

[Jay Scherr statement to FlaglerLive on FC3/Peter Johnson, June 21, 2025]

On Friday afternoon, Nancy Crouch, Debra Morgan, and I were in the TDC conference room preparing for the upcoming Flagler County Cultural Council (FC3) board meeting. We arrived approximately 25 minutes before the meeting was scheduled to begin. Peter Johnson arrived a few minutes after I did.

During our pre-meeting conversation, we briefly discussed FC3's recent grant presentation at the June 17th City Council Business Meeting. Debra and Peter had attended the meeting; Nancy and I had not. As we were discussing the topic, Peter began expressing his frustration with the way FC3 was treated during the City Council meeting. His emotions escalated quickly—he raised his voice, then began yelling and using profanity. This behavior was uncharacteristic of Peter in our usual board settings.

At that point, Debra stated that she would not tolerate being spoken to in that manner and left the conference room to return to her office. Peter exited the room shortly afterward. Nancy checked on Debra, who was visibly upset, and then returned to ask if I would speak with Peter and ask him to leave the premises.

I spoke with Peter outside in the parking lot. I listened to his concerns and then informed him that his behavior was completely inappropriate, unprofessional, and unacceptable. I explained that, as a result, he would not be permitted to attend the board meeting. While he was argumentative, he eventually appeared to be leaving the premises.

After making sure Debra was okay, I returned to the board meeting, which had just begun. Moments later, I was called back out by a TDC staff member. Peter had returned and was standing outside the TDC entrance. I spoke with him again, this time he was recording our conversation. He asked for a reason he wasn't being allowed into the meeting. I reiterated the concern over his prior behavior. He then left.

Shortly after I returned to the meeting, I was again called out. This time, a sheriff's deputy was present. Debra mentioned that, given the circumstances and following the guidance of the Deputy County Administrator, the sheriff's office had been contacted to trespass Peter if he returned again due to his earlier aggressive conduct. The TDC staff, all of whom had heard his outburst, expressed concern for their safety.

At that point, I was asked to notify the board that we would need to vacate the building. The

board members left the TDC offices, and we relocated to another site to continue and complete our meeting.

This was an unfortunate situation and one that underscores the importance of emotional regulation, for all of us. Passion and conviction are valuable, but how we communicate, especially in moments of stress or disagreement, matters deeply. We each have a responsibility to model respectful, professional behavior and to create a safe and constructive environment for discussion and decision making.