Kern-Scheerer <SKernScheerer@williamsburgva.gov>
Cc: Andrew Trivette <ATrivette@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: FW:

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

From: mvsboutique@gmail.com <mvsboutique@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:34 AM
To: City Council <Council@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject:

[NOTICE: This message originated outside of the City of Williamsburg mail system -- DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

The fact that Jews can't celebrate their holidays in the USA poses a major problem, bordering on a violation of the Freedom of Religion Act. It's more embarrassing for the local authorities, as it blatantly shows anti-Semitism and, of course, a lack of any backbone

Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Barbara L. Ramsey
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:47 PM
To: Andrew Trivette
Subject: FW: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

FYI in case you didn't receive this e-mail

Barbara Ramsey
Williamsburg City Councilwoman

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

From: Kimberly Dynia <hello@dirtyfloorfibers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 18:11
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer <SKernScheerer@williamsburgva.gov>; Barbara L. Ramsey <BRamsey@williamsburgva.gov>; Caleb Rogers <CRogers@williamsburgva.gov>; Doug Pons <DPons@williamsburgva.gov>; Pat Dent <PDent@williamsburgva.gov>
Subject: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

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I absolutely agree that you should not hold a whole group accountable for the actions of a few. That includes both holding Jewish Americans accountable for a war in Israel/Palestine, but also vendors at a market for the actions and words of the nonprofit organizer.

I ask that the city step in and back the vendors of 2nd Sunday. Please organize a Williamsburg Holiday event - reach out to Colonial Williamsburg to use the Art Museum lawn if need be- to give small local businesses a chance to make up their missed income, and to distance the city of Williamsburg, Colonial Williamsburg, and other local art nonprofits from this horrible mess. Even if it couldn't be organized for this week, delay to the following Sunday. Please do something to stand by these local small businesses. Don't make us choose between supporting an event that has received global backlash and being able to pay the bills. I would be happy to spearhead the event, if you give me permission.

This is a time of year we need to be supporting local small businesses and artisans, when people flock to big box stores for cheap deals. Many of these small businesses rely on income for these markets, and December crowds help get these businesses through the off season.

If Lovelight Placemaking doesn't issue a heartfelt apology, or if the organizer isn't asked to step down by the board, by the end of this week, there is an impossible decision ahead for 150+ small businesses and organizations.

If I choose to participate in 2nd Sunday this week, I take the risk of backlash against my business. I risk angry people on the streets. I risk looking like I am against the local Jewish community, which is completely untrue.

If I don't participate, I risk not being invited back to 2nd Sundays next year. More imminently, I was counting on income from this market to pay the bills this month. It's too late to sign up for any other holiday markets to compensate-applications were due, and spaces filled, months ago.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read and consider this proposal.

Kimberly Dynia

Dirt Floor Fibers
Sent from my iPhone

Christina Shelton

From: Kimberly Dynia <hello@dirtyfloorfibers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:11 PM
To: Stacy Kern-Scheerer; Barbara L. Ramsey; Caleb Rogers; Doug Pons; Pat Dent
Subject: Urgent: 2nd Sunday Vendor Plea for Help

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If Lovelight Placemaking doesn't issue a heartfelt apology, or if the organizer isn't asked to step down by the board, by the end of this week, there is an impossible decision ahead for 150+ small businesses and organizations.

If I choose to participate in 2nd Sunday this week, I take the risk of backlash against my business. I risk angry people on the streets. I risk looking like I am against the local Jewish community, which is completely untrue.

If I don't participate, I risk not being invited back to 2nd Sundays next year. More imminently, I was counting on income from this market to pay the bills this month. It's too late to sign up for any other holiday markets to compensate- applications were due, and spaces filled, months ago.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read and consider this proposal.

Kimberly Dynia

Dirt Floor Fibers

Sent from my iPhone