

NORTH BAY TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

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Dear Editor

On Saturday, September 2nd in the middle of a long weekend, North Bay Hydro chose to release the news that will be a new COO at the helm. Based on that timing, they appear to have wanted to keep this changeover and its details a secret from as many people as they could. There have been no media reports or any details coming from council meetings that this was in the works or any indication that this was discussed with council members who are the directors of Bay Hydro Holdings, the parent company of North Bay Hydro.

It appears as if, a major management change affecting a company owned by taxpayers was put together by the management of North Bay Hydro and a few appointed directors without the input of any of any elected taxpayers' representatives. This position is the highest paid position at Hydro and probably the highest paid in the City. I say probably, because taxpayers are kept in the dark about sunshine list salaries at North Bay Hydro.

The most breathtaking statement made in the article was that of board chairman John Krieg who opined that "our motivated, talented and dedicated staff has increased the value of North Bay Hydro and its net worth position for the shareholder." This statement is incorrect since it is the OEB, not the employees, who have approved the inflated delivery prices that increase Hydro's net worth on a yearly basis and extremely discouraging because it illustrates the culture that presumes, incorrectly, that the mandate of North Bay Hydro is to fatten the company balance sheet at customers' expense.

The overriding mandate of North Bay Hydro is to deliver electricity to citizens in the most efficient manner at the lowest possible cost. The citizens of North Bay North Bay are the only customers that Hydro has and they are also its owners and beneficial shareholders. Any increase in the value of North Bay Hydro can only be realized by taking money out of customers' pockets.

What Mr. Krieg is suggesting is that taxpayers giving money to North Bay Hydro as customers to increase Hydro's value will, by some type of flawed logic, be a benefit to taxpayers as owners. Not only is it not a benefit but there is a net loss to shareholders/customers, since taxes must be paid as these funds pass from our pockets to Hydro coffers. North Bay Hydro does not produce a profit. North Bay Hydro produces a taxable income which has cost taxpayers millions of dollars in taxes over the past 15 years.

The article indicated that Mr. Wilcox who is currently the President of both North Bay Hydro and North Bay Hydro Services will now be employed solely as President of North

Bay Hydro Services for another year. The effect of course is instead of paying one sunshine list salary, there will now be two sunshine list salaries with zero benefit to taxpayers. This sounds suspiciously like the golden handshake that the City gave its previous CAO when he resigned and remained on the payroll for months.

Municipal elections are coming soon; voters would do well to remember these types of behind the scene agreements being finalized with apparently no input from owners.