

Cambridge City Council meeting -- September 11, 2006 – AGENDA

WHEREAS: On December 3, 1984, the world's worst chemical disaster took place in Bhopal, India, when a Union Carbide Corporation chemical plant unleashed a cloud of deadly chemicals that killed more than 3,000 people in a single night, and has been responsible for over 20,000 deaths since; and

WHEREAS: In the intervening years, Union Carbide Corporation abandoned all responsibility for the site or the plight of survivors and their children; and

WHEREAS: Union Carbide Corporation has refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Indian government in the pending criminal case against it where it is charged with culpable homicide for the deaths allegedly caused by its negligence; and

WHEREAS: Union Carbide Corporation is currently an offender in the eyes of the Indian Government after the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Bhopal proclaimed the company an absconder from justice for its failure to honor the process of law; and

WHEREAS: Union Carbide Corporation was purchased by the Dow Chemical Company in 2001; and

WHEREAS: The Dow Chemical Company professes to lead the chemical industry in sustainability and ethical practices; and

WHEREAS: The Dow Chemical Company too has refused to address pending issues in Bhopal or force its subsidiary Union Carbide Corporation to appear in the Indian court to face criminal charges; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council go on record recommending that the members of the Cambridge Retirement Board of Trustees vote in favor of resolutions requesting information from the company regarding the Bhopal disaster and possible avenues of remediation of the site; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Council go on record recommending that the members of the Cambridge Retirement Board of Trustees divest of Dow bonds and refrain from future purchases of Dow Bonds; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably copy of this resolution to the Cambridge Retirement Board of Trustees on behalf of the entire City Council.

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the appropriate City departments to conduct an audit of what Dow products the City of Cambridge currently purchases and to report back to the City Council on what substitute products are available and what process Cambridge might take to transition to substitute products; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the appropriate City departments to assist in the December 3, 2006 Cambridge Day of Remembrance for Victims of Industrial Disasters and Pollution by planning activities and seminars regarding the Bhopal disaster, corporate accountability and advancing precautionary measures that can be taken by the public and private sector to prevent chemical releases, disasters, and public health incidents within the City's borders.

RESOLVED: That this City Council go on record proclaiming December 3, 2006 as "Cambridge Day of Remembrance for Victims of Industrial Disasters and Pollution;"; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this day will be a day of activities and seminars regarding the Bhopal disaster, corporate accountability and advancing precautionary measures that can be taken by the public and private sector to prevent chemical releases, disasters and public health incidents within the City's borders; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the government of Bhopal, India and Dow Chemical Company.