



CITY COUNCIL ACTION

Council Meeting Date: November 27, 2023

Item No: 24-038

Responsible Dept: City Council

Action Requested: Order

Map/Lot: N/A

Title, Order

Censuring City Councilor Joseph Leonard For Inappropriate Public Remarks Made About Incoming City Councilors

Summary

At the November 13, 2023 Bangor City Council meeting, City Councilor Joseph Leonard during closing remarks expressed displeasure with the advertisements of a campaign group which had endorsed two of the incoming City Council members. Mr. Leonard made the following public comments about the two new Council members who were sworn in as City Councilors for the first time earlier that same day:

"...[b]oth Councilor Fish and Councilor Deane have expressed that they had nothing to do with these negative ads and have spoken out against them. While I appreciate those statements, those ads never stopped. And while I personally choose to forgive everyone who was involved in this advertising campaign, including our two new Councilors..."

Later in his comments, Councilor Leonard stated, "I want to clearly state that I forgive the two of you for your part in this negative ad campaign that commenced in this city, and I want to stress that I will work with the two of you for the benefit of Bangor." He went on to say, "...[t]he responsibility of building trust on this Council is on you, and I'm not going to lie—you have some work to do in the coming years."

Council Leonard's remarks were inappropriate, offensive, and disrespectful to the incoming City Council members. The City's Code of Ethics requires that City Councilors maintain a standard of conduct that will inspire public confidence in the integrity of the City's government, and Councilor Leonard's inappropriate public remarks about the incoming City Councilors fell well short of this standard.

This Order, if passed, will formally censure Councilor Leonard for his remarks.

Committee Action

Committee:

Meeting Date:

Action:

For:

Against:

Staff Comments & Approvals

City Manager

City Solicitor

Finance Director

Introduced for: Passage

**CITY OF BANGOR ORDER**

Date: November 27, 2023

Item No. 24-038

Assigned to Councilor: Fournier

ORDER, Censuring City Councilor Joseph Leonard For Inappropriate Public Remarks Made About Incoming City Councilors

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2023, at the regularly-scheduled City Council meeting during closing remarks, City Councilor Joseph Leonard made the following public comments about two new City Council members who had been sworn in as City Councilors earlier that day:

"...[b]oth Councilor Fish and Councilor Deane have expressed that they had nothing to do with these negative ads and have spoken out against them. While I appreciate those statements, those ads never stopped. And while I personally choose to forgive everyone who was involved in this advertising campaign, including our two new Councilors..."

Later in his comments, Councilor Leonard stated, "I want to clearly state that I forgive the two of you for your part in this negative ad campaign that commenced in this city, and I want to stress that I will work with the two of you for the benefit of Bangor." He went on to say, "...[t]he responsibility of building trust on this Council is on you, and I'm not going to lie—you have some work to do in the coming years."

WHEREAS, the remarks made by Councilor Leonard were inappropriate, offensive, and disrespectful to the two incoming City Council members; and

WHEREAS, the City's Code of Ethics requires that City Councilors maintain a standard of conduct that will inspire public confidence in the integrity of the City's government; and

WHEREAS, Councilor Leonard's inappropriate remarks fell well short of this standard;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BANGOR THAT,

City Councilor Joseph Leonard is hereby formally censured for his inappropriate public comments made at the November 13, 2023 Bangor City Council meeting about the two incoming City Council members.

IN CITY COUNCIL

**NOVEMBER 27, 2023
CO 24-038**

Motion made and seconded to Suspend the Rules to take up Order 24-038

Vote: 7 – 1

Councilors Voting Yes: Deane, Fish, Fournier, Hawes, Schaefer, Tremble, Pelletier

Councilors Voting No: Yacoubagha

Passed

Motion made and seconded for Passage

Vote: 7 – 1

Councilors Voting Yes: Deane, Fish, Fournier, Hawes, Schaefer, Tremble, Pelletier

Councilors Voting No: Yacoubagha

Passed



CITY CLERK