

Dear Council Members and City Staff,

I understand tonight's meeting is a procedural and bureaucratic function to approve Council Member McLewis' 60 Day absence.

Council Member McLewis has been a vital part of the Council and has served on two very complicated and demanding Ad Hoc committees – fire and garbage. She worked with her colleagues on extremely successful outcomes for the City of Sebastopol. These committees required many additional meetings and an extraordinary amount of document review, diligence and time.

Council Member McLewis has been devoted in serving her community with her time, expertise and compassion. She strives for the best outcome for Sebastopol's diverse citizens. One recent example is her advocacy for the residents of Elderberry Commons. Council Member McLewis was a sounding board for residents and a support for them.

While I know this is a procedural vote, I was a bit taken aback by the public comment made by Kyle Falbo. He does not recognize all of the valuable and critical input Council Member McLewis has made during her term. I have attended almost all the Council Meetings, perhaps more than Mr. Falbo and do not agree with his assessment.

Being a Sebastopol Council Member is a public service. It has minimal pay - \$300 per month – and the demands and stress of a full-time job. Council Members must field an array of emotional content from the public and carry the responsibility of running a City.

While I do not always agree with Council, I can certainly acknowledge that everyone on Council works hard and is working in a more or less volunteer capacity. I find it somewhat disingenuous that Mr. Falbo, who does not serve on any City commissions, criticizes McLewis for lack of participation when she has most likely spent 20-60 hours per week on City business since her election.

Obviously, Council will approve McLewis' absence as she has been a diligent and constructive member of Council and been a guiding force in two major City transitions – fire and garbage. At this time, it might be good for Council to educate the public on the nature of service and how much time Council Members devote to their positions in additions to the meetings. Mr. Falbo might simply not realize the amount of hours each Council Member devotes to their position.

Best,  
Kate Haug