

Subject:**Date:** Wed, 25 Jun 2003 08:32:44 -0700**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>**To:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>**CC:** "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <cagebc@yahoo.com>

Mayor and Council:

Mayor Don Bell conducted the Regular Council Meeting on Monday June 8th in an abysmal fashion. He interrupted members of Council on several occasions under all kinds of pretexts.

This is especially true for Councillor Crist whom he interrupted on an ongoing basis.

He continues to insist that Councillor Crist, does NOT have the right to explain a motion before calling for a seconder for debate and concocts all kinds of lame duck excuses to prove his case. Clearly he does not understand the precepts of democracy. Clearly he does not understand that he is undermining all incentive to display initiative and he clearly fails to understand that by so doing he is condemning Council to the lowest possible level of performance while at the same time opening the door to incompetence and worse.

A typical example was the motion regarding the expenditure of \$ 10,000 for the distribution of a pamphlet on the West Nile Virus which had come before Council for approval AFTER staff, without Council's knowledge, had committed Council to pay for it. Right from the start, even before calling for a seconder of my motion Mayor Bell furiously blew smoke in all directions in an attempt to divert attention from the matter while at the same time pretending to deal with it.

He did the same thing in connection with the Lynn Valley Heritage Building and School issue, arguing vociferously that the Archives HAD NOT been part of the original Library proposal. I was Council's rep both on the Library as well as the Museum and Archives Board and/or Committee at the time this matter was debated .

All in all Mayor Bell showed once again his contempt for the fundamentals of civic democracy. He answered questions directed to staff (with bias) before staff could answer them. He interrupted members of Council, especially Councillor Crist, under the pretext of clarifying matters when it was clear that they were solely geared to put up a smoke screen. That is how he conducted the meeting on Monday, June 8th and that is how he conducts meetings in general.

He did the same during the Special In Camera Council meeting on Thursday on the Northlands issue. Not only did he interrupt members of Council routinely, but he also took it upon himself to answer questions put to the Solicitor in what can only be interpreted as a crude attempt to influence the outcome of the discussion.

He is clearly abusing his powers as Chair. Not only is he showing contempt for the democratic integrity of his office and the public, but he is also by his maneuvering, bringing Council and indeed the community as a whole into disrepute.

I for one will continue to expose such behavior by Don Bell for what it is and I will not kowtow or become a clown in Don Bell's Circus.

Ernie Crist

