

Peel asks Province to keep Peel Regional Police whole

Motion asks for statement to be made before transition board appointed

By Zachary Roman

The Region of Peel would like to have assurance its police force will remain whole ? even when the Region is no more.

At Region of Peel Council's June 22 meeting, Mississauga Councillor Carolyn Parrish put forward a motion asking that the Region write a letter to Premier Doug Ford asking him to announce that Peel Regional Police will remain whole post-Peel dissolution.

She added that she would like the announcement to be made immediately, even before the transition board that will deal with the dissolution of Peel is appointed.

Parrish's motion was seconded by Mississauga Councillor Martin Reid.

Brampton Councillor Michael Palleschi said he can't get behind the motion; that there's not much point in dissolving the Region if servicing boards are set up.

Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown suggested a friendly amendment to the motion. He asked that it be added in that the same funding formula currently used for the Peel Regional Police be used post-dissolution. He said he supports the Peel Regional Police and that they're one of the best police forces in all of Canada.

Parrish said she didn't consider the amendment friendly, instead calling it political. She said Brown is a smart politician and that he was trying to pull a fast one on her. Parrish said the main point of her motion is to give Peel Regional Police staff assurance so that the Region will not lose any officers over the next 18 months. She said the transition board can decide on the funding for the police.

Mississauga Councillor Joe Horneck asked Peel's Police Chief Nishan Duraiappah ? who was at the meeting as he delegated earlier in it ? if supporting the motion would give his team confidence.

Duraiappah said the motion would indeed give assurance to him and Peel Regional Police staff, calling it ?an important comment for our people.?

During discussion of her motion, Parrish accepted adding a clause that said the funding model for Peel Regional Police post-dissolution would be determined at a later date.

Brampton Councillor Gurpartap Singh Toor said he doesn't believe police jobs are at risk since the Region needs more police officers anyway. He also said the Province won't care about the Region's motion. He said the Provincial Government passing the legislation dissolving Peel without any consultation means it will just do what it wants.

Caledon Mayor Annette Groves said while she wouldn't want to see the current Peel Regional Police funding model change, she supports Parrish's motion. She said she doesn't see the harm in it and that the message it sends will help keep police officers in Peel.

Groves said Regional Council needed to get politics out of the room when discussing the motion because it's a motion about community safety. She said it's important to give residents comfort knowing policing services will remain whole, and added that the motion would boost morale in the Peel Regional Police department.

Parrish's motion passed by a vote of 16 to 8.