

March 3, 1975

4:00 p.m.

City Council held a special meeting this afternoon to meet with Mr. Christenkas, Regional Director for Ontario of Parks Canada. Those in attendance were - His Worship Mayor G. Parisien; Aldermen Lynch, Pearson, Aubry, Guindon, Lebano, Pescod, Keen and Samson. Also present was - Mr. Geo. Samis, M.P.P.

Mayor Parisien expressed concern about Park Canada's decision to move their headquarters to an unknown destination - possibly in the Toronto area. Agreeing that the location has not been decided on, Mr. Christenkas stated the announcement is official to the extent that the Minister has made the statement in the House and there has been an exchange of correspondence. The local office, he went on to state, is taking the announcement as final and is proceeding with implementation of the program.

Mr. Christenkas agreed that the decision by management to relocate the Cornwall office was taken at the time Quebec and Ontario were separated into two regions. However, it was decided not to relocate at that time due to local conditions. Now, with improved industrial and economic development and the proposed building of the Coast Guard School and area traffic control system, Parks Canada feel this would be the least serious time to effect the move.

In the opinion of Parks Canada, it is not feasible to have its office at the eastern end of the province, considering the area to be served, and the need for its people to deal with Toronto. Alderman Lebano recalled how Hon. Lamoureux had worked very hard to have the office locate within the City and questioned the wisdom of moving into the Toronto area when the government is now speaking of decentralization of its agencies.

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Mr. Christenkas assured Council that the government is very sensitive to public needs and fully appreciates the role of municipalities and respects the alarm of this council over the relocation of the office. For some time, he went on to state, Parks Canada has been studying the social, economic needs, etc. of all employees in order to achieve the move with the least traumatic effect. For employees unwilling to leave the City, the government will endeavour to place them in employment with the Coast Guard School/ <sup>or</sup> some other government agency. Further, a study is going on with Manpower in order to assist any others in obtaining work in the private sector. Mr. Christenkas reiterated that Parks Canada is utilizing all its resources to see that no one will suffer. Relocation, it is hoped, will be in area where real estate will be comparable to Cornwall as the government is not prepared to offset any difference in home purchase price in the relocated area.

Replying to Alderman Keen that this could be a strictly political move, Mr. Christenkas stated that the Quebec region is not the only region created in the last ten years. The parks program, he noted, has expanded phenomenally with the western region having been split in the last couple of years.

Mayor Parisien thanked Mr. Christenkas for his most comprehensive explanation to the various questions asked him. He explained that, as a Council, he would <sup>like</sup> to know that the members are very concerned over this and believe it their responsibility to do everything in their power to assist the many people involved in this move. Mr. Christenkas replied that he appreciates the interest of Council in the problems of the people they represent and trusted that he has been able to answer some of the questions.

Mayor Parisien asked that, as the Department keeps growing, and the necessity could arise to split the area into another region, that Cornwall be considered at that time. He was assured by Mr. Christenkas that should this happen, consideration will certainly be given to the Mayor's suggestion. Mr. Samis thanked the Mayor and Mr. Christenkas for the opportunity of sitting in at the meeting.

  
Acting Clerk

  
Mayor