

Funding restored temporarily for DA intelligence specialist

By DENISE SIEBENTHAL

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — District Attorney Art Danner has managed — at least temporarily — to restore one of the cutbacks supervisors made in his budget last summer.

This morning, much to the consternation of Supervisors' Chairman Joe Cucchiara, the Board of Supervisors reneged on its former decision to cut a criminal intelligence specialist unless outside funding could be found for the position.

During the budget hearings last summer, the board funded the criminal intelligence specialist position through September with the understanding that Danner would attempt to find outside funding.

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But this morning, in a letter to supervisors, Danner told them that potential funding from state legislation has not come about. There's a chance it will be considered by Congress this fall and be available to the county by October, 1984.

He particularly wants to continue the position since the person is the principal investigator in the Royal Hayes murder case, Danner stated.

He added continuing the position through December won't really cost the county extra money since his office is saving money by not filling a vacant inspector position.

Cucchiara said it's not proper to fund a position through the salary savings of keeping another position vacant. Those salary savings are taken into account in putting together the budget and are used for emergency and unanticipated expenses, he said.

Plus, Cucchiara pointed out, the cuts made in the district attorney's office during budget time were a compromise for not cutting six other positions including four attorneys, he said.

In the same action, supervisors agreed not to cut a family support officer and not to add a new position of supervising family support officer. This is also a change on what was agreed upon at budget time.

Supervisor Gary Patton abstained from the vote, saying he did not have enough time to review the proposal.

During the budget hearings, supervisors also agreed to cut an account clerk position from the district attorney's office as of January. Danner is thinking it may be best to keep this person on the job because of a new computer system going in. He will report back in November or December on this issue.