

## Edith Watson

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**From:** Kate Maddigan . <kate.maddigan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 18, 2019 7:44 AM  
**To:** Email - administration@strathconard.ca  
**Subject:** SRD blocks democracy on Cortes Island

To The Strathcona Regional District Chair and Board of Directors:

I am deeply shocked at the many efforts the Strathcona Regional District Chair and Board of Directors have treated Cortes Island so disrespectfully, blocking democratic processes with little or no explanation.

The Campbell River Mirror reported (Campbell River Mirror Nov 28 2018) that Brenda Leigh, representative for Oyster River, cited emails voicing concerns she had received from Cortes Island residents as the reason for her vote to delay the hall tax referendum decision, despite a clear majority (in both the 2017 petitions and delegations and the October 2018 vote) in favour of proceeding with a referendum. Not only does this mean some people on Cortes are lobbying a Regional Director other than their own, to influence SRD votes on Cortes affairs, but Brenda Leigh has not made the number or contents of these emails public, has not entered them into the SRD record as Correspondence Received, and has not shared them with other Board members or even with our own Regional Director. We now have a an indefinite delay for our referendum, after a promise that if the October 2018 vote passed, SRD would expedite the process so that we could have a deciding vote in the Spring of 2019 - AND at considerable cost to the taxpayer.

In light of these assaults on our democracy by the SRD, both due to secret emails not being made public, but also the delay in the referendum, I request answers to the following questions:

- Why are these emails Brenda Leigh refers to not being shared with Cortes' elected RD and with the rest of the Board?
- How are we to fact-check their content, and how do they represent in any way the majority opinion on Cortes?
- Is this normal operating procedure at SRD, or is it only Cortes issues which are interfered with in this way?
- What is SRD's policy on Correspondence Received? Is there any policy?
- What does SRD's Code of Ethics for Directors say about this issue?
- Why did SRD reverse its position between summer 2018 and Nov 2018, rescinding the promise that the long-delayed hall tax referendum would be expedited if the "non-binding" referendum passed?
- Why were we ever forced to go through the pointless non-binding referendum, whose results showed the same 66/33 percent Pro/Anti percentages that have been consistently demonstrated by petition?
- Why is the majority will on this issue being blocked and delayed?
- Are Regional Directors in the habit of blocking and delaying voter initiatives from other Areas which do not affect their own Area? Or is this only happening to Cortes initiatives? If so, why?

I would suggest that the SRD would not dare treat any electoral area in such a twisted "special" fashion, and demand answers to these important questions without delay.

Sincerely,

Kate Maddigan