

north shore news

EDITORIAL: Santa's agenda

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If you'll forgive us the cliché, Christmas has come early for City of North Vancouver council watchers. For the last two meetings, the city has moved its behind-closed-doors portion of the meeting until the very end. The city has, for years, typically gone in camera just minutes after calling the meeting to order.

It's more than a little inconvenient for the people who have come at the invitation of council to make a presentation, receive an award or simply make good on their democratic right to show up and give council what-for. This goes double when the in-camera meeting drags on for an hour or more.

In-camera meetings should be held either before or after public meetings, not during, and council should make public any releasable information at the next available opportunity.

While we're at it, here's the rest of our Christmas wish list for our North Shore councils.

From the District of North Vancouver, we'd wish for council agendas to be translated from bureaucratese into either of Canada's official languages. Also, another piece of coal for the fire in council chambers. It's bloody cold in there.

All we ask from West Van council is that they make sure everyone understands what they're voting on before casting their yay or nay, preventing the need to revisit old issues.

Of course, fixing these problems would improve the lives of our long-suffering council reporters but they're also irritating - and unnecessary - stumbling blocks to public engagement, which is what this is really about.

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