

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Recent council press policies
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 11:02:16 AM

Dear City of Sebastopol,

I oppose your recently updated and defined city council press policies.

It is obvious that a main tenant of your updated policies is to control the narrative. That is not your job. Your job is to disseminate information NOT to control the information. When, where and on what you are being asked about (by a citizen or the press) then becomes your sworn duty to engage and provide the information requested. Information in a very timely manner, with no spin, no delay, no one afraid to speak out of order or turn. You do not own the information of our city, you are holding it for us and when we/press request it, you must give it.

What is a free press and how does a government organize themselves in relationship to a free press? Thank you for giving us here in west Sonoma County a piece of the larger debate raging across our nation currently. Thanks to your newly stated press policies, we in west county are now provided with a real-time, really important discussion of what is free speech, a free press, a free community? Will you now acknowledge the seriousness of your misguided policies or pull the "I AM THE EMPEROR AND WHAT I SAY GOES" card? Please remember you are not reigning over us, you are us, we are each other and government works for us.

Restricting the press and your staff when approached by press is clearly a control issue. Exerting undue control over the community that you are hired to serve is a twisted power dynamic that I encourage you to work out now by eliminating the majority of your newly defined press policies.

Your new policies are restrictive, controlling and already resulting in real-time delays and omissions on real city happenings. You do not get to preemptively prioritize what our community issues are and then ignore requests/rights because you didn't prioritize them. You get to prioritize to your best ability AND ALSO respond in real time to what else is going on as brought to you by the people/press. Saying you have prioritized our issues and now we all have to stand in line behind that perfect prioritized list reeks of hubris and "we know better than you, leave us alone and we will tell you when something is a priority to you".

Enacting public policies to remove the permission of people/press to directly access government staff of their choosing is wrong and illegal. Transparent government does not hide behind policies that remove people/press's access to their government. It is actually very plain and simple, don't get in the people/press's way of accessing our government. Your recent policies violate a free people, press and community.

Please consider my voice in this discussion. What we do here is very important for continuing together or in opposition of each other. The FREE press is ALL OF OUR best friend, please treat them and us as such.

Thank you,
Stephanie Lennox