

OC Human Relations Commission Seeks to Mediate Alvarez/Chase Situation; Martinez Leaves Alvarez off her Supporters List

By Dan Chmielewski

Earlier this week, acting Santa Ana City Manager Paul Walters asked the OC Human Relations Commission to intervene in the case of anti-Semitic comments made by Santa Ana Mayor Pro Tem Claudia Alvarez. Executive Director Rusty Kennedy confirms he has since spoken separately with all parties in the case as a part of his organization's mediation efforts with the businesses in Downtown Santa Ana affected



by PBID. Walters made the request on Monday according to Kennedy.

Kennedy says his discussions with the parties involved remain confidential and he couldn't say if they have met personally to resolve the situation. Any announcement would be made with the mutual agreement of Alvarez and Irv Chase and Ryan Chase.

Last week, Alvarez used an anti-Semitic example to compare Irv Chase to Hitler and accused him and his son Ryan of engaging in "ethnic cleansing" by ridding Downtown Santa Ana of small Latino businesses. Chase stormed out the meetings.

Alvarez's comments have sparked international outrage with newspapers in Israel picking up the story. Her comments have been condemned by the ADL, which also called for her resignation, LULAC, and the DPOC. The city has received more than 120 emails and phone calls calling for her resignation and an online petition asking for her to step down is now at 99 signatures and growing. The city issued an apology to the Chase's in a press release issued on Friday.

Another consequence is the notable absence of Alvarez's name on the candidacy announcement for Michele Martinez, the Ward 2 council representative who is running for the California state assembly. Every other member of the Santa Ana city council is listed as a supporter save Carlos Bustamante, a Republican, and Alvarez herself. Alvarez and Martinez were often at odds in 2008 when Martinez challenged Miguel Pulido for Mayor, but have since been viewed as chummy. Chris Prevatt emailed Martinez about the omission and has received no response.