

Gautho, Julia

From: Tiffany Wise-West <twise99@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 10:26 PM
To: City Council
Subject: 9/25/25 Agenda Item 9b: Request to Dismiss Code of Conduct Violation Claim

September 22, 2025

Email to: citycouncil@ci.capitola.ca.us

Re: Request to Dismiss Code of Conduct Violation Claim against Councilmember Orbach

Dear Capitola City Council,

As a resident of Capitola for over 20 years, I write today with disappointment that the Council has allowed a baseless complaint against Councilmember Melinda Orbach to rise to the level of a public agenda item. Doing so has essentially placed Councilmember Orbach on trial for speaking openly about harassment and intimidation, which is not only absurd—it is an insult to every resident who expects their leaders to stand up for civil discourse, safety, and respect.

While neither violation purported by the complainant has any merit whatsoever, Councilmember Orbach acknowledged that naming that individual was a mistake she will not repeat. Nonetheless, her comments on April 17, 2025 were rooted in truth, transparency, and a mother's instinct to protect her family. Councilmember Orbach described ongoing threatening behaviors accurately and has evidence of it. She did not engage in name-calling, slander, or personal attacks—she simply set boundaries that any public servant has the right to establish. For that, she has been met with months of attacks on her character and motives online, threats of litigation, and political intimidation.

Councilmember Orbach 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. Instead of rewarding good-faith efforts at resolution, this Council majority is legitimizing harassment by publicly considering agendizing a code of conduct complaint that has no merit. Unless dismissed, the Council majority's actions will be construed as complicity in the unwarranted and dangerous harassment that has taken place.

Capitola residents are outraged to witness attempts to silence their duly elected representatives and/or drive them out of office by those who would rather bully rather than engage in authentic and meaningful dialogue in a neutral facilitated environment.

Thank you for consideration of this letter and the facts surrounding this unfortunate turn of events. I urge you to dismiss this claim outright on September 25. It is important that Capitola's leaders protect truth and principle and do not bow to intimidation. Punishing Councilmember Orbach for demanding civility sends a message that harassment works. That is not the Capitola I believe in and I stand firmly with her. Capitola can and should do better.

Respectfully,

Dr. Tiffany Wise-West, P.E.
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