

---

## Reject complaint against Councilmember Orbach

---

**From** Natasha Pedroza <pedrozafamily53@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 9/25/2025 9:13 AM

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

Dear Capitola City Council,

I am writing with deep concern about the Council's decision to place a code of conduct complaint against Councilmember Orbach on the public agenda. This course of action not only undermines the integrity of a process already underway through mediation, but sends an unsettling message about how Capitola treats leaders who speak out with courage and conviction.

At the heart of this situation is something more than a procedural disagreement. A public servant experienced conduct that felt unsafe, and she responded with the only recourse available to her: she used her voice. Without any other protections in place for public servants, she spoke out. That voice wasn't reckless—it was clear, measured, and rooted in a commitment to transparency and accountability. Councilmember Orbach acknowledged her initial misstep in using a specific name and immediately sought resolution through mediation. That's leadership.

By continuing to elevate this complaint, the Council is not serving justice—it is disrupting it. Rather than allowing the existing conflict resolution process to proceed, this hearing risks inflaming division, escalating hostility, and exposing the city to unnecessary legal and reputational harm. Worse, it threatens to normalize a pattern far too familiar to women in public service: speak out, and be silenced.

Let's be honest about what's at stake. When a woman in public life draws a boundary to protect herself and her family and the consequence is a public hearing meant to shame her—that is not accountability. That is a warning shot. And every woman watching, every young person learning what civic leadership looks like, sees it for what it is. In this political climate, when a disgruntled constituent appears to be hunting down her home where she lives with her young family, of course she felt fearful. And I am disappointed that instead of protecting her and our other public servants, we are witnessing this spectacle.

I urge the Council to reject this complaint and restore faith in Capitola's commitment to ethical leadership, authentic dialogue, and a public culture where all can lead without fear. Please reject this complaint and move forward with the work that actually serves this community.

With conviction and respect,  
Natasha