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■ LAURELTON SALE

Woodward firm buys state center Pa. gets no cash in deal

By John Finnerty
The Daily Item

LAURELTON — The company that operates Woodward Camp has purchased the former Laurelton Center, the state Department of General Services has announced.

The property of the former institution for the care of the mentally retarded, located in Hartley Township, Union County, has been sold to Sports Management Group, said Kelly Powell Logan, secretary of the state agency.

In lieu of a cash sale, the commonwealth used the process of fair consideration in order to spur economic development in the region, Logan said.

Laurelton Center consists of 272 acres and 52 buildings. It

closed in June 1998. At least two previous attempts to sell the property failed.

The fair consideration process allows the developer to apply money used to pay for construction, real estate taxes, sales taxes and other various costs that would otherwise be paid directly to the commonwealth, Logan said.

This allows that money to be invested into the Union County community, she added.

The anticipated economic benefit to the region is expected to exceed \$3.8 million over the next five years, she said.

The sale of the Laurelton facility will allow the nearby Woodward Camp to expand.

Woodward Camp is nationally
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known for Action Sports and the X-Games. Woodward Camp is also host to many gymnastics camps and is a training site for the USA Gymnastics National Team.

"The sale will have a positive affect on both the local and regional economy," Logan said. "The use of the Laurelton facility for the expansion of the Woodward Camp is expected to draw thousands of children and families from across the nation."

Sports Management Group Inc., doing business as Woodward Camp, 134 Sports Camp Drive, Woodward, is the host to up to 10,000 children each summer.

Logan said: "We're very pleased that this property will be returned to the local tax rolls and placed back into productive use, benefiting the citizens of Pennsylvania. The partnership with local and state officials made this project possible."