

What are Lambton County officials doing to keep Coronation Park open, asks CUPE ^[1]

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Text of the press release:

Since early June, when Lambton County voted to defer a decision on the future of Coronation Park, county officials, including senior councillors and senior management, have all but abandoned their efforts to save the 42-year-old child care institution from closing, said the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), representing 38 Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) at Coronation Park.

"Parents and child care workers are continuing their push to save Coronation Park from closing," said Mary Aikin, president of CUPE 2926. "But, we have not seen any real effort from the warden and management to do their part to keep Coronation Park open."

"Aside from requesting a meeting with the municipal affairs minister at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference in the middle of August, what else have the warden and management done to speak up for our community about the urgent need to keep Coronation Park open?" asked Aikin. "As far as we know, County officials have not done anything beyond asking for a meeting. If they have, they should tell the community what their plans are to save Coronation Park from closing."

The AMO conference is set to take place from August 17 to 20 in London, while the decision on the future of Coronation Park is set for September 3. "There is not a lot of time between AMO and September 3," said Aikin. "County officials don't know what's waiting for them in London when they bring up the Coronation Park issue with the minister in their meeting. We are not even sure if the meeting has been granted or if this will be discussed during cocktail hour. Surely, children and their parents and child care workers deserve better than this."

"The provincial election took place on June 12 and we are now in August, aside from asking for a meeting, have they reached out to the Liberal government to advocate for the community, have they called, e-mailed or sent an official letter explaining the urgency of the situation?," asks Aikin. Child care advocates and workers have been reaching out to Premier Kathleen Wynne and Education Minister Liz Sandals seeking their help to stop the closure of Coronation Park. They will continue their push to raise awareness of the importance of having a county-operated child care centre in Lambton by reaching out to the community starting with the Boat Race event this weekend.

"There is a municipal election coming up in October, and concerned residents and parents will be asking their councillors what exactly they did to save Coronation Park," said Aikin. "These councillors will have to be held accountable for their actions or inactions - did they truly reach out to keep Coronation Park open or are they just waiting for September 3 to simply vote on an important issue without doing the real work that they were elected to do?"

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: funding ^[4]

public management ^[5]

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