

From: Karen [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2026 9:43 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Subject: Barlow vote

I am absolutely stunned at the carelessness in which City Council members caved to Barney Aldridge's threats to not build the hotel unless you decided to do it his way immediately. What an outrage, that you are all so careless with taxpayer money. This isn't about wanting to ensure the hotel gets built, it's about the lack of due diligence on your part. Many excellent points were made during public comment, about the legality, about setting a standard, about protecting public funds, possibly setting a cap, etc. Initially it appeared Council wanted to hold off. But after Aldridge issued another threat, you caved. All he got was a scolding for bullying you. Mr. Zollman himself cited his empty promises but you chose to believe a man who has a record of breaking of his word, such as promising flood control, promising a sidewalk, promising to promote the downtown. All broken promises.

It's not a no risk investment. There are costs to the City. And if it goes bankrupt we will have an empty monstrosity of a building for the entrance to our town. You all have a responsibility to look at the additional costs to the City before you give away half the TOT.

I recognize the work you all put into this role but this was such an embarrassment. He didn't discover a problem yesterday and it's naive to think his investors wouldn't wait a week or two to come up with a thoughtful plan.

Karen McClure
Vaughan Whalen