

Timeline of Senator Mitch McConnell's Censure

1 July 2022

Bobbie Coleman emailed the Chair, Cheryl Benitez, requesting to censure Senator Mitch McConnell. Cheryl replied she will put it on the agenda for August since no meeting was scheduled in July, due to County Fair.

8 Aug 2022

At the regular scheduled meeting of the Hardin County Republican Party, immediately following the Star-Spangled Banner, Bobbie Coleman brought a motion to the floor to amend the agenda. Cheryl did **not** have it listed on the agenda to censure Mitch McConnell, as her email had stated. The motion was seconded and passed. The chair wanted to immediately go into discussion, but the vice-chair suggested to wait and add as the last item.

As the last item on the amended agenda, Bobbie Coleman read some highlighted issues on S. 2938 the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act of 2022. Which is a violation of our 2nd Amendment right. It was then opened for discussion. Following discussion, a motion was made by Marsha Jewell to Censure Senator McConnell and have a committee write the censure and present it at the next meeting, which would be 12 September 2022. The vote was 20-6 in favor on the motion. Donnie Thomas called for a roll call vote. The Nays consisted of 4 Officers and 2 Committee members. By a majority vote, Senator Mitch McConnell was censured by the Hardin County Republican Party. Cheryl Benitez stated to form a committee and take care of it.

11 Aug 2022

Cheryl Benitez sent a text to Bobbie Coleman, asking her to remove her post about the censure from her personal Facebook page.

19 August 2022

During the White Mills Festival, the Chair, Cheryl Benitez, spoke to another County Committee member and asked if they were present at the 8 August 2022 GOP meeting where the "Extremists" voted to censure Senator Mitch McConnell. She also stated she was going to cancel future meetings until after the November election. Statement is included

1 Sep 2022

Donnie Thomas sent an email to Cheryl Benitez, asking her to place the finalized censure on the 12 September agenda per IAW Roberts Rules of Order.

5 Sep 2022

Cheryl Benitez sends out an email cancelling the 12 September 2022 meeting.

6 Sep 2022

Donnie Thomas sent an email to Cheryl Benitez with the 5 signatures, IAW the Official Rules of the Republican Party of Kentucky Handbook 4.03, requesting a special meeting to be called to read the finalized censure of Senator Mitch McConnell prepared by the committee.

7 Sep 2022

Donnie Thomas and Bobbie Coleman walked the original hard copy of the petition to the GOP HQ at 0800. Cheryl Benitez saw them walking from their vehicle towards the HQ, and she locked both glass doors. Bobbie Coleman

knocked on the glass window and Cheryl Benitez came to the hall, which is between 2 sets of double glass doors. She refused to open; therefore, the petition was slid through the double locked glass doors. Bobbie Coleman was recording and has that video.

12 September 2022

Debbie Webb made a request for the minutes on 12 September 2022, and a copy of the "Draft" 8 August 2022, minutes was provided because the minutes weren't approved yet. These minutes should have been turned in and approved by 22 August 2022. The draft minutes, and the minutes that were read in November from the 8 August meeting, indicates the voting members who voted to censure Mitch McConnell. Minutes list 18 as voting in favor of the Censure, and 6 voting against the censure.

In the RPK Rules 4.09, it states that new members shall not be recognized until the minutes of the meeting, at which they were elected are turned in, within 10 days to the State Party Headquarters, with their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. New committee members started to receive official emails 16 September 2022. So, we question when the minutes were turned in and approved.

The majority vote should not reflect those 3 new members who voted as precinct captains/co-captains and would make the total who voted to censure McConnell 15 County Committee members. The minority vote should not reflect the county chairs vote and would make that the total who voted against the censure 5.

In addition, IAW RRO 12th EDITION, newly revised, 44:12 the presiding officer (in other than a ballot vote) votes whenever her vote will affect the results – that is, she can vote either to break or cause a tie, or, in a case where a two-thirds vote is required, she can vote either to cause or to block the attainment of the necessary two thirds.

13 September 2022

Donnie Thomas sent an email to Cheryl asking the status of the special meeting. Cheryl Benitez's reply was her interpretation of the 4.03 is that, "any such meeting shall require at least five (5) business days written notice to all members of the county committee. It doesn't say the meeting must be held within 5 days of the petition...you will get your special meeting."

16 September 2022

Cheryl Benitez calls for a Special Meeting on 26 September 2022, for a vote on funds for a running candidate.

22 September 2022

Bobbie Coleman emailed Elizabeth "Hunter" Whitaker, 2nd District Director of Local Development. Bobbie Coleman wanted to get clarification on bringing our Special Meeting concerns up during Cheryl Benitez's Special Meeting. Hunter informed Bobbie Coleman that it had to stay on topic of what the Special Meeting was called for. Hunter also clarified that the Chair doesn't have a set time to hold a Special Meeting. As long as a 5-day notice is given unless it's an emergency.

26 September 2022

Special Meeting held for Candidate Taul to receive GOP funds. Prior to the meeting, Laura LaRue, our Parliamentarian and Precinct Captain, approached Marsha Jewell and stated since the censure was voted and approved, that we didn't need to call a Special Meeting just to present the censure.

5 October 2022

Cheryl Benitez cancels another GOP meeting claiming it was due to campaigning for the candidates. Bobbie Coleman emailed Cheryl and stressed the frustrations of another canceled meeting that we felt was being done to avoid the censure of Senator Mitch McConnell.

2 November 2022

Cheryl Benitez informed us at Rand Paul's event, at Addington Field, that we will be holding a November meeting and we can finish up the censure. She mentioned doing it after the regular meeting, as a Special Meeting, but Bobbie Coleman recommended it could be just added to the agenda as a committee report.

14 November 2022

At the regular meeting at the HQ, the censure was not on the agenda and there were no committee reports. Cheryl Benitez stated she will be calling a Special Meeting the end of November. She stated she didn't want any non-voting members there. Not all members can vote but should be able to be present for a voice. She also replied to a non-voting member, via text, that he could not come because it was only opened to voting members.

18 November 2022

Cheryl Benitez called a Special Meeting for 29 November 2022, per our Petition dated 5 September 2022.

29 November 2022

Instead of opening the meeting with the County Committee reading the censure, the Leadership, the candidates that ran for office in the last election, and a few County Committee members tried everything possible to stop the censure that was already approved during a meeting back on 8 August 2022. With a lot of tension on both sides, the committee read the censure that was written at the end of August. The wording had not yet been approved so a motion was made to accept the censure as read with a 2nd motion that followed. A vote was conducted, and the motion passed with majority vote 24-14. A motion was made and 2nd for the censure to go into the local newspaper at GOP expense, as well as posting the censure on the GOP Facebook page. It was at the time during the discussion, the Chair, Cheryl Benitez, resigned and walked out stating "we could have it and said that she did not want it anymore". Jim Weiss, Vice-Chair, stepped up as Chair and said it would be temporary until a new chair could be elected. Discussion continued and a motion was made and 2nd, to amend the original motion to add, if the funds could not be provided by the GOP, that we pass the hat to collect the funds for the ad in the newspaper. A vote was called and passed by majority 24-12. The meeting was recorded audio, by Kim Coleman, which captures all the tension from the start of the meeting to the end of the meeting and the resignation of the Chair, Cheryl Benitez.

30 November 2022

Bobbie Coleman emailed Jim Weiss, Vice-Chair, acting as Chair, giving him the budget guide info on page 8, stating that GOP funds could be spent on newspaper advertisements. With further conversations, via email, through Hunter, Jim Weiss and Bobbie Coleman it was decided the GOP funds could not be used for the newspaper ad. Jim Weiss suggested it would probably be best just to pass the hat.

2 December 2022

An email was sent from Cheryl Benitez stating she changed her mind on resigning, The Christmas party on 12 December 2022 was canceled, February Lincoln Dinner postponed until after Primary election and she is considering quarterly instead of monthly meetings. The email also stated that the 4 County Officers will be appealing the censure under RPK Rule 12.04.

5 December 2022

Cheryl Benitez sent an appeal letter to Timothy Gilliam and a copy of the appeal to the County Committee.

6 December 2022

Bobbie Coleman sent email to Timothy Gilliam and Mac Brown requesting a copy of the appeal and a chance to respond both in writing and in person. The County Committee also had 19 of the 24 voting members sign the letter to Timothy Gilliam dated 3 December 2022.

16 December 2022

Email received from Timothy Gilliam on our options to be heard concerning the appeal