

Written Public Comment — Agenda Item 13

October 6, 2026

To: Sebastopol City Council

Re: Creation of Ad Hoc Committee or Council Liaison Regarding Racism, Social Bullying, and Mockery and Direction Regarding Training and Other Options

Dear Councilmembers:

Our aim as residents is to confront toxic bias that undermines safety, dignity, and belonging, and to build empathy across Sebastopol. We understand the City—and especially a six-month advisory committee—cannot eradicate bias on its own; that is not its job. Its role should be to enable residents to reach farther: connect with one another and organizations beyond the committee's limited reach, while the City handles actions within its authority. I ask Council to make this enabling role concrete. The staff report presents an advisory committee or Council liaison for Council's decision today.

What Option 1 actually creates. The proposed committee would have two appointed Councilmembers. It allows them to invite neighbors, school officials, Safeway representatives, youth, restorative-justice practitioners, City staff and others to particular meetings; it does not give residents committee seats. The committee would hold an organizational meeting within three weeks of appointment, meet approximately monthly, and submit recommendations within six months of its first meeting. It is advisory only. Staff estimates 6–12 hours for meeting attendance over six months, excluding research and preparation, with support absorbed within existing resources.

I support Option 1 only with meaningful resident membership. Please amend it to include **six appointed community members alongside the two Councilmembers**, and ask the City Attorney to clarify the applicable Brown Act and other requirements before finalizing the structure. Invitees can offer valuable input, but they are not a substitute for residents who share responsibility for the work and its recommendations.

Please also give the committee a clear assignment:

- Define the subject as **toxic bias and harassment of all kinds**, not only the wording “social bullying and mockery,” and avoid singling out one identity group.
- Publish a short work plan identifying City responsibilities, partner responsibilities, deliverables, owners and deadlines. Include a privacy-protecting baseline that keeps community reports, police classifications, school reports and confirmed findings distinct; unlike records should not be combined or presented as a trend.
- Require a written Council response to each recommendation—accepted, modified or declined, with reasons, an accountable owner and a timeline—and periodic public status updates. Identify any staff time or costs beyond meeting attendance before they are incurred.
- Enable residents to continue and extend the work beyond the committee's six-month term by connecting them with residents and organizations outside its reach. Residents can work with the City or independently; the committee should strengthen that capacity, not absorb responsibility for community-wide change.

If Council chooses Option 2, please give the liaison-led process the same scope, resident participation, written deliverables, deadlines and public Council follow-through. The report describes meetings led by the existing liaison, staff assistance as needed, a report back to Council, and a staff-prepared draft graffiti ordinance; that ordinance should not become the sole measure of addressing toxic bias.

Finally, please preserve accessible remote public comment and apply conduct-based, viewpoint-neutral rules to any disruption. Residents and the City can work in parallel without competing for credit or authority: resident-led outreach builds empathy and connection, while the City enables that work and follows through on actions within its authority.

Respectfully,

Robert Moniz

Sources

1. City of Sebastopol, *October 6, 2026 City Council Meeting Agenda*, Item 13. [Official agenda PDF](#) (accessed October 6, 2026).
2. City of Sebastopol, *Item 13 Staff Report*, especially the recommendation and proposed committee scope of work. [Official Item 13 packet PDF](#) (accessed October 6, 2026).