From: Lee Mathias [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, November 14, 2026 11:35 AM
To: Zulema Higgins <zhiggins@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Public Comment Received For City Council <citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov>; Mary Gourley <mgourley@cityofsebastopol.gov>
Cc: Ian Hoff [redacted]
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 13 Staff recommendation is nonsensical

Dear City Staff and City Council,

Staff reports are a critical element of Sebastopol's city governance. Staff reports provide the basis for the public and the city council members to understand the issue at hand and the proposed solutions. City Council do have the option to communicate with staff prior to a meeting, but the public does not enjoy such luxury and thus are dependent on well written staff reports.

Agenda item 13 proposes a simple change to Chapter 8.36 of the city ordinance. The proposal before council is to strike section 9.36.090 which caused Chapter 9.36 to be automatically repealed on January 1, 2027. The automatic repeal was added to ensure the council could evaluate whether the ordinance was still necessary and/or required any changes.

It appears that someone copied from a prior staff report when this ordinance was enacted and didn't update the Staff Recommendation.

The staff recommendation for this agenda item states:

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:
1) Introduce and waive first reading of an Ordinance to add Chapter 9.36, Just Cause Eviction and Tenant Relocation, to the Sebastopol Municipal Code regarding Regulated Units; and
2) Adopt an Urgency Ordinance to add Chapter 9.36, Just Cause Eviction and Tenant Relocation, to the Sebastopol Municipal Code regarding Regulated Units.

This recommendation is copied from the January staff report and is unrelated to the agenda item proposed before you at this meeting. Similarly, the OPTIONS and most likely the Attachments are incorrect (incomplete).

The staff recommendation is important. Staff are usually the experts, have spent time studying and crafting the proposal and should be heavily weighted in decisions by the City Council. When recommendations are nonsensical it undermines the confidence of both council and the public in the information included in staff reports. Other staff report errors describing background or supporting data may not be so obvious and have the potential to lead to poor decisions and open the city to legal actions.

Cramming two weeks of meetings into a single "holiday" week is a challenge. It is up to the City Manager and the Agenda Review Committee to set realistic goals for each meeing allowing time for all staff reports to be properly drafted and reviewed.

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