

Subject: Re:

Date: Wed, 13 Apr 2005 15:47:35 -0700

From: Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

To: Ernie Crist <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

CC: James Ridge <James_Ridge@dnv.org>, Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@dnv.org>, kspencer@png.canwest.com, fonvca@fonvca.org

Dear Councillor Crist,

As I said... "not so fast!". A number of issues have been exposed by what I consider a rare lapse in judgment of those responsible for what is displayed next to our council chambers. Everyone, and I mean everyone, should feel welcome at the hall and not be subject to unnecessary harassment when they visit the hall. Whether there is only one complaint is irrelevant to the examination of the merits of the complaint. We all know that for every complaint many more likely feel the same way but are hesitant to speak out.

There is also the issue, notwithstanding the benefits to various parties, of the for-profit, commercial sale, of goods next to the council chambers. You will note that they are even in clear sight of those sitting in the council chambers. If paintings, albeit to the benefit of local artists, can be displayed, why not music (in which there is at least a choice that can be made by all members of the public whether they wish to hear samples of them or not). Also, there are after all, publicly funded art galleries throughout the district where these pieces of art could have been displayed - without giving rise to the problems created by displaying them in a place where the governing of our citizens takes place.

Yes, council may empower another body to pass judgment as to what is suitable. However, the ultimate responsibility stays with council.

Sadly, in the final analysis, it may well be that this error in judgment results in the future loss of this venue (District hall) for all artists.

Yours truly,

Corrie Kost

Ernie Crist wrote:

Dear Dr. Kost:

When the item is returned to Council you will have an opportunity to provide input. My personal concerns, that no single individual should have the power (which includes elected officials) to unilaterally demand removal of an Art object based on his her personal taste has been addressed for the time being. This was my primary concern. It may be further elaborated and firmed up when the matter is returned to Council as is presently planned.

As I understand it, there is nothing specific or in writing at present stipulating as to what constitutes appropriate art to be displayed in the Municipal Hall. Neither is it likely that anything but the judgment of the Arts Council will be the guide for future displays. It occurred to me that a committee to establish guidelines might be helpful. However, I withdrew my motion when Council was assured that the judgment of the Arts Council will be sufficient.

However, if you, or any person disagrees with this judgment you may bring any concern to the attention of the Arts Council at any time.

Needless to say you may also bring such concerns to the attention of Council as a whole, who may then act or reject any action in line with your request.

However, the District has the right to empower the Arts Council to use their judgment on the placing of Art objects including paintings in the District Hall.

I trust this will explain the issue as I understand it.

Yours truly,
Ernie Crist

---Original Message-----

From: Corrie Kost [<mailto:kost@triumf.ca>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 12, 2005 4:11 PM
To: Ernie Crist
Cc: kspencer@png.canwest.com; fonvca@fonvca.org
Subject: Re:

Dear Councillor Crist,

Not so fast! Responsibilities such as this cannot be given to an unaccountable body. Ultimately, it is the elected body - accountable to the public who is responsible what goes on next to their council chamber. Members of Council are the only ones we can change if the public is not happy with what goes on at District Hall. The matter, in my opinion, is not closed.

Your truly,

Corrie Kost

Ernie Crist wrote:

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

District Council last night adopted a recommendation that the Arts Council prepare a letter for Council's consideration authorising the Arts Council to be the sole arbiter in deciding what "Art" can be displayed in the Municipal Hall. This came about following discussion between myself and Ms Linda Files from the Arts Council yesterday.

Although it was assumed that Ms Files, by virtue of her position, had the authority to decide what can be displayed, there was nothing in writing to this effect. This will now be changed and will, in turn, provide Ms Files with the necessary authority without involving District Council per se.

This meets my objective which was that this issue should be the responsibility of persons with some professional experience independent of political influence or the influence of individual residents. It was the objection by one individual over paintings being

displayed in the Hall as being unsuitable which had resulted in their removal which, in turn, gave rise to the controversy in the first place.

Since my objective has been met, during last night Council meeting, I

withdrew my motion calling for the setting up of a committee to make further recommendations. In light of the Council decision, this will no

longer be necessary.

The matter is therefore closed.

Ernie Crist