

**Subject: FW: District Advertising**

**Date:** Fri, 2 Jul 2004 14:46:20 -0700

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <cagebc@yahoo.com>

**CC:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

I DID NOT PROOF READ THE PREVIOUS MESSAGE. THIS IS THE REVISED VERSION. PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES.

ERNIE

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Ernie Crist

> Sent: July 2, 2004 10:35 AM

> To: FONVCA (E-mail); 'cagebc@yahoo.com'

> Cc: Mayor and Council - DNV; Senior Management Committee

> Subject:

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> A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

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> The contract for District advertising in the NORTH SHORE NEWS and NORTH SHORE OUTLOOK is up for renewal. That the Municipality should advertise in the local press in first place was an initiative of mine some years ago when I realized that the only way to raise public awareness above the freezing level and how municipal government impacts our every day lives, was by raising civic awareness. In our culture advertising is probably the most effective tool, I argued at the time. I should not have had to argue this since this is self evident to most everyone but then this was the District.

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> The voter turnout during local elections tells the story. I recall municipal election meetings where the audience consisted of 5 or 6 people mainly family members of the candidates. It has improved since then, but I still run across people who, when I ask whether they live in the City or the District, get that "Martian" expression in their faces.

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> But enough said. Selling the idea at the time was tough, but finally we started to advertise - first in the NEWS and now we have contracts with both the NEWS and the OUTLOOK. I consider both to be excellent publications each in their own way. Both have contributed immensely in raising community awareness including understanding both the extent of responsibility of local government as well as it's importance in our everyday lives.

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> The NEWS has been with us for decades and when the OUTLOOK came on the scene a few years ago I suggested immediately that we base our criteria for placing ads on a scientific basis. The criteria should be transparent, non political and at the same time serve our objective of raising civic awareness, I thought. Funds I suggested should be allocated on the following criteria

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> 1) price of advertising,

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> 2) door to door delivery and

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> 3) space, allocated by the papers to Council issues.

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> However, when the item was recently raised, it was In Camera, not in public as was the case previously and it became immediately clear that the "Crist Dictum" that "Politics Determines Everything" is very much in effect.

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> It should have been a regular agenda item - not In Camera. If Council, after debating the matter in the presence of the public wants to refer the issue back to staff for a report, then this is one thing, but to all intents and purposes to exclude both Council and the public from debating parameters right at the beginning, is quite another.

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> It shows once again the fundamental lack of understanding if not contempt for the


public by the present NET endorsed District Council. The upshot is that it is ultimately staff which will make the decision as to where the advertising money will go. This message will not be lost on the media and they will have to take this into consideration when they write about Council issues. Who has the power in the District will be the question asked.

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> District staff, I dare say, are every bit as political as the politicians themselves, albeit their criteria may be different. As I see it, the matter is of crucial importance to the public. Let the public have a say I said since it is they who are the best judges and are the ultimate object of the exercise but my ideas were shot down by the NET endorsed District Council.

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> Staff "suggestions" will come forward, but it will probably be in Camera and it will most certainly be based on a formula not necessarily in the interest of the people fighting against secretive governments (Northlands) and even more secretive bureaucracies but with an eye on power right in line with "1984". What this means by way of example is that a simple request for information by an elected official until recently available upon request now has to be obtained through an FOI. If open government is our objective as we blabber ad infinitum then we are definitely going the wrong way, I say.

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> Ernie Crist  
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