
True Leadership: who will you choose to be

From joy flynn <joyflynnwall@gmail.com>

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

Dear Capitola City Council,

I write today with deep disappointment that the Council has allowed a baseless complaint to rise to the level of a public agenda item. To place Council member Melinda Orbach on trial for exercising her authority and freedom of speech and 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.

Councilmember Orbach has already acknowledged that naming an individual was a mistake she will not repeat, but her comments on April 17 were rooted in truth, transparency, and a mother's instinct to protect her family. Which is exactly what you as a board representing the city of Capitola should also be doing. She 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 as resolution, and modeling restrictive practices for its community, this Council instead is legitimizing harassment by agendizing a code of conduct complaint that has no merit.

The facts are clear: Council-member Orbach described threatening behaviors accurately. 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 online vitriol, threats of litigation, and political intimidation when you as a board have the authority to shut this down and provide her the backing she deserves. Instead you are using her as an example and singling her out. Capitola residents should not have to watch their representatives be silenced or driven out by those who would rather bully than engage in dialogue. As a board member who knows all too well the discord that can occur from the dais it is important to have a call for kindness both on and off the dais something I've recently begun calling for.

I urge you to dismiss this claim outright on September 25. Capitola deserves 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 harassment, rather than logic, works. That is not the Capitola I believe in, and I stand firmly with her.

Respectfully,

Joy Flynn

PVUSD Trustee area 1

Sent from mobile, please forgive any mistakes.