

2-17-84

Businesses are chosen for new Transit Center

By PAUL BEATTY

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SANTA CRUZ — Three of the businessmen who failed to get space in the new bus center on lower Pacific Avenue made their disgruntlement known to Transit District directors this morning.

They said the selection process had a number of failures and that it was bad business for the commission to release its committee recommendations to the public before notifying businesses that had applied.

Transit commissioners said they felt the review committee's work was sound and unanimously accepted its recommendation.

Picked for spots in the new Transist Center were Cafe Metro, Half-Shell Market and Cynthias in the main areas.

Companies getting booths were Santa Cruz Coffee Company, Santa Cruz Orange Juice, Dunbar's Yogurt, Rico Pollo (two booths) and Nelson's Flowers.

Larry Pierce of Pacific Cookie Company said he didn't want it to sound "like sour grapes" since his company was one of the 32 that missed out on the nine spaces, but that he felt it was unfair to give the list of selections to the public before notifying the business.

He also said he felt the selection of six food companies out of eight companies was a poor mixture to generate the most

money.

A businessman who said his company was named "Freddie's" intimated that there was favoritism and nepotism involved in the committee's recommendation.

"There's a very interesting mix of friends and relatives involved," he said. The businessman gave his name as Fred Siegel, but refused to spell his name for the press, saying, "I don't want to fight with those people in there."

His charge resulted in a quick fight, however, as Commission Chairman Joe Cavallero immediately challenged him, demanding he come up with facts to support the innuendo.

The owner of Freddie's said he would only do so in private.

Commissioner John Laird said he had heard rumors of favoritism, but in checking them out found he was satisfied with the committee's work.

In addition to being upset over not being notified, some business owners were bothered that the committee's recommendation bore such strong weight with the Transit District board.

They said they expected the real decision would be made this morning at the committee meeting, with a chance to give further sales pitches, rather than to see the commission simply rubber-stamp the review committee's recommendation.