

Subject: FW: Transcript of: Legal Opinion: Conflict of Interest Policies of the North Vancouver Recreation Commission.

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

A transcript is available of the discussion during the Council meeting of Mar. 1, 2004 pertaining to my motion requesting a legal opinion as to whether a member of Council appointed by Council to the Recreation Commission may receive a free annual pass from the Commission for the duration of his/her appointment not only for him/herself but also for his/her members of the family and/or whether

a) they are in a conflict of interest and must subsequently excuse themselves from any Council debate while matters of Recreation are being debated in Council and/or

b) whether they must forego receiving free annual passes not only for themselves but also for members of their immediate family

During debate of this item, the Mayor interrupted me no less than 31 times and the question I had asked was not answered. Indeed it would appear that the Mayor's interruption may have been deliberate so as to avoid clarification.

My previous motion to receive a legal opinion was not seconded even though Council does not have such an option. Neither did members of Council who were in a potential conflict of interest, leave the Council chambers as they were supposed to under the conflict of interest policies.

My motion asking for a legal opinion pertaining to Council members serving on the Commission was not answered. Neither was whether family members of a Council appointed Councillor are entitled to receive free passes and neither was this question addressed in the subsequent staff report.

Mayor Bell tried to divert attention from the issue by attempting to connect the matter with free promotional and introductory passes handed out to potential users of Recreational facilities. Although the two items have nothing to do with each other, the Mayor, in a desperate attempt to confuse the issue, went even so far as to impugn my character by suggesting that I had received free passes and had given them out, contrary to policy more or less, which of course is a total fabrication.

In my capacity as Councillor, I have accepted free passes for promotional purposes, but I did so in line with the existing policy. It has absolutely nothing to do with the issue at hand. As a regular user of recreation facilities, I pay for my annual pass in full just like any other citizen.

All in all, the Mayor's performance during this Council meeting showed once again that the District under Don Bell is nothing more than a banana republic where procedure is violated routinely without any semblance of respect for democratic principles. It also shows utter contempt not only for Council but, above all, for the public. He abused his powers as Chair in a most shameful manner. His performance can have no purpose other than to sweep this matter under the rug. Some of the questions are still unanswered.

Ernie Crist

