

From: E [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [REDACTED] [Don Schwartz](#); [Mary Gourley](#)
Subject: Re: Sebastopol City Council Meeting Mach 4, 2025
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 9:45:20 AM

Please read the editorial in today's Press Democrat, prior to tonight's meeting.

A high (or rather, low) light:

'Even City Council members would have to notify City Hall before they talked to a reporter, a ridiculous capitulation by independently elected officials who have a right and even a responsibility to speak for themselves.'

> On Mar 3, 2025, at 8:18 PM, Barbara <baharris@sonic.net> wrote:

>

> Dear City Council Members and Mayor, City of Sebastopol, City Manager, Don Schwartz,

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> I have been disturbed and concerned regarding the potentially diminished press access to city council members regarding discussions and publishing of activities, opinions, and discussions.

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> As a result, please accept this communication to encourage your commitment to a free press with transparent, timely, and available intention toward receipt and response of questions, opinions, and concerns.

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> As a small town, with carefully elected citizens serving as council members, there is a significant investment toward being heard and recognized without any perceived or actual restrictions.

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> I am requesting a refrain from necessary referral to "alert the city manager and assistant manager, who would then alert the mayor that one of their number would be talking to the press".

> This would obviously hierarchy could, of course stifle, discourage, and interrupt the flow of information. Routing through city hall, rather than an immediate approach to include each and every council member would certainly discourage citizens' input, enthusiasm, and possible engagement. Each of our voices is valuable and is to be treated as valid, important and engaging.

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> Please also consider the content of inquiries, questions, analyses, and/or suggestions.

> These are initiated by interest which expects and deserves inclusive and valid responses. These are not to be categorized per perceived importance. Each is to be considered.

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> It is imperative that the city of Sebastopol council members and leadership positions consider access to the press and citizenry as essential involvement, rather than potential disruption or inconvenience.

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> Barbara A Harris

[REDACTED] Sebastopol

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