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**POLITICS**

**Cousens ponders GTSB head post**

BY LISA QUEEN  
STAFF WRITER

Markham Mayor Don Cousens is considering taking on former Metro Toronto chairperson Alan Tonks to become the first leader of the Greater Toronto Services Board.

Cousens will make his decision over the next few days.

He said he's been under considerable pressure by GTA politicians to run for the job. Tonks has been openly campaigning for months.

No other names have surfaced as potential contenders.

"It wasn't my idea (to consider running). I didn't raise the issue," Cousens said.

"I've had a large number of people say, 'Why don't you look at it?' It's become an issue. People would love to

see me there."

Cousens said he's torn between leading the GTSB — which he believes will eventually develop into one of the province's most influential political bodies — and his love for Markham.

The GTSB is expected to hold its first meeting in mid-January, although a location has not yet been announced. So far, no office space has been put aside for the board.

If he decides to run, Cousens said he hopes the race won't become a battle



**DON COUSENS**

Mayor torn between Metro and Markham

between Toronto and the outlying regions.

"I think we've got to end this confrontational mode of dealing among cities and communities. I don't think residents have much patience (to see politicians) continue these little spats," he said.

Cousens sidestepped questions about whether he thinks Tonks would make a good chairperson. "I don't know how to answer that," he said.

"When I worked with him, he had a very pro-Metro bias and he wasn't the easiest (person) to get along with when Hazel (McCallion, Mississauga's mayor) and I were on the GTA mayors (committee)."

But Cousens added that at that point, Tonks was just doing his job as Metro chairperson.

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