

Gautho, Julia

From: Maria Gitin <msgitin@mariagitin.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 20, 2025 2:59 PM
To: City Council
Cc: wildr.santacruzcounty@gmail.com
Subject: Melinda Orbach Code of Conduct Complaint

Dear Capitola City Councilmembers,

Our nation is currently experiencing an extreme decline in civility. I'm disappointed to learn that the Council considers Councilmember Melinda Orbach speaking openly about harassment and intimidation is something to be criticized, let alone censored.

Councilmember Orbach has already acknowledged that her naming of an individual was a mistake she will not repeat, but her comments on April 17 were rooted in truth, transparency, and an instinct to protect her family. She has offered mediation multiple times through the Conflict Resolution Center, and she continues to show restraint in the face of continued personal attacks. Instead of rewarding good-faith efforts at resolution, this Council is legitimizing harassment by agendizing a code of conduct complaint that has no merit.

The facts are clear: Councilmember 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. Capitola residents and shoppers like me should not have to watch elected representatives be silenced or driven out by those who would rather bully than engage in dialogue.

Please dismiss this claim 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 harassment works and to further discourage women leaders from stepping up to serve. Capitola can do better. I hope that you will!

Respectfully,
Maria Gitin Torres
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