

Subject: FW: Cassidy

Date: Mon, 22 Aug 2005 11:32:10 -0700

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

To: <fonvca@fonvca.org>

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

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> **From:** Ernie Crist
> **Sent:** Monday, August 22, 2005 8:42 AM
> **To:** Ernie Crist
> **Subject:** Cassidy

> Dear Mr. Cassidy:

> I have received a copy of your letter sent to Mayor Janice Harris
> dated May 24, 2005 regarding BC Assessment. I am cognizant of the hard
> and detailed work you as a citizen have performed in analysing the
> activities of BC Assessment. I am extremely disturbed by the cavalier
> attitude of District Mayor Janice Harris in responding to your mail
> and your justified concerns regarding assessment issues. Either the
> Mayor does not wish to defend the interests of a growing number of
> taxpayers or she does not understand her obligations. I also note
> that any and all suggestions you have made to make BC Assessment more
> people friendly and more business effective have been nixed by
> District Council.

> I was present when on a previous occasion you appeared before the BC
> Assessment Review Board along with Mr. Fenton. I was impressed with
> the detailed research you did in preparing your case. I was appalled
> by the attitude of the BC Assessment Review Panel and by what I
> thought was their haughty, dictatorial and bureaucratic attitude in
> response to your requests for explanations on certain aspects of BC
> Assessment operations.

> Following this, I have noted that your concerns about the
> inconsistency of the BC Assessment are not only true but, if anything,
> are understated. BC assessment claims that all its assessments are
> within 97% of market value. In light of the evidence this claim
> lacks total credibility.

> What is more, as we analyse individual assessments, an even more
> disturbing picture emerges. It would appear that BC Assessment is
> applying favouritism based on purely subjective factors. It suggests
> that BC Assessment wants to convey the impression that if anyone
> challenges assessments, however far they are removed from 97% market
> value they may have their assessments raised. This is a very serious
> matter.

> As you are aware, I have, on several occasions, attempted to shed some
> light on the whole matter by putting forward resolutions and
> initiatives on Council. However, none were pursued by Council.
> Indeed, I note that, contrary to policy, some senior staff attempted
> to discourage any initiative towards that end. This is notwithstanding
> that Councillor Nixon an experienced Real Estate manager voted in
> favour of the motion to determine whether District homeowners are
> being treated in a consistent and fair manner by BC Assessment. -

> As you quite correctly pointed out in your letter to District Mayor
> Janice Harris, by defeating the motion to shed some light on this
> issue, the Mayor exempted BC Assessment from any current or future
> responsibility to provide information necessary for District staff to
> evaluate the accuracy, uniformity and fairness of the Assessment Roll.

> This is extremely disturbing, for it points to an abdication of the
> responsibility of the Council of the District especially Mayor Harris,
> in defending the interests of District residents. Notwithstanding,
> that technically speaking, BC Assessment is under the jurisdiction of
> the Provincial Government, local government has a responsibility to
> speak on behalf of its citizens.

>
> This includes suggestions by you as well as others that, in light of
> the apparent irregularities of assessments, the District appeal the
> assessment roll. The same is true for your suggestion that the
> District pursue the idea of monitoring property sales against
> assessments.

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> I am cognizant that a number of individuals, including yourself, have
> come to the conclusion that the value of services provided to District
> taxpayers are far below what BC Assessment actually charges to the
> District taxpayers for the services.


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> As you have pointed out, considering the small number of personnel
> employed by BC assessment it is virtually impossible that they can do
> the job they say they are doing in the District. This can only mean
> that BC Assessment is making a huge profit at the expense of the
> District taxpayers.

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> I will send a copy of this letter to the press and to various
> community organisations and individuals who may well be interested in
> this issue for the upcoming municipal election when once again those
> wishing to get elected and/or re-elected will step on the platform
> claiming that they are the champions of the people and are defending
> their interests. This also applies to mayoralty candidates.

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> Yours truly,

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> Ernie Crist

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