

Tonight, Beachwood City Council voted to censure Councilmember Mike Burkons for his conduct. A censure is an expression of formal disapproval of the conduct of an elected official by their peers. The measure passed unanimously, apart from Mr. Burkons.

Mr. Burkons earned his censure because he retaliated against a Beachwood resident who asked for an update on a complaint they had lodged against an off-duty police officer. The evidence that Council reviewed showed that Mr. Burkons first argued with the resident via email and then contacted senior leaders at the resident's place of employment in order to exert pressure on the resident to be silent.

The resident then reached out to other members of Beachwood City Council for assistance. On behalf of the entire Council and Mayor, James Pasch contacted the resident's place of employment, apologized for Mr. Burkons' behavior, and worked to mitigate the impact to the resident's reputation.

Further evidence showed that Councilman Burkons was simultaneously texting with the police officer noted in the resident's original complaint. When the officer inquired about, "any thing new?" Councilman Burkons responded, "Nope, I think the email to CH council quieted him."

The First Amendment to the Constitution enshrines our right to express our opinions to our elected leaders free from the threat of retaliation. Mr. Burkons failed to respect that right and that's why the Beachwood City Council issued the first censure in many years.

We, the members of Beachwood City Council, strongly condemn Mr. Burkons' attempts to silence a dissenting voice. We hope that Mr. Burkons will learn from this experience and work to represent his constituents in a productive manner.

The resolution of censure and evidence that Council reviewed is public record and can be found on the City of Beachwood's website at <https://www.beachwoodohio.com/AgendaCenter>.