

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Mary Gourley](#)  
**Subject:** Laura Hagar Rush Inaccurate Public Comments - Public Comment 11/15/22  
**Date:** Friday, November 11, 2022 11:13:06 AM  
**Attachments:** [IMG\\_1154.PNG](#)

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Dear Council Members,

I am writing in regards to Laura Hagar Rush and her coverage of Council meetings. I gave public comment on November 1, 2022.

The meeting minutes accurately reflect my comments:

<https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/getattachment/Meeting-Event/City-Council/2022/City-Council-Meeting-November-15,-2022/Agenda-Item-Number-1-November-1-2022-DRAFT-City-Council-Regular-Meeting-Minutes-For-Packet.pdf.aspx>

"Kate Haug commented as follows:

- *I have two comments.*
- *One is that we have a very important election coming up.*
- *I strongly urge voters to vote for three candidates since we have three open council seats.*
- *We can see from these council meetings that every single voice on council is important and matters.*  
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*Agenda Item Number: 1*

- *So we want to make sure when we're voting that you're electing three people that you're comfortable with representing you in town.*
- *My second question or comment is that we're being sued over our parking ordinance, and one of the members of the lawsuit is a resident of the RV village.*
- *Simultaneously tonight, the RV village is being we're being asked to support funding for the RV village.*

- *If we continue to fund the RV village, will we continue to be sued."*

As you can see from the minutes, I was not commenting on the City's support of the RV Village, I was asking "if we continue to fund the RV village, will we continued to be sued?"

On November 8, 2022, Ms. Hagar-Rush's blog for "The Sebastopol Times," which she states is completely independent from Council, she wrote in regards to my public comment:

*"Kate Haug urged voters to vote for three city council people in today's election and took issue with the city's support for HorizonShine, the homeless RV Village at the north end of town."*

On November 8, I contacted Ms. Rush and Mr. Dougherty with the following email:

*"Dear Dale and Laura,*

*I believe that you misquoted me. In my public comment, I asked if the funding for Horizon's Shine would mitigate the law suit by one of the residents of Horizon Shine against the City's RV Parking Ordinance. In fact, I said nothing about the City's support but rather was asking directly about the lawsuit as one of the basis of the lawsuit was that Horizon's Shine was closing due to a lack of funding and therefore displacing the residents.*

*Instead you misquote me by saying the following:*

*"*

- *Kate Haug urged voters to vote for three city council people in today's election and took issue with the city's support for HorizonShine, the homeless RV Village at the north end of town.*

*Please update and correct this passage to reflect my statement.*

*Best,*

*Kate Haug"*

I believe my request for clarification was clear and is also supported by the minutes statements.

On November 11, Ms. Hagar Rush emailed me the following:

*"Hi Kate - I clarified your comment in the last city council recap.*

*She also took issue with the city's support for HorizonShine, the homeless RV Village at the north end of town, in light of the fact that one of the residents there is involved in an ACLU lawsuit against the city's parking ordinance."*

I emailed her back the following:

*"Hi Laura,*

*I ask for the following correction as in my statement, I do not have an issue with the funding but am asking about how funding impacts the lawsuit:*

*She asked if the funding of the Horizon's Shine, the homeless RV Village at the north end of town, would mitigate the lawsuit against the City's RV Parking Ordinance as one of the plaintiffs in the suit is a resident of Horizon's Shine."*

Ms. Hagar Rush emailed the following:

*Kate - I'm afraid you don't get to dictate my gloss on your comments. - Laura*

I responded that I wanted the summary to reflect my actual statement and would write a letter to Council, which I am doing now.

As Ms. Hagar Rush has a dual relationship with the City, one where it is part of the City's Public Relations arm via her contract promoting the City via her paid ReLaunch position and one where she claims she has a wholly independent relationship with the City covering Council meetings, I ask that Council reflect on Ms. Hagar Rush's professionalism and whether or not she has the task of accurately quoting people on public comment.

In addition, does Council believe that Ms. Hagar Rush is the best person to promote Sebastopol and communicate with its residents as she seems rather defensive in this situation and in others where people question her? Attached are some screenshots from the comments section of the "Sebastopol Times," where she uses profanity and hostile language.

If Ms. Hagar Rush is reporting, then it seems she has the obligation to correctly quote people making public comments, especially if that comment is located within the minute record for the meeting. If Ms. Hagar Rush is representing and promoting the City of Sebastopol, it seems she would want to promote the values of the City rather than a defensive attitude toward people who simply want their statements to be accurately reflected and clarity on important issues.

Once again, I ask that Ms. Hagar Rush's summary of my quote reflects my actual statement which is clearly located in the minutes from the meeting.

Best,

Kate Haug



**NYT** 36 min ago

I don't think you can be an unbiased and objective journalist reporting on the City of Sebastopol if you are also employed by them. In effect your contract with the City is specifically for PR and marketing. In effect this sub stack blog is operating as a PR tool for the Council. It appears you need to give up one or the other.

 Reply Give gift Collapse ...



**Laura Hagar Rush** 20 min ago  **Author**

Luckily, I don't give a shit what you think. I won the contract with the city, and then a few months later my old newspaper folded. Rather than leave the town without a newspaper - and leave the city government uncovered - I started a new newspaper, in my spare time for free. What you been doing with your sorry ass?

 Reply Collapse ...



**Laura Hagar Rush** 11 min ago  **Author**

Red flag numero uno: people who are too chickenshit to show their face or name in their comments.

 Reply Collapse ...



**NYT** 3 min ago

Thank you for your comment. I am glad to know your ideas and general life philosophy. But since you are kind of scaring me. I won't be posting any more. Thank you for showing me your commitment to journalism, democratic debate and the civil exchange. of ideas. I feel so welcome on your "news platform" that I won't be returning.

 Reply Gift a subscription Delete

Collapse ...