

Gautho, Julia

From: Stephanie Chu <stephyjchu@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 21, 2025 10:52 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Item 9B Code of Conduct Complaint

Dear Capitola City Council,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to dismiss the complaint against Councilmember Orbach.

In a moment where she felt threatened, Councilmember Orbach chose to speak up — using her voice as a means of self-protection. She has acknowledged the impact of naming the individual involved, expressed regret, and is now participating in mediation. Proceeding with a public hearing at this point risks disrupting that process and could ultimately do more harm than good. The current political climate is increasingly polarized and often hostile. Elected officials at every level — and especially women — are facing growing levels of personal attacks, intimidation, and pressure. Public service is demanding enough without the added burden of complaints that can be used to shame or silence. If Capitola wants to attract and retain thoughtful, capable leaders, it must foster an environment that supports rather than punishes those who serve.

As a parent, I hope to raise children, who believe in the power of their voice, who are unafraid to speak up for themselves and others. This hearing risks sending the opposite message: that speaking out invites punishment, not protection. That is not the example we should be setting as a community.

I urge you to support the integrity of the mediation process and dismiss the complaint at your September 25 meeting.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Chu