

Laurelton Center deal falls through

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

LAURELTON — A deal that would put Woodward Camp in the former Laurelton Center complex has been called off, according to printed reports.

The state Department of General Services confirmed Friday that the two sides could not come to terms on an extension of the June 30 closing date, according to reports.

Woodward Camp had previously indicated that it would expand into the Laurelton Center, hoping to open facilities later this year.

The deal appears to have broken down over the length of an

extension. Reports indicate the state was offering a two month extension while Woodward officials were seeking a six month extension.

In an unprecedented move by the state, as announced in November of last year, Woodward Camp was not going to have to come up with the \$3.8 million price attached to the property but instead would pay a reported \$175,000. It was expected that Woodward would generate \$16 million in capital spending, tax payments and local economic growth over the course of five years.

Woodward, founded in 1970, operates a camp that typically draws more than 10,500 kids

from nearly each of the 50 states and nearly two dozen countries.

The new facility would be a camp for extreme sports as well as a prep school.

Rep. Russ Fairchild, R-85, originally announced that Woodward would be purchasing the property last September.

The state now plans to aggressively market the property, according to officials in the Department of General Services.

The former Laurelton Center consists of 335 acres and 52 buildings. It once served as a home for the mentally retarded and was closed in June 1998 after 77 years as a state institution.