

Double whammy hits

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Dear editor,

For all those who supported the "Why Now?"
campaign in the October 2006 Restructuring
Referendum for Union Bay to become a municipality, I
hope they now have the answer to their question.

As a result of the Minister of Community Services
denying approval of the KIP bylaws, Brian McMahon,
VP of KIP, has informed the Union Bay Improvement
District and other concerned citizens that there is
every likelihood that there will not be any major
development of their property; and therefore, no
financial support for the badly needed infrastructure
upgrades for the community.

As a double whammy, at the same time that the
minister's decision was made public, a letter was
received by the Comox Strathcona Regional District
from the staff of this same ministry advising that the
request for provincial grant monies to support a new
regional sewer system for Royston/Union Bay has
also been denied, due to a lack of government funds.

Many septic systems in the Union Bay area are failing
and a regional sewer system would have been a
more-affordable solution than the replacement of

individual systems.

This now places the burden of financing the water treatment facility at Langley Lake and a new fire hall and equipment squarely on the shoulders of the Union Bay landowners.

Many Union Bay residents are seniors on fixed incomes, and can hardly afford any substantial increase in taxes to pay for these upgrades.

Without the extra financial support that the development was going to bring to our community, we will have now have to find alternative monies to develop these facilities -- but as an Improvement district we do not qualify for the same provincial assistance that a municipality receives.

The minister's decision is also counter to her desires to see a Comox Valley Regional Water System established. Without the major development of Kensington lands and the increased population in the community, there is no point in Union Bay joining a regional system.

We were seen as the starting point of the region-wide system, but now the supply of water from Langley Lake will be sufficient to meet the needs of the community for the foreseeable future.

As a board, we will now have some hard decisions to make with regards to meeting the demands of the

health authority and its mandate of a water treatment facility for Langley Lake.

As a community, we stand to lose the fire protection we currently have if we cannot afford to build a new fire hall and purchase a new fire truck.

Again, the financial burden of all of these expensive infrastructures will now rest solely on the landowners of Union Bay.