

## Re: Response to Censure

“Who are they going to believe? You, or me?”

Those are the words that Lemoore Police Chief Darrell Smith said to me in a private meeting, after I brought up concerns about the police force. I took that as a threat. Nathan Olsen was also present in the room, at that time.

For the first nine years I lived in Lemoore, I never had one negative experience with law enforcement. Then, I voted against Lemoore Police Chief Darrell Smith’s choice for City Manager, Nathan Olson.

Immediately after that, I was pulled over numerous times by local law enforcement for trivial, and sometimes non-existent, offenses. I was followed many more times, including being followed and pulled over by a Lemoore police officer, well outside the city limits of Lemoore. I also had the police called on me, *numerous times*, for non-existent offenses.

I don’t know if the individual officers were acting independently, if they were being directed from above, or if citizens who were angry at my vote were weaponizing the police, but I do know that the probability of having so many police encounters in such a short period of time, after NINE YEARS without a single negative encounter, cannot be a coincidence. I was either being targeted, or I was the luckiest person alive.

I tried to address this situation privately with the Chief Smith to avoid a public spectacle. Shortly after brining the issue up, Chief Smith yelled at me in our aforementioned meeting for questioning the mayor on social media, *as if that were any of his business*. He also criticized me for using the term feminism. He asked if my bosses at West Hills College knew about me using the term **feminism** on my social media page, *as if that were something that would get me in trouble!*

Shortly after this, defamatory lies about my interactions with local police were printed in a local blog run a friend of Mayor Madrigal - a friend that has already cost the city tens of thousands of dollars in legal costs *after doing the same thing to a previous councilmember*. That councilmember left me with nearly 300 pages of documentation related to that person - which is now in the hands of my legal counsel.

When I asked for dash-cam or vest-cam videos of these supposed serious incidents, I was told that there was no video and they refused to provide me with any reports.

After getting confirmation from City Manager Nathan Olson that there was a close familial relationship between him and Chief Smith, I asked for an independent investigation into my experience with local law enforcement. Chief Smith responded by claiming that if he lived in my district he would recall me. What Chief Smith failed to mention is that *he does reside in my*

*supervisorial district, where he recently ran for county supervisor - the same position I ran for in 2014.*

Since that meeting I've been subjected to a constant barrage of online harassment and bullying by members of local law enforcement and their families. This bullying has included racist, and misogynistic attacks, *and has even included attacks on my husband and our five young children.*

In the wake of the meeting, Chief Darrell Smith also attempted to intimidate me into silence by sending me a baseless legal threat from his personal lawyer, and I have also had my job at West Hills College threatened multiple times by people related in some way to local law enforcement, including our Mayor.

I have shared a small portion of these vitriolic online attacks on my social media, and will be sharing much more in the coming days.

*I am being censured because I refuse to remain silent in the face of these vile attacks. This council claims that it is "unbecoming of a council member" to respond in the way that I have to this online bullying. **To the contrary, I maintain that it is not only appropriate, but the duty of any good leader to forcefully push back against this repulsive behavior.***

For two years I tried to work with Darrell Smith and Ray Madrigal in a collegial manner, but as soon as I disagreed with their leadership decisions: they took advantage of my trust, and attacked me personally, rather than having a substantial policy debate. *Due to this shattered trust, I now have to question every interaction I have with law enforcement.*

Some of the decisions that I have disagreed with include: failing to pay our firefighters for nearly five months and instead, wasting the city's time discussing my Twitter feed; decimating the beautiful trees on Fox street without a clear plan for revitalizing the area; and failing to do proper research regarding a possible ordinance change regarding mobile food vendors. After I pointed out a factually incorrect statement by Councilman Brown regarding mobile food vendors, Mr. Brown had the audacity to tell me that I could criticize him, but not to do it in public!

In April, Mr. Madrigal asked me on the dais if I thought he was a misogynist. The answer is yes. **Absolutely.**

When I first met Mr. Madrigal, I did not ask him for an endorsement. Rather, I inquired as to why he had already endorsed Jeff Chedester for City Council, without at least meeting me first. Instead of addressing my question, his response was to ask if I really had five kids. He then proceeded to ask how old I was and how old my oldest child was, as if that had anything to do with my ability to serve on the city council. I responded by asking if he would have asked a man that? He responded by saying that if he looked as young as me, then he would have. *I don't believe that for a second.*

After being elected to council, our relationship did not improve. Upon learning that my initial encounter with Mr. Madrigal had offended me, Chief Smith recommended that I attempt to clear the air by bringing the issue up privately with Mr. Madrigal. In doing so, Mr. Madrigal's response was to point his finger at me, and to tell me that I had better not repeat that. Mr. Madrigal has also *repeatedly* yelled and chastised me, *as though I were a child that should submit to him behind closed doors*. **There are witnesses on this council to his repeated inappropriate behavior towards me. Their silence speaks volumes to the women of our community.**

Rather than doing their due diligence in treating these my concerns seriously by having an independent investigation, this council has chosen instead, to attack me and censure me, all in an effort to intimidate me into silence.

I have to ask, why would a man who puts the word integrity next to his name not want an independent review of such serious concerns within the department he oversees? *What is Lemoore Police Chief Darrell Smith so afraid of?*

And why would a council which has expressed so much concern over the city possibly being sued over me posting my opinions on social media, not be concerned with much more serious allegations? *What is this council, and what is our Mayor so afraid of?*

I want to make it perfectly clear to everyone on this council, to police chief Darrell Smith, and to the community members that have chosen to - *or have been incited to* - weaponize the police against me, that **I WILL NOT resign, and I WILL NOT be bullied or intimidated into silence!** I look forward to being censured by this council. I will wear it as a badge of honor. I will frame it and put it on my wall, for I know that I am advocating for the entire community of Lemoore, and not just for a select few.

Thank you.