

# Mayors call for review of kart decision

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Cowichan Valley mayors have waded into the debate on the Capital City Kart Club's future.

Cowichan Valley Regional District area directors have faced a public backlash after they voted to deny the Capital City Kart Club a temporary commercial use permit to continue racing in Youbou.

Electoral area directors Mike Tansley and Joe Allan approached other board members this week to see if there is support to have the matter reconsidered.

"We think there's enough new information and enough interest to bring this back," said Allan.

"We're trying to give everybody a chance to speak, which didn't happen last time."

Allan said all four regional district mayors — Rob Hutchins, Jack Peake, Jon Lefebure and Mike Coleman — support the request, though they can't vote on land use issues within electoral areas.

"Even though they don't get a vote, they want to let their feelings be known," Allan said.

"It's more than just a one-area issue," said Peake, mayor of Lake Cowichan.



**JACK PEAKE**

Not a one-area issue

# Board's integrity at stake,

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"Events in any area benefit the whole Valley," Peake said. "When people come to an event, they don't just spend money at one venue. We need to be thinking globally on these types of issues."

"I think there's a real concern that the board itself is being painted as dealing not effectively with this issue," said Coleman, mayor of Duncan.

Coleman said the four mayors and two North Cowichan councillors who sit on the board should have a say on the matter.

"The whole board needs input into the discussion," he said. "We won't have a vote but we should have a voice so the integrity of the board isn't called into question."

The integrity of the board is one of the reasons Tansley and Allan have

approached board members to support their request to have Chair Mary Marcotte bring the motion back for reconsideration.

"The vote was wrong," said Tansley, director for Cowichan Bay. "People didn't know what they were voting for and it was badly worded."

The decision was made based on personalities and not on the merits of the application, he said. "I think it was messy from the beginning. First it was voted for, then it was voted against. I think you've got personalities getting involved and that's silly. We should look at the merits and make an adult decision."

Lefebure, mayor of North Cowichan, said the reasons for denying the permit don't seem to be reflected in the minutes of the public hearing.

"I'm very sensitive to noise concerns," he said, referring to Chemainus residents' problems with a log chipper in their neighbourhood. "It definitely isn't like the chipper situation

with sleep being disrupted and I think there should be some consideration to the young people."

Dozens of members of the public have asked the board to reconsider the matter, Tansley said.

"I didn't think people cared that much. I was amazed," he said. "If all these people are coming forward, that tells me it should be brought back. Do their opinions not count?"

Allan agrees. "We're not trying to be malicious but rational thought says let's look at it again.

As of Friday, eight of the 15 board members had signed the request.

Marcotte had indicated to Tansley she would bring the matter forward if there is significant interest.

"I would say more than half the board is significant interest," said Tansley.

Marcotte was not available for comment.

The directors' request is backed by the Cowichan

Regional Economic Development Commission, which sent a similar request to the board. Three former Youbou area directors are also calling for reconsideration. Tara Daly, Lois Gage and John Ward sent a letter to Electoral Area Services Committee chair Mike Walker asking the committee to "take a second look" at the club's application.

"The majority of the presentations at the meeting were in favour of the proposal," the letter said. "Many of the community members that appeared to speak against the proposal were speaking against general issues rather than the specific proposal.

"Our perception of the meeting was, and remains to be, that the majority of the residents at the meeting and in the community of Area I support the proposal."

Even if the matter is reconsidered, Tansley said, the issue will not go away. "I think this will come back to haunt some people."