

Referring to Article of 5/18/2003 "Critics: Panel Bad For Councils"

I have read this article for the third and last time. Frankly, each time I read it, it tires me out. My experience with DONE, thus far, has been extensive. Our Formation Committee has been active for approximately two years. We have been assigned three different project coordinators within that timeframe. Each one has been as dedicated, supportive, and effective as his/her predecessor. Each one has been available, responsive, present, helpful, dedicated, cautious when "advising", understanding, patient, professional, and pro-active.

I have yet to personally experience DONE's "controlling" tactics on any level.

We have had literally hundreds of hours of interaction with DONE at our weekly meetings, on the phone, via email (even into the wee hours of the night), faxes, planning of agendas, outreach events, forming and finalizing bylaws, attending seminars and workshops, strategizing outreach efforts, developing a database, working on election procedures, using its staff, equipment, legal department, translators, and so forth. We even have their cell phone numbers for emergencies.

In several instances, when these project coordinators were not sure about the issue at hand, or the answer/solution to a particular question or scenario, we were asked if he/she could research further and get back to us. Thus far, I have found the approach of all three to be consistent, cautious, well thought out, and definitely "advisory" only. I have never viewed them as anything more than facilitators.

Has our formation committee had any disappointments in or with DONE along the way? Sure we have. This is part of the process, which includes a learning curve. However, the partnership with DONE has grown stronger over time, and the disappointments have been small enough that I cannot actually site one at this time.

I will close by stating that if having neighborhood council elections at our police stations doesn't scare off some voters, articles like the article written on May 18th will scare them away for sure, which saddens me. We have all worked so darn hard and come so far.

Carol Dignard

A Concerned Sun Valley Stakeholder