

Subject: Motion re Snow and Ice removal;

Date: Mon, 29 Apr 2002 17:45:46 -0700

From: Ernie Crist <CristE@dnv.org>

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CC: Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@dnv.org>, Directors Team <managecomm@dnv.org>

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST:

Recently I put a motion before District Council that we re-confirm a policy that has been in place for many years that all District streets be cleared of snow within 24 hours of a heavy snow fall.

This policy has apparently been changed without consulting either the public or Council. The District has always taken great pride for clearing roads, including side streets and cul de sacs, within 24 hours of a heavy snow fall. It was always done on a priority basis beginning with main streets and bus routes but all within a 24 hour period.


Residents who complained about being unable to get out of their homes for days during last winter's heavy snow fall were told, however, that now it is up to 72 hours before streets are guaranteed to be cleared. This is clearly contrary to promises made during budget debates that the level of services in the District would be maintained. Indeed, making no cuts was one of the reasons justifying the steep tax increases in the District over the last 10 years. Having to wait up to 72 hours to get out of the house is clearly a cut in the level of services. It follows on the heels of similar cuts in street cleaning. This too was done without consulting either the public or Council.

Prior to this un-announced change, any person knew that they would be able to leave their homes, go to work, to the doctor and or in an emergency, could be accessed by an ambulance or a fire truck within 24 hours regardless of weather conditions. This is clearly not the case anymore.

But my motion that, in light of public concerns, we go back to this policy or at least seek clarification from staff, was not seconded and subsequently I was not allowed to explain the rationale behind the motion. As a result staff does not even have to explain why they changed this policy unilaterally

That an elected official should not be allowed to explain a motion before the Mayor calls for a seconder is in violation of every conceivable democratic principle. We are not speaking about debating a motion per se, we are speaking about being allowed to explain and introduce a motion and then call for a seconder for debate. The new rules were changed following the last civic election in the District. It was one of the first actions of the CCA endorsed District Council.

The CCA is a civic party and represents a special interest group consisting mainly of residents from the Deep Cove waterfront in the District. The CCA endorsed all but one member of the present District Council, including Mayor Don Bell.

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