


Sandy Hook Community Association

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 April 17, 2003

The Mayor & Council
District of Sechelt
PO Box 129
Sechelt, B.C.
VON 3A0

Re: Discourtesy

Dear Mayor Reid and Councillors,

The board of this association has directed me to write you expressing, for the record, our chagrin and disappointment in the behavior of the Chairperson, the Mayor and the Planning Committee at its April 8 meeting, with specific reference to the visit by Councillor Ken Melamed of the resort Municipality of Whistler. The behavior reflected badly on Sechelt and insulted its residents, this Association and our honored guest.

As residents of the District, we expected, and we deserved, better from our elected representatives.

We note the following points.

1. The opportunity to hear from Councillor Melamed was no surprise to Committee Chair Barry Poole or Mayor Reid. They both had well over two weeks' prior written notice of the nature of our presentation and any necessary adjustments could have been made upon advice.
2. Prior to the meeting this Association had received an indication that the presentation would be afforded from fifteen to twenty minutes.
3. A friend of the Chair, a representative of the B&B Assoc., was allowed to blatantly and admittedly breach the Chair's own rules which the Chair had just enunciated. The Chair did nothing until after the errant representative had said enough for his own purposes. When the Chair finally moved to quiet the representative he did so by "congratulating" him - for something that had been in the press two weeks earlier.
4. The first item on the agenda of the meeting was a presentation by this Association, yet the Chair preempted our delegation's opening remarks to make his own introduction of our guest. He sharply chastised this officer of the Association when he politely tried to recover the thrust of his prepared introduction.

5. Notwithstanding a rather limited and mundane agenda, the Chair firmly declared the enforcement of a ten minute limitation on our guest's presentation, and admonished our guest with a rude one-minute closing warning. We all know that this rule is often waived for important presentations or those of special interest to the public. Ironically, in one instance not long ago, the Chair waived his rule and permitted the same B&B representative and friend a presentation lasting over 40 minutes. Many of us witnessed that occasion.

6. Over 50 interested Sechelt residents were present and the presentation was balanced and informative. When it was rudely cut off there was disappointment from almost all present. At any time, the Mayor or any councillor present could have interjected and requested a reasonable extension of the time. At any time the Mayor or any councillor present could have compensated for the earlier rude behavior of the Chair. Not one spoke up.

Since the event, we have heard from many residents including many from other communities, all expressing their disgust with the lack of courtesy from our elected representatives. They, like us, would appreciate appropriate apologies - one to your electorate; one to Councillor Melamed; and some assurance that you will take care to avoid a recurrence of such behaviour.

Yours truly,

Robert D'Arcy (Computer Signature)

Robert D'Arcy, President
Sandy Hook Community Association

(This letter vetted and approved by the members of the SHCA Board)