

Expenditures for studies criticized by councilman

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Two items authorizing a total expenditure of \$11,300 were approved by the Capitola City Council last night, but not without criticism by a least one council member on both items that the expenditures were a waste of money.

One of the expenditures was \$4,000 to the Santa Cruz County Child Care Council to fund a study for the problems of child care in the county. Council members Dennis Beltram and Bob Bucher opposed that expenditure.

The other item authorized \$7,300 for consultant fees in expanding the historical district survey. Beltram also opposed this item.

In the child-care issue, Beltram and Bucher said the money would be better spent going directly to the day-care centers rather than to a study.

"I have the feeling Capitola

Day Care would rather see this \$4,000 go directly into their pockets than into this study," Beltram said.

He also said the request was inappropriate because it came in the middle of the budget year and it was not an emergency measure. Other requests for funds, Beltram said, had been turned down because they were untimely.

Bucher added that the study may not solve any of the problems of day care in the county, and to think that the study would solve a significant number was "pretty idealistic."

The two members criticized the cost of the entire study — \$87,000 for seven months of work.

Among the budgeted items, the two noted, was \$3,600 for meals, \$3,200 for hotels, and \$600 for "hospitality."

Two Capitola residents spoke in favor of the study.

One of those, Ted Durkee, said the way the study was approached "makes sense."

"It includes both the public and private sectors," he said.

A Capitola mother told the council how hard it was to find a day-care center with a vacancy and that standards in some day-care centers are sometimes lacking.

One of the consultants in the study, Jane Follansbee, told the council there would probably be another stage in the study — implementation. She said costs for the implementation stage would probably amount to the same fees as in the current stage.

Mayor Mick Routh and council members Stephanie Harlan and Jerry Clarke voted for the expenditure.

Beltram also opposed spending \$7,300 for a "city-wide multiple resource" historical district application.

The city has already spent \$9,700 for a historical survey and one historical district application.

The historical district classification is necessary to bypass Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines which limit the rebuilding of structures in the flood plain if they are damaged by any natural disaster.

The new contract will authorize the consulting firm of Rowe and Associates to make a historical district application that would include the Soquel Creek, Six Sisters/Lawn Way, Depot Hill, the Venetian Courts districts plus 10 structures in the city that have historic significance.

Beltram suggested having the city staff prepare the application rather than pay a consultant to do it.