

# Curtailed County Budget Passes

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Gov. Jerry Brown's "lowered expectations" will be realized in local government service in the coming year, but it was the work of Howard Jarvis' Proposition 13 that made it come true.

Friday, the county Board of Supervisors approved a \$73 million budget for government services that cuts the county work force by over 150 positions.

It curtails programs in nearly all areas of government, hitting hard at health and social services and even brushing the heretofore sacrosanct area of law enforcement.

The sheriff's office lost six positions, but kept all active patrolmen. Cuts also were made in the probation department and in criminal rehabilitation.

Planners lost around 20 positions and fees were sharply escalated to prevent a

more serious drain on the department.

"We're not even talking about such words as 'fat' in government any longer," commented conservative Supervisor Dan Forbus, "we're talking about cutting out essential services in areas such as law enforcement and probation."

Chairman Robley Levy said, "It's enormously tight, but it does reflect the board's concern for both law enforcement — all patrols will remain intact — and for children's and seniors' programs."

She lamented the losses that are occurring in health, pointing out the "devastation" that is occurring in the mental health area as the state continues to withdraw funding and destroy those programs.

Of the 72 positions lost in the health services department, 19 were taken in mental health and the director of the local department, Tim Mullins, warned that any more cuts in state funding could mean

closure of the department.

The present cuts eliminate help for all but the more seriously disturbed.

Health department funding cuts will mean the end of the immunization clinic for children.

At the ending of sessions, Supervisor Gary Patton turned wearily from the board, saying, "It wasn't enjoyable." He would admit that the last afternoon's action was the brightest spot of a dismal week.

In that session, about \$300,000 was added to the budget from increased revenues and the board was allowed its moment of friendly political tradeoffs and its moment of public largesse.

While relatively small in comparison to the \$73 million, the \$300,000 allowed the return of four sheriff's deputies, keeping the affirmative action officer on, maintaining staff for the children's, women's and seniors' commissions and funding a

well baby clinic and health screening for the elderly.

It also went to the cultural council for a total of \$65,000, and gave the convention bureau \$25,000 more — if there is an increase in the motel tax.

The board is uncertain if the tax can be increased, short of having a two-thirds approval of the electorate.

Also, the board added about \$150,000 to the \$1.5 million that went into community services. One of its last actions was to add money to all of the children's day care programs, bringing a cheer from the audience.

Both the added community support and staff for the commissions and affirmative action are expressions the present board is shifting community services to a status closer to traditional departments.

While this year never quite reached a

SEE BACK PAGE

## COUNTY BUDGET PASSES

FROM PAGE 1

point where it was a tradeoff of a day-care worker, or meal for the elderly or a sheriff's deputy — that day may be coming in the next couple of years.

A major shift in the proposed budget came on June 8 when voters turned down a disaster road tax that would have brought in \$5 million to the county in local funds and \$19 million in federal funds to fix storm damage roads.

It would have increased the budget by \$3.3 million this year and that amount had to be deducted.

In order to get some money to "match" with the federal funds, the board took \$800,000 from the road maintenance budget and that is expected to be reflected in an increase in chuckholes on county roads.

However, it will get some of the storm damaged roads fixed, the board was assured.

New planning fees hit hardest at the major developers (the maximum is \$3,250

for a major subdivision) and protected the smaller permit taker as much as possible, Levy stated.

It adds fees for coastal permits that previously went to the state and those fees range from \$750 to \$2,000 for a coastal review.

Small remodeling jobs will cost \$50, grading will cost from \$75 to \$2,500. Other fees were increased to compensate the department for the time it spends and put it on a pay-for-service basis, according to Planning Director Kris Schenk.

To save money, the board consolidated the mechanical services, purchasing, communications and fire marshall's departments under one administration.

Mechanical Services Officer Mel Angel is the agency head.

Overall, this budget year met predictions in 1979 that Proposition 13 wouldn't impact until the state's surplus and county reserves were exhausted.

While the county's budget actually

showed an increase of about 3 percent, the rate of inflation ate that up and caused cutbacks of nearly 10 percent.

Added to the problems of a set 1 percent rate on the market value of property, is the problem of a static market in real estate.

That has cut the 16 percent increase in property revenues that were average — in year's past that has hit 30 percent in this county — down to around 9 or 10 percent.

Proposition 13 has increased fees, where it has been possible without going to the voters, and it has cut property taxes by 50 percent and more.

It now is cutting back the services that local governments can provide.

As the 1982-83 budget session closed Friday, Levy said, "I want to thank the staff for all it has done."

Watsonville's conservative Supervisor Wayne Moore said, "And, thank you Howard Jarvis."

Analysts said the I would overrun the storming into the ac nian camp of Bourj case Israel decides to PLO nerve center.

Beirut newspapers r tion efforts were und formula to move the hi Lebanese army into we the guerrillas pull back on the city's southern

The army would th PLO's heavy arms fr while a multinational f police a 25-mile guerri ty zone adjoining Isr border in southern papers said.

The west Beirut se controlled by the PLO Lebanese militia all 1975-76 Moslem-Christi Syria snuffed out th 30,000 "peacekeepers"

U.S., Israel