

YouTuber charged with trespassing in Danbury leads protest at city hall

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DANBURY — A YouTuber who recorded his interactions with city officials at the library and city hall was arrested last week on charges of trespassing and breach of peace, according to the Danbury Superior Court clerk's office.

In an interview, SeanPaul Reyes, said he was arrested July 15, the day after he was confronted by a security guard and another city employee for filming at city hall. Reyes was held on a \$10,000 bond before posting bail. Further details about the arrest were not available from police, Monday.

Through his YouTube channel, Reyes' films or attempts to film inside public buildings— activity he claims is protected under the first amendment. One such video went viral last month after Reyes filmed inside the public library, where he was asked by police to stop recording. The response by police has prompted an internal investigation.

So-called “auditors” are part of a social media movement where people try to film inside public or municipal buildings to see how government officials respond.

Monday, Reyes, who is from Long Island, led a drawn-out demonstration - originally billed as a “press conference” - in the main lobby of city hall, during which he and supporters filmed live on their phones, and heckled police and a security guard.

During the drawn out confrontation Monday afternoon, Reyes' supporters shouted at the security guard and police officers, calling them “Nazis” and “Communists.” The supporters took issue with policies requiring visitors to sign in and wear a mask inside the building, while municipal employees were not required to wear masks inside.

Supporters filmed on their phones throughout the demonstration in the lobby, sometimes drawing backlash from people visiting city hall.

“Why are you so divisive?” asked one man who confronted Reyes inside city hall. The man declined to give his name, saying he was a concerned citizen—and that his wife had told him to avoid trouble. “You’re just saying anything you want to get a rise out of people,” he said.

Several supporters gave various reasons for why they attended, but many cited concerns about their constitutional rights.

Seymour resident Brian Alonzo, who attended the event with his daughter, said he believes “America is going in the wrong direction” and that “a lot of our rights are being slowly taken away.”

Rich Orefic said he learned about Reyes through watching his videos. The Eastchester, N.Y. resident said he didn’t find Reyes’ style confrontational. “Of all the auditors, that they call themselves, he’s the least confrontational at all,” said Orefic. “He does it the right way,” he added, standing outside city hall before the demonstration moved inside.

At one point, two EMTs approached Reyes after pulling up to the demonstration in an ambulance, and asked him to sign a coffee mug— which he did.

Several people shouted at the demonstrators as they gathered outside the municipal building. Others seemed to simply want to know what the gathering was about.