

Subject: Your public comments re signing of Recreation Commission Agreement

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From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: <RWalton@dnv.org:>

CC: "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>, "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <Cagebc@yahoo.com>

Councillor Walton:

At a recent Council meeting you challenged me in public to explain why I voted in favor of the recently signed agreement with the City and the Recreation Commission for the provision of joint services, under which the District continues to subsidize the City, while the Commission continues to flounder and move towards extinction when subsequently I opposed the agreement via a motion calling for a fundamental reorganization of the Commission along the Parkgate model.

I am sure you will agree that I have made my position re this issue very clear and for a long time. When the matter was debated at a recent budget meeting, I again raised the issue and in reference to the agreement was told by the Mayor that the signing was merely a formality and the issue would be reviewed. That statement was repeated when the actual vote took place.

I took the Mayor at his word and thinking that the vote was merely a temporary step, I did not specifically vote against it at the time. It was my understanding that we would turn this matter over to the new Manager. My effort was geared to open the door for such a review. A contributing factor was the discussion I had with some members of Council, including yourself, which made me believe that there would be support for my motion to that effect.

As it turned out, however, all it took was for the Commission to lobby a few Councillors to kill this effort. That the Commission itself has become unwieldy, inefficient and an out of control bureaucracy cannot be disputed. This opinion is not just my own but is shared even by several commissioners themselves - that is those who have any kind of business comprehension. It stands to reason that the Commission, having become an out of control and huge bureaucracy, will do everything in its power to avoid any change in the status quo. However, you yourself, after pointing to serious shortcomings, changed your tune when my motion to this effect was debated and so did Councillor Nixon.

As to why the Mayor would indicate that he would support a review when he had no intention of doing so, is a matter of speculation and I must leave it up to everyone concerned to draw their own conclusions. In hindsight, it is evident, however, that he had no intention of doing anything other than baffle gabbing along to avoid providing any kind of leadership. That he excluded Council from the hiring process of the new Director of Recreation speaks for itself.

This style of "leadership" or lack of it is by no means isolated to this instance and may well be the reason for the string of fiascos that has plagued the District for the last ten years resulting in the District performance sliding to near bottom in the region.

I should tell you, however, that, notwithstanding, the Commission is in a state of crisis and the matter is far from being closed. Objective reality will find its own way of asserting itself regardless.

Ernie Crist

