

**Gautho, Julia**

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**From:** Alexander Pedersen <alexander.dean.pedersen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 22, 2025 7:22 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 9B Code of Conduct Complaint

Capitola City Council Members,

I am writing to express my concern over the decision to place a code of conduct complaint against Councilmember Melinda Orbach on the September 25 agenda. This complaint does not reflect misconduct but reinforces a pattern of harassment that is now being legitimized by the Council itself.

On April 17, Councilmember Orbach spoke candidly about an intimidating experience for her and her family. She was clear about her values of supporting free speech, welcoming disagreement, and civil discourse. What she opposed were behaviors that crossed into harassment and people escalating rhetoric beyond the bounds of civility. Any parent or community member in that position would have felt compelled to say the same.

She has taken repeated steps to resolve this conflict through mediation and those efforts have not been met in good faith. Councilmember Orbach did not slander anyone but described behaviors that occurred and set boundaries around her family's safety.

If the Council allows this complaint to proceed, the message to every resident will be that harassment works. Capitola cannot afford to drive out its representatives through campaigns of intimidation. We need leaders who will defend open dialogue and personal safety, not enable those who would silence voices they dislike.

I urge you to dismiss this complaint outright on September 25. Capitola residents deserve nothing less.

Alexander Pedersen