
[PDF] Letter for Sept 25 2025 Agenda Packet Item 9B re Melinda Orbach

From Iwalani Faulkner <equitytransitsantacruz@gmail.com>

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To City Council <citycouncil@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Clarke, Joe <jclarke@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Margaux Morgan <mmorgan@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Gerry Jensen <gjensen@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Melinda Orbach <morbach@ci.capitola.ca.us>; Westman, Susan <swestman@ci.capitola.ca.us>

 1 attachment (342 KB)

2025-09-24_Item9B_DismissCode of Conduct Complaint.pdf;

Dear City Council Members and Staff:

Attached is our letter in support of Councilmember Orbach requesting that you dismiss the Code of Conduct complaint against her for reasons outlined therein.

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Best regards,

Lani Faulkner, Director
Equity Transit - Tránsito de Equidad
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Capitola City Council Members
420 Capitola Ave
Capitola, CA 95010
March 2, 2023

Re: Item 9B Code of Conduct Complaint filed by Kevin Maquire against Council Member Orbach on June 12, 2025

Dear Capitola City Council Members and Staff:

We urge you to dismiss the **Code of Conduct complaint** filed by Kevin Maquire against Melinda Orbach in retaliation for her speaking out his name in fear asking him to cease stalking her in her neighborhood.

On Saturday morning June 14th, 2025, at 2am Vance Boelter, dressed in a police uniform, pounded on the door of **Senator John and his wife Yvette Hoffman**, shouting that he was the police. When she and her husband opened the door, John was shot 9 times and Yvette was shot 8 times, and their daughter was spared when Yvette pushed her back into the laundry.

At 3:30 am the same morning, Vance Boelter pounded on the door of **Minnesota House Speaker Emerita Melissa and her husband Mark Hortman's** home. When she and her husband opened the door, they were slaughtered, along with their pet golden retriever, **Gilbert**. They leave behind two children, Sophie and Colin.

In April, **Governor Josh Shapiro's** home was set on fire while his family slept inside. In October of 2022, David DePape located the home of **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** and her husband and beat **Paul Pelosi** over the head with a hammer stating that he was planning to break **Nancy Pelosi's** kneecaps. In 2020, 9 people plotted to kidnap and possibly kill Michigan Governor **Gretchen Whitmer**.



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The safety of our elected officials has been deeply compromised! When someone chooses to not use proper processes and channels to reach out to a councilmember and instead seeks to hunt them down, knocking on neighbor's doors in the area where a councilmember resides with their 3 young children and husband, this level of stalking cannot be taken lightly. Most of us would be afraid for our lives and safety of our families. Mr. Maguire's behavior has been extremely inappropriate and concerning. Even more concerning and outrageous is the fact that a group of vocal locals who associate with Mr. Maguire and share his political leanings, primarily opponents of rail, have similarly engaged in bullying and have rallied behind Mr. Maguire as though he is the victim.

This was not the first time Mr. Maguire or other members of this group of people inappropriately doxed and harassed our city council members and members of the public. I am refraining from calling out the name of these groups here, because most importantly, this harassment needs to stop! These aggressive people continue to harass and dox councilmembers, representatives, and members of the public beyond Capitola. Calling these people out by name may be the only way to get them to stop!

Alexander Pederson, a recent Capitola Councilmember, was harassed and bullied, even at his place of employment, which led to his stepping down! Stalking, doxing, and bullying is **never** acceptable behavior and for those of us who sit in public positions which leave us vulnerable to attack, resorting to calling out a perpetrator may be the only way to get shine light on an aggressive perpetrator in order to encourage them to stop their inappropriate behavior.

The initial statement made by Melinda during the April 17, 2025 meeting I attended is below. She did not expand upon the incredible fear that a young mother, or anyone, must feel when being stalked in her own neighborhood:



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“I support civil discourse. I think political disagreements and the process of finding compromise are the bedrock of our democracy. I am all for free speech. However, the actions of certain community members, including threats and intimidation, both explicit and implied, have crossed the line in recent months.”

“Spewing vitriol on Nextdoor is one thing, but wandering around a City Council member's neighborhood asking their neighbors where they live is something entirely different. You are engaging in physically threatening behavior that extends past politics to our homes and families.”

“I would kindly request that the members of our community who have been crossing those lines, and in particular Kevin Maguire (the one trying to find out where I live), dial down the rhetoric and restrict their activities to the appropriate forums.”

It is unconscionable that fellow councilmember Susan Westman requested that the tort claim be continued instead of being rejected during the September 11th meeting and that the code of conduct complaint against Melinda be agendized for discussion! Melinda has indicated that she regrets calling out Mr. Maguire by name and is willing to work through appropriate conflict resolution processes to help mediate this issue. Kudos to Melinda for being willing to sit with a perpetrator of bullying and harassment! Kudos to Melinda for remaining at the dais amongst peers who might consider siding against a her, a fellow councilmember, because their personal politics and opinions do not align, favoring instead harassers and bullies who inappropriately stalk councilmembers! This behavior is egregious.

I encourage this council to consider training on council conduct and mentoring the public on appropriate behaviors, as is offered through a number of programs such as the CSDA (California Special Districts Association). Included in such training is the discussion that



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councilmembers need be aware of the tendency towards inappropriate bias favoring aggressive or highly vocal groups with a strong united message. These vocal groups can often represent more entitled members of the community who are financially able to attend council meetings. Refresher training reminds us that our representatives should reflect on a greater sentiment of the community, often a quiet majority. Importantly, councilmembers like Melinda represent the community members who are unable to come to meetings or write letters. The people voted for Melinda because Melinda represents people in our community who work full time, possibly over the hill, many who have children and can NOT afford to attend these public meetings. Members of this community who have the luxury and privilege of time to attend council meetings think that their perspectives matter more than those who voted for Melinda but are unable to attend council meetings. This is not how democratic representation works!

To place Councilmember Melinda Orbach on trial for speaking openly about harassment and intimidation is not only absurd—it is an insult to every resident who expects their leaders to stand up for civil discourse, safety, and respect. For that, she has been met with months of attacks on her character and motives online, threats of litigation, and political intimidation. Capitola residents should not have to watch their representatives be silenced or driven out by those who would rather bully than engage in dialogue.

I urge you to dismiss the Code of Conduct Complaint outright on September 25. Capitola needs leaders who protect truth and principle, not those who bow to intimidation. To punish Councilmember Orbach for demanding civility is to send the message that stalking, bullying and harassment works. That is not the Capitola we believe in, and we stand firmly with Melinda Orbach.

Sincerely,

Lani Faulkner, Director