

Subject: RE: Rain on the North Shore: The long-term question

Date: Sun, 27 Mar 2005 13:35:21 -0800

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

To: "Elizabeth James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>, "James Ridge" <James_Ridge@dnv.org>, "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, <fonvca@fonvca.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

CC: <poetic_licence@hotmail.com>, <jmaloney@northshoreoutlook.com>, <mbragg@shaw.ca>, <ptillots@dccnet.com>, <mgzodard@sfu.ca>, <charlie@straight.com>

Dear Ms James:

I read your email below with considerable interest. While I agree with the broad thrust of your comments, you may not be aware that over the past few years, I have submitted several motions to District Council to be submitted to the GVRD for a comprehensive long term study of the total water resources and a corresponding cost benefit study for the delivery of these resources. I did the same during GVRD Council of Council meetings. This is a matter of record and applies to all existing resources including Pitt Lake, Harrison, Coquitlam etc.

However, none of my motions were ever accepted and neither, judging by the minutes, was there a single instance when any of the close to 90,000 residents in the District or any of the Community Associations or their representatives ever came forward to speak in support. The result was not only that there was no action but, that for lack of a seconder, these motions could not even be debated. This included the key of the issue, namely making regional government itself directly accountable. The member of Council, who consistently advocated and with the help of his runalongs assured non-support of this effort - the same person who is now representing the people of North Vancouver in Ottawa as an MP.

I am mentioning this since, in your email you state that. "someone should have listened more respectfully to Dr. Kost - and those who were urging GVWD to join the Fraser Regional District in a region - wide feasibility study of the long-term water supply/capacity delivery requirements - to include evaluation of the Pitt and Harrison Lake resources".

As for Mr. Pewden, following his representation to Council telling you that "We don't need to include Pitt and Harrison" because "we have done a study" all I can say is that Mr. Pewden is not only poorly informed but this statement has been contradicted by any and all knowledgeable and responsible persons. A long term strategic and comprehensive study is now being undertaken. At least this is what I have been given to understand by GVRD and GVWD spokespersons.

I also found very interesting your appeal "to see Staff of the District of North Vancouver take the lead in persuading a rethink over at the Kingsway offices". This is a somewhat curious statement since Staff do not make political decisions or at least are not supposed to. However, I must admit that District Council's record in providing leadership has been poor. You will recall that Don Bell, the erstwhile Mayor of the District, was appointed vice chair of the GVRD - do I need to say anymore? This is one more reason why I have found the lack of support for initiatives on my part even more disappointing. Still, since, you indicated you will (from now on?) deal with District staff directly, in realising "District Staff taking the lead in persuading a rethink over at Kingsway offices" I wish you the best of luck.

However, for what it is worth, it is my opinion that, unless the people of the District of North Vancouver form a Civic Party to be led by truly progressive and dedicated persons, truly dedicated to civic democracy - people who understand dialectics or as the shipyard worker said it is either them or us who run things rather than the "Uncle Toms" under whatever guise, any and all talk of making any impact at the local and/or regional government level now or in the future is an

exercise in futility.

In this connection I cannot help but to also mention some of the other key issues including the Waterfront, the District Heritage Fund and the Infrastructure Reserve issue not to mention any of the other major debacles such as Northlands etc. Also, for what it is worth, it was on Friday December 9, 1994 that I received a plaque from District Staff at a special function stating "To Councillor Crist - The Most Persistent Councillor Award For The Establishment Of A Waterfront Task Force". In 1994 I had already worked for many years to address the scandalous waterfront matter - an issue which has not been resolved to this very day.

However, I would fail in my duty would I not, in this connection, recognize the outstanding work by many individuals including Glynis Deering-Robb, Maureen Bragg, David Sadler, Eric Andersen, Brian Platts, Allan Orr, Dr. Corrie Kost etc. I would also be remiss if in the same vain I were not to give full credit to District Councillors Trevor Carolan and Pat Munroe who were defeated at the polls because they supported the Public Waterfront Task Force Recommendations stating that the District Waterfront should be returned to it's rightful owners and that public access to the Waterfront should be restored.

The "Concerned (for themselves) Citizens Association" (CCA) was a special interest group and they spent a colossal amount of money in the most scandalous misinformation campaign ever witnessed in the municipality. With the help of their political runalongs, some of whom are still on District Council, plus one who was subsequently promoted to Parliament, they prevented the District Waterfront from being returned to its rightful owners and providing proper public access. When I say it is either them or us who control civic affairs I was not kidding. It is hard and irrefutable evidence of this truism. It is, you might as Mexico's Zapata said, the ultimate political reality.

The bottom line, Ms James, is that only a new civic movement consisting, not of Uncle Toms and naive do gooders and well wishers but only of truly progressive and dedicated political realists and hard working people oriented activists can change the situation. This, for what it is worth, is my opinion. This is another way of saying that if you put your hopes in any level of bureaucracy unless you can back it up with real political power, your run with disappointment will continue.

Yours truly,

Ernie Crist

From: Elizabeth James [<mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2005 1:09 PM
To: James Ridge; Mayor and Council - DNV

Subject: Rain on the North Shore: The long-term question

12:15 a.m.
Saturday, March 26 2005

Dear Mr. Ridge:

Further to the deluge: A broader, more long-term issue is in urgent need of attention.....

A recent BCTV news item covered the province-wide water shortage anticipated for the upcoming summer season. In reference to the Lower Mainland, the comment was made: "Luckily, our reservoirs are full right now....."

That misleading comment was in stark contrast to GVWD staff comments a few weeks ago, when residents expressed concerns about the mere trickle of water arriving at the mouth of the Capilano. They were told that lake levels had been lowered considerably to allow remedial work on the dam to be done in safety. Indeed, while the news report was in progress, cameras were rolling on water levels at the Cleveland Reservoir which, clearly, were several metres lower than normal.

The current deluge is not likely to solve our regional water-shortage problems. Therefore, it would be appreciated if you could commission a Staff report to council, as to the current status - of both the Capilano Dam/reservoir and of regional water capacity in general.

As Capilano resident Dr. Kost has said in the past: "It is less the case that there is a shortage of water, than that there is a serious lack of storage capacity.....due to inadequate planning by GVWD"

January and current downpours lend an exclamation point to his evaluation. So does a revealing comment by GVWD Systems & Operations Manager, Paul Archibald in his April 22 2003 report to the May 13 2003 meeting of the regional Water Committee - a report which appears to have been dropped from web archives. That meeting was attended by then-Councillor, now Mayor Janice Harris.

The subject of Mr. Archibald's report was: Water Supply Update for 2003. After detailing the state of diminished snow packs and the fact that the usual 13% reserves at Burwell Lake would be unavailable due to outlet reconstruction work, Mr. Archibald went on to discuss conservation measures - including sprinkling regulations:

Since twice-weekly lawn-sprinkling regulations were first implemented in 1993, the District [GVWD] has seen a reduction in per capita average daily demand of about 15%, and per capita peak day demand of about 25%. As a result of this significant decline in demand, it is possible for [GVWD] to defer some planned water supply and transmission system infrastructure. In general, [GVWD] has come to rely on the lower demand achieved as a result of summer period lawn sprinkling regulations and is conducting the long-term planning of the system based on lower per capita demand. All GVWD municipalities enjoy the cost savings.

Taxpayers can only deplore the cynicism of that last remark. Of course politicians support deferral of capital projects - doing so also defers their need to go cap in hand to voters for the level of taxes required to build the appropriate storage capacity.

One is left to wonder whether Mr. Archibald took into consideration the fact that, while the per capita demand may have decreased, increased population numbers in the region continue to be encouraged at a staggering rate. He certainly seemed stumped for a technical answer when he was asked, in front of TV cameras later that season, "What is your plan if the drought continues longer than expected? His answer? "Pray for rain I guess." The summer of 2004 was little better and 2005

promises more of the same. Notwithstanding, while our GVWD Neros fiddle.....

This week's news reports have referred to the fact that GVRD/GVWD still are trying to extract financial blood from the Federal stone, to assist with the costs of the \$600-million Capilano-Seymour water filtration projects. If we heed other articles, together with the information you provided to Council re escalation of costs for the Lynn Valley projects, we can guess why. It is that increased costs of steel and concrete almost guarantee that the \$600-million figure will not come even close to the eventual cost of the project. Perhaps GVWD would have been further ahead had it considered whether there would be any water to filter in the first place.

Too late now, but perhaps someone should have listened more respectfully to Dr. Kost - and to those who were urging GVWD to join the Fraser Regional District in a region-wide feasibility study of long-term water supply/capacity/delivery requirements - to include evaluation of the Pitt and Harrison Lake resources.

When I raised that possibility with GVWD's Doug Peden, following his presentation to Council, he dismissed it out of hand saying, "We've done a study. We don't need to include Pitt and Harrison. We won't need to meet that level of supply until about 2050." Reacting to his demeanour, I replied, "Maybe; but that's called long-term planning."

To once again threaten residents with region-wide metering, with by-laws to require "ultra" low-flow toilets [one can only imagine the definition of "ultra" in this context!] and imposition of regulations that will reduce award-winning landscapes to dried-flower arrangements, is an unacceptable diversionary tactic that will merely defer the inevitable; an inevitable in 2040 dollars .

It would be really encouraging to see Staff of the District of North Vancouver take the lead in persuading a rethink over at the Kingsway offices. Yes?

Sincerely,
Liz James
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