

north shore news

Parting words from the departing

Outgoing councillors offer advice to their successors

Jeremy Shepherd / North Shore News

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While the majority of the North Shore's councillors spent November loudly campaigning, four politicians are quietly stepping away due to burnout, retirement

and conflicting political ambitions.

A fruitless push for amalgamation with the District of North Vancouver caused City of North Vancouver Coun. Guy Heywood to reach his tipping point after two terms in office. "Both bureaucratic and political leadership are doing everything to undermine the rec commission, the museum and archives," Heywood said. "The lip service they're paying to collaboration has burned me out."

While the split between city and district dates back to 1905, the rift still permeates today, according to Heywood.

The delay in replacing Harry Jerome is directly attributable to its geography along the seam between the two municipalities, according to Heywood.

The zigzagging border even hampers the city's waterfront plan, according to Heywood. "The city is actually trying to reinforce the boundary that has all the rich people on the other side, and that's just stupid and self-interested."

Heywood described the city and district continually trying to "photobomb each other" when one is profiled.

"I love North Vancouver, but not the city or the district," Heywood said.

Heywood advised new councillors to think outside their respective boxes.

While Heywood is leaving North Vancouver council, he isn't leaving North Vancouver.

The longtime politician plans to work with North Shore Rescue, possibly getting the backcountry searchers on firmer financial footing through an insurance system. "I don't think what they do should be funded by charity, it should be funded in part by self-interest."

In a powerful speech delivered earlier this month, West Vancouver Coun. Trish Panz revisited the most hotly debated decision of her six-year tenure on council: granting approval to sevenand six-storey towers on the 1300 block of Marine Drive.

If council had rejected Grosvenor's proposal West Vancouver would have missed a \$46 million opportunity as well as the catalyst for restoring Ambleside as the "heart of our community," Panz said.

Council was evenly split leading up to the final vote.

"The 3-3 tie was only broken in the last minute by a single change of heart, but it took two years to break that tie," Panz said.

West Vancouver's next council should be mindful of global issues and local ramifications, according to Panz. "There are some points missing in the community election conversation: no one is talking about climate change and how we need to plan for

impacts on our waterfront and mountainside," she said. "Though we debate our sea level neighbourhoods, our future is our mountainside."

One of the new council's first orders of business should be renovating the Ferry Building Gallery, according to Panz. "It's suffering neglect. It needs restorative care, public washrooms, and a modest ancillary space."

Panz was a leader in ushering in coach houses and overseeing the largest park dedication in the district's history with Whyte Lake park.

For the last nine years, District of North Vancouver Couns. Alan Nixon and Mike Little have sat on opposite sides of chambers and on opposite sides of many issues.

"Mike and Alan have taken opposite views, I would say, probably 98.9 per cent of the time," noted Coun. Doug MacKay-Dunn.

Despite disagreements, the two were never disagreeable, according to MacKay-Dunn.

Mayor Richard Walton praised Nixon as the district's "finest natural orator." After singing Nixon's praises and discussing their friendship, Walton asked Nixon if he wanted to say a few words or cry.

"They're not mutually exclusive," Nixon replied.

After 12 years on council, Nixon plans to move to Mexico.

Little plans to run for the Conservatives in the new riding of Burnaby North-Seymour in 2015. "That is an entirely different election," Little commented. "It's adversarial. It's confrontational."

Walton credited Little for his work ethic and his "extraordinary grasp" of technical details.

"I'm not going to go far," Little said. "I'm planning on staying in Seymour as long as I can."

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