

**Subject: Car Allowance****Date:** Wed, 21 Jul 2004 16:32:38 -0700**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>**To:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>, "James Ridge" <James\_Ridge@dnv.org>**CC:** "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <Cagebc@yahoo.com>

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

Mayor Don Bell, will not have to pay back \$ 8,400 he owes to the District taxpayers for unlogged car allowance, but District Councillor Lisa Muri, who owes a much smaller amount, will have to reimburse the District for over one thousand dollars for 2003. This is according to a decision made by Council on Monday July 19. Bell claimed that he had kept a record but had been too busy to enter it in his log. "Don't worry," he said, "I will transfer it by next Monday." Lisa Muri was short of the required kilometers for 2003m to qualify for the \$ 226 per month.

The issue came up as a result of a motion that the District Car allowance policy be reviewed. The idea behind the policy, among others, is to encourage members of Council to visit places listed on the agenda mostly development applications and rezoning sites. The review showed that Councillor Ernie Crist was the only member of Council who had kept a proper log and had played by the rules. BUT rather than acknowledge that Crist had done the right thing Council, used the opportunity to attack Crist instead .

Councillor MacKeon Homes was particularly viscous and accused Crist of not being efficient in his travels. Crist should have gone to the different places on the same day rather than on separate days she said. She wanted to turn this matter over to the RCMP, saying she believed Crist had cheated the municipality. While her outburst was surely a sign that District business has descended to the gutter level, it did divert attention from Don Bell who should have been requested to reimburse the taxpayers for the \$8,400 he owes. Getting into the act, District Staff suggested that the policy should be changed retroactively so that Crist would have to pay back money even though he followed the rules. This strange and absurd idea was actually seriously considered by Council before it was narrowly defeated with NET endorsed Councillors Nixon and MacKeon Holmes voting in favor of such a nonsensical and illegal act.

North Vancouver District Council has a car allowance policy. It entitles members of Council and employees to claim compensation based on logged mileage or kilometerage as it is now called. " I personally claim an average of between 150 and 180 km per month," said Crist. "This works out to approx 5 km per day and under the policy entitles me to \$ 226 dollars per month. Although I log approximately 10 km per day, I claim, on average, for only 5 per day," he said .

"In practical terms, it means I am subsidizing the municipality," said Crist. "We have one car in the family already. It belongs to my wife and would be sufficient for the two of us," he said.

"I need a car for Council business which costs me considerably more than the \$ 226 dollars per month," he said. "The lease on my economy car alone is close to \$ 400 a month over the three year Council term, not to mention business insurance, gasoline and maintenance. The issue is that I followed the rules, the only member of Council to do so. Don Bell, on the other hand, did not. He will not have to do so, however, because the NET endorsed District Council has two standards and is protecting Bell and because Bell "merely forgot" to enter the daily log for 365 days in 2003," said Crist.

