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From: ()
Sent: April 16, 2009 7:34 AM
To: Raymond Fung
Cc: MayorandCouncil
Subject: Water and Sewer Rate Increase

Dear Mr. Fung,

A recent article in the North Shore News brought West Vancouver residents some unpleasant news on the water and sewer front, yet again after the accounting flop that saw some bills hit with a 47% increase. In my humble opinion, there are many inconsistencies in this article and your own statements justifying a round of very selective rates increase invite clarification.

"The installation of water meters district-wide was completed in 2006. A year later per-usage water rates and base fees were implemented."

BUT

"However, the final phase of West Vancouver's conversion to universally metered water rates means some residents will see significantly larger increases than others.

Fung said about 2,500 homes built after 1999 with requisite water meters have not been charged a full base rate for water. Rather, homeowners have only been paying for water usage."

So what "final phase"? Was it completed in 2006 and per-usage and base fees charged in 2007 or not? If so, what prevented the District to charge full base fee and water usage back then as we were told it would be?

"Older homes retrofitted with newer water meters have been paying base fees all along, Fung said. Average water users in older homes will see much smaller increases of about \$4 for water fees and \$29 in sewer fees over 2008 rates."

If this Base fee reflects anything unrelated to Metering issues, why wasn't it charged to all? If this base fee is indeed related to the metering issue then one would think there was very little -if any- cost to the District when home owners installed at their cost the required meters while building their homes. The cost of older retrofitting must have been paid by older home owners through the fee, and very likely by everyone's property taxes too. In addition, the new home owners have from the start behaved responsibly with the use of the resources, to clearly no reward... Now this cost will be smoothly shifted to newer home owners, those who already paid for the meter during construction. This simply looks like a disguised TAX on residences 10 years or recent.

AND

"The 2009 fee structure phases in the entire cost of base fees..."

In light of this seemingly never ending universal metering saga, can that statement be believed? Are we done yet or will there be another "accounting" problem in 2010, another "phase" we did not know about in 2011 and of course should we be gullible enough to believe we'll benefit from any savings? Or is it that all this is to provide the District with attractive substantial savings for those who will get subsidized housing thanks to our taxes?

"Both sewage and water usage fees were affected by higher than expected water conservation by West Vancouver residents."

And naïve of us who trusted those who tell us conservation is supposed to save us money... except that for some "lucky" residents, "green" means paying more regardless of their conservation and investments efforts.

So I would appreciate if you would be kind enough to clarify the following:

- 1) **Provide me with an anonymous actual bill of an older home bill for 56 m3 of water consumption for the period April 1, 2008 – that is before the accounting correction- for comparison purpose**
- 2) **Written assurance there are no more hidden phases with regards to the universal metering project**
- 3) **Calculations showing that residents of 10 years or recent homes in West Vancouver will also see the saving benefits of the District's water and sewer management strategy.**

Looking forward to reading you,

Season's greetings

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