

Link locally, not globally

Dear Editor:

I am writing to argue that the City Council of Coquitlam should refrain from voting on issues that are not directly related to the city's immediate interest. It is inappropriate for the councilors to arrogate this power to themselves. Apparently, Coun. Bill Le Claire is the only counselor with any sense.

The city does not have a mandate from the voters to take on all the controversial issues in the world. The candidates for council did not campaign on the voters of Coquitlam what their positions were on national or international issues, so they do not have the right to speak on our behalf on these issues.

Worse, The city council is voting blind. The Parliament of Canada has a staff to research issues before MPs and Senators cast a vote. Not our city council. This is a recipe for political posturing. The city's residents deserve better.

If the council gives itself the permission to vote on any issue it wants, then there is no logical way to limit its agenda. By voting on 'moral issues' like world peace, the City Council has now opened the agenda up to every issue any political activist would wish to bring forward. On what grounds would the Council refuse to discuss women's abortion rights or a fetus' right-to-life? Or capital punishment?

I would agree that there are important issues for Canadian citizens to consider beyond sewers and zoning. But that does not mean that the municipal calendar should be filled with such issues.

When will the counselors find time to consider the issues they are paid to decide? Only 80 minutes were reported spent at the regular meeting Monday, Feb. 17/2003, and over 177 minutes solving the world's problems.

If the City Councilors wish to vote on such issues they should resign and run for Parliament.

Cordially,

Gary Mauser

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