
Melinda Orbach Claim

From Elizabeth Malmborg <elizabethmalmborg@gmail.com>

Date Tue 9/23/2025 4:57 PM

To City Council <citycouncil@ci.capitola.ca.us>

Dear Capitola City Council.

I stand firmly with Melinda Orbach and ask that the Council stop legitimizing harassment by agendizing a code of conduct complaint that has no merit. I was in attendance on April 17th and know firsthand that her comments on April 17 were rooted in truth, transparency, and a mother's instinct to protect her family. Since that meeting Melina has demonstrated integrity by offering mediation multiple times through the Conflict Resolution Center, and she continues to show restraint in the face of relentless personal attacks. These good faith efforts must be met with united support from the Capitola City Council, her colleagues, by dismissing the claim outright at its September 25th meeting.

Now is the time to communicate your firm and public commitment to keeping our elected City Council members, their families, and their livelihoods safe and protected from personal attacks, harassment and political intimidation. None of us want a tragedy to unfold in our community due to disagreements about issues and flaring tempers. We desperately need you, the Capitola City Council, to demand civility, ensure safety, and facilitate respect for all those willing to serve on the City Council now and in the future. It is shameful to be watching our Capitola elected representatives be silenced or driven out by those who would rather bully than engage in dialogue.

As I have noted, I was in attendance at the April 17th meeting and it was a disgrace start-to-finish. ALL Capitola City Council members must do more to ensure meetings going forward are respectful and that disruptive behaviors are not tolerated at all. Frankly, it was shocking that the Mayor did not attempt to gain control of that meeting and try to establish calm as behavior rapidly diminished. It was a disgraceful meeting for everyone involved. To place Councilmember Melinda Orbach on trial for speaking openly about harassment and intimidation at the start of the meeting is not only absurd—it is an insult to everyone who attended that meeting.

We need leaders who insist on civil discourse, safety, and respect for everyone participating in Council meetings. Let's get back to work and focus on the real issues facing Capitola and its residents. Don't let intimidation tactics become the default mode of attack for anyone who may disagree with the Council or one of its members. We must do better here in Capitola. Dismiss the claim against Melinda Orbach on September 25th so our community can move on. Any other course of action is sure to result in more challenges and result in a chilling effect for those who may wish to do more in their communities.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth A. Malmborg
Community Advocate, Santa Cruz County