

Fascist Proud Boys threaten incumbents in bid to take over Nevada Republican Party

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On Monday, Nevada's Clark County Republican Party announced that a previously scheduled Tuesday meeting had to be cancelled due to threats by Proud Boy militia members against elected officials. Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, is home to some 2.2 million people, who comprise more than two-thirds of the state's population.

It appears that the Proud Boys, with backing from the sections of the state party, were attempting to replace the party leadership as part of the internecine war within the Republican Party nationally between outright fascists and more traditional reactionaries.

"Our management team has decided the risk to our members outweighs the value of this meeting," Clark County Republican Party Vice Chair Stephen Silberkraus said at a press conference Monday, at which he announced the meeting's cancellation along with the banning of seven people with alleged ties to the Proud Boys.

Following Trump's attempted coup on January 6, elements within the Republican Party who have failed to demonstrate sufficient loyalty to Trump and promote his baseless claim that the election was stolen have been ostracized, while those who have repeated the lie have been elevated.

A recent analysis by *Vice* found that "at least 19 Republican state chairs—including most of the ones in key swing states—publicly pushed former President Trump's big lie about the election."

Those who have been banned by the county party include three leaders of the local Las Vegas Proud Boys group: Rudy Clai, Matt Anthony (Yankley) and Paul Laramie.

Clai, Anthony and Laramie, along with seven other people, previously filed a lawsuit against the central committees of both the county and state parties,

claiming that they were illegally denied entry to Clark County party meetings.

During Monday's press conference, Silberkraus revealed that Proud Boys Clai, Anthony and Laramie had threatened Republican officials, including Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske. Silberkraus also claimed that the group was hosting neo-Nazi social media groups.

He showed images culled from a Telegram group, dubbed "Keep Nevada Open," which lists Anthony as its owner and Clai as its moderator. The filthy images include a photo blaming the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on Jews as well as several caricatures of Jews with money. Another post features a video of Adolf Hitler giving a speech as Nazis march in formation.

While they had not formally announced their candidacy, Anthony and Clai were rumored to have been looking to run for the positions of chairman and vice chairman of the Clark County Republicans against a slate headed by State Senator Carrie Buck, whom the current county party leadership is supporting.

Silberkraus said that in addition to threatening elected officials, the group was planning to flood the church where the Tuesday meeting was to be held with supporters, so as to prevent their opponents from entering.

The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reported last week that Clai, Anthony and Laramie had previously threatened two current Nevada Republican politicians, Clark County District Judge Nadia Krall and Clark County School Board Trustee Katie Williams.

Williams claimed that Anthony called her ahead of a May 13 meeting, at which a vote was to be held on whether to extend Superintendent Jesus Jara's contract. Williams told the *Review-Journal* that Anthony told her

to “vote the right way,” and that “people wanted him to do much worse to me.”

Williams admitted that she and Anthony were previously friends, and that they first met at an anti-mask rally in May 2020. On her Twitter account last year, Williams, a former beauty pageant contestant, had repeatedly spread fascist QAnon propaganda, including the claim that “Wayfair is selling children and if you don’t believe that you’re probably voting for Joe Biden.” She also tweeted, “Mandating masks are only helping child sex traffickers get away and hide.”

In announcing the banning of the seven Proud Boys, Silberkraus said the county party had decided, nearly five months after Proud Boys militia members spearheaded the attack on the US Capitol, to bar anyone with Proud Boys affiliations from membership in the party, as well as “anyone who traffics in intolerance or hateful, anti-Semitic and racist ideology.”

The announcement of the cancellation of the meeting came three days after Nevada Senate Republicans issued a statement calling for an audit of a vote at the April 10 state party meeting in Carson City during which Republican Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske was censured.

The statement was issued following a recent *Review-Journal* article in which Clark County Republican Party Chair David Sajdak claimed that Clai, Anthony and about 40 others had been surreptitiously added to the Clark County Republican roster by Nevada Republican Party Chairman Michael McDonald ahead of the April 10 meeting.

At that meeting, Cegavske was censured by a narrow 226-212 vote for “failing to investigate election fraud” and for making public statements refuting former president Donald Trump’s baseless allegations of election fraud. McDonald told the *Review-Journal* that he was not involved in the censure vote and did not recruit anyone to participate in it.

In their statement calling for an audit, the Nevada Senate Republicans wrote: “News reports that state party leaders may have formed a relationship with members of the organization known as the Proud Boys to sway the censure vote of a public official is profoundly concerning. If there is a determination that any member or employee of the Nevada Republican Party conspired with these individuals or had knowledge of any wrongdoing in the party vote, Senate

Republicans call for their immediate removal and resignation.”

Defending himself and the Proud Boys, Chairman McDonald told the *Review-Journal* that the allegations that he had encouraged the Proud Boys to join the party were “slanderous lies.” In another statement, McDonald defended the lawsuit filed by Anthony, Clai and others, saying that they had made “serious allegations of discrimination” on the part of the county party.

In an interview with the *Review-Journal*, Anthony claimed to have met with McDonald prior to the April 10 vote. Anthony said that McDonald told him they needed to “get Clark County in line” with the rest of the state. He added that he and about 30 other people went to Carson City to ensure that the censure vote passed.

“Our votes absolutely made the difference in censuring,” Anthony boasted to conservative host Johnny Bruchhagen during a recent podcast. On the same podcast, Anthony was asked if McDonald knew that Anthony was a Proud Boy.

“I believe so. It’s not like it’s a secret,” Anthony replied.



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