

Subject: Motion-Electronic display of the order of speaking and duration of speaking time allocated to members of Council during official Council meetings.

Date: Tue, 28 May 2002 15:40:59 -0700

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Notice of Motion - Report Councilor Crist:

That the newly installed electronic display indicating the speaking time allocated to members of Council be changed to also show their names in the order of their request to speak.

Rationale:

It has taken many years before a Council decision to install an electronic monitor indicating the time allocated to members of Council during official Council meetings visible to both Council and the public has been installed in front of the Mayor.

However, the original request was not only that such an electronic monitor be installed to indicate the speaking time but also that it should indicate the names of the members of Council in the order of their request to speak. This has not been done. Yet this is at the heart of this issue which has been a long standing bone of contention.

With the exception of Councillor Crist, all members of the present Council, including Mayor Bell, were endorsed by the Concerned Citizens Association (CCA) a civic party formed prior to the last municipal election for the specific purpose of representing a special interest group in the District.

In the absence of an electronic display, there have been charges that Mayor Bell has and continues to violate the speaking order at his whim for purposes of political bias, to influence the outcome of debate, to sow dissension among members of Council but, most of all, to antagonize and give vent to his malice against the only member of Council not endorsed by the CCA.

Charges of manipulating the speaking order by the Mayor may be true or they may not be true, but, in the absence of an electronic indicator visible to both members of Council and the public, such charges are hard to dispel especially in light of the political history of the last few years including the hostile statements and threats against Councillor Crist made by Mayor Bell himself.


Following the results of the last election Mayor Bell, in front of witnesses in the Municipal Hall, stated that, "we will now put Crist in his place".

This expression of malice by the Mayor may have been accentuated when Councillor Crist exposed improprieties in the dispensation of expenses to two member of Council which implicated the Mayor himself.

Another factor may have been a conflict of interest charge by Councillor Crist against Mayor Bell in connection with a rezoning application. Shortly thereafter a member of staff alleged confinement against Councillor Crist. These charges were never substantiated but they were used by the CCA endorsed Council to deprive Councillor Crist of his right to be Acting Mayor.

Neither was this display of malice isolated to Council. In total contravention of District policy, a member of District Staff revealed the

identity of Councillor Crist as the complainant when a car blocked the exit to a roadway. This resulted in threats made against Councillor Crist and his wife by the owner of the car. The list goes on and on. One question remains however? Why did the recently installed electronic display not include the single most important aspect namely the name of Council members requesting to speak? In light of the above, it is appropriate that such a display be installed quickly.

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