

Park to challenge Niagara Escarpment Commission ruling

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on for critical funding.

At its meeting Thursday, the park's board decided it'll challenge the commission's verdict to turn down its application that would've allowed thousands of cars awaiting sale at the Toronto Auto Auction to be stored on its rural property during the off-season.

"It was a unanimous decision as a board to appeal," Mr. Cressman said.

"We feel that there are grounds for appeal."

The park had actually been storing cars since 1999 between December 1 and May 1 on about 11 acres of its Tremaine Road property, but the NEC said the matter came to its attention earlier this year after public complaints were made. The car parking initiative brought in up to \$60,000 of important funding for the park each year.

A staff report put forward at the November 17 NEC meeting

explained if the park appeals the decision, the hearing would likely not take place until next year. A final decision would be made a minimum of 30 days following the hearing.

Mr. Cressman explained that now more than ever it's important for the park to be self sufficient, since the Province's transfer agreement is contingent upon it being able to raise money to finance its ongoing operations.

Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh voiced his support last week for an appeal of the NEC's decision, which he described as "inane."

"Nuances in NEC regulations were never meant to be applied like this," said Mr. Chudleigh. "While the appeal is in process CHP should continue to park cars on the lot."

Since the NEC denied the application, Mr. Cressman said the park has received several donations from the community, but he didn't want to disclose the amount at this time.

"We're humbled and absolutely pleased," he said of the outpouring of support the park has seen over the past few weeks.

He also said several local organizations have come together to plan a fundraising event at the park on New Year's eve, which will include dinner, dancing and a silent auction.

Mr. Cressman said as soon as the transfer is official and all the documents are signed, a major capital fundraising program is going to be launched to raise a \$2 million endowment fund for the park.

"We're going to need folks to give us a hand," he noted.

The province's \$750,000 is intended to act as a bridge for the park until the endowment fund is up and earning interest, Mr. Cressman said.

One person who's already stepped up to help the park out is Tom Chudleigh of Chudleigh's apple farm.

Mr. Chudleigh said his family found the NEC's decision to be mean-spirited, so they decided to make a "significant" donation.

"We hope it might be an incentive for others to do the same," he said.

Staff donate tips to women's shelter

Staff at a local Tim Hortons store are helping make Christmas a little bit brighter for some of the abused women and children at Halton Women's Place.

"The whole staff is contributing their tips for one week," explained Penny Surcon, owner of the 900 Steeles Ave. location.

The fundraiser started when two part-time students, aged 16 and 17, decided to contribute their tips for the week, and then challenged the other employees to do the same.

It was well received and everyone wanted to contribute, Ms Surcon said, adding, "I'm really proud of these kids."

She noted that while it may not be a huge amount that's raised, it comes from generous hearts since the money is well-needed by most of the employees.



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