

Subject: Regular Council Meeting May 6-2002 Agenda Item 9 " 2002 Public Referendum on subsidizing the City of North Van. via Shared Services agreement"

Date: Sun, 5 May 2002 09:00:19 -0700

From: Ernie Crist <CristE@dnv.org>

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST;

This is one of the most important motions of the year since it deals with the continuing bleeding of the District's Finances through the present Shared Services Agreement with the City of North Vancouver.

The District has 3 out of the 4 major recreation facilities in North Vancouver. The total subsidy of the District to the Rec Commission is \$ 5 million annually, more or less. District facilities are accessible to City residents at the same cost as they are to District residents, but the City does not contribute a single penny to the capital maintenance of those facilities.

The same is true for playing fields. There is a surplus of playing fields in the District. At the same time there is a desperate shortage in the City. Since both Municipalities are treated as one, however, there is a combined shortage of playing fields in both the District and the City. The District, at present, is not only building more playing fields for the City but the District is also paying for their maintenance. Hence the subsidies.

Any and all attempts on my part to address this matter in the past failed. The matter is taboo. The Rec Commission is very much in favor of the present arrangement notwithstanding that it is costing the District taxpayers big money.

There have been several expensive reports trying to prove that claims of this subsidy are not true. The Reports were seriously flawed however and now the Rec Commission has commissioned yet another expensive report. It will be the third such report and it will be paid for again by raising fees. In 2000 and within the span of a year the fees were raised by close to 35% except fees for seniors which were raised by almost 55 %. During this years budget debate the Rec Commission again promised that there would be no fee increases. But now that the budget has been approved the Commission is already beating the drums to renege on this promise.

The Rec Commission is desperately trying to sweep the subsidy issue under the rug. It even provided false information to Coopers and Lybrand, the consultants who wrote the first report on "Shared Services". In the report, the values of District facilities were given at a fraction of their replacement value. It even claimed that the Centennial Theater is under the jurisdiction of the Arts Commission when in reality it is under the jurisdiction of the Rec Commission.

The subject of District subsidies to the City is taboo, "Speak not of subsidies even-though it is true, see no subsidies even-though it is true, and hear nothing of subsidies, even-though it is true" appears to

be the motto of the Commission and the politicians who toe its line. And all this at a time when the total tax increase for District homeowners both direct (5.5%) and indirect (10%) will be 15 % this year.

Tomorrow, Monday, May 6, I am presenting yet another motion to Council trying to address this matter. But it is unlikely that there will even be a seconder. I will not even be allowed to explain the motion to the people who have elected me since the present CCA endorsed District Council decreed that no motion may be introduced and explained unless it is seconded by one of the present CCA endorsed members of Council first. The CCA you may remember, was formed prior to the last election to represent the special interests of a group of homeowners in Deep Cove in the District. They do not want to share their adjoining waterfront with the public even though much of it belongs to the public.

In effect this means that the bleeding of the District will continue while City Councillors boast openly, that the reason they do not wish to amalgamate with the District is because taxes in the District are much higher than they are in the City. Not to speak of the City's Heritage Fund which remains intact and is in fact growing, while in the District it suffers from the fatal disease of extinction.



[Part 1.2](#)

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