

Court challenge won't be pursued

5-18-84

Seaside Co. will go to the table

By PAUL BEATTY

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — After seven months of resistance, Seaside Co. today announced it will go to the bargaining table with union employees at Cocoanut Grove and Wellington's Restaurant.

The company, which also owns the Boardwalk, was ordered to bargain by the National Labor Relations Board April 30,

but had the option to further challenge the union in federal court.

Seaside's decision comes three weeks after Mayor John Laird was appointed by the City Council to see if he could cajole the company into sitting down with the union.

Seaside President Charles Canfield bluntly told Laird the company's management didn't need the mayor's help and that "the company does not recognize the City Council as an entity having any legitimate right to become involved."

Laird said today, "I'm very pleased (with Seaside Co.'s announcement) and I look forward to seeing peaceful and harmonious labor relations at the Boardwalk."

Local 483 Chief Executive Officer Lenny O'Neill in Pacific Grove said, "We are very happy that they're going to come to the table. At the same time, we're guardedly optimistic about talks. We just hope the company is sensitive to the needs of employees."

O'Neill said the wage of employees at the Grove is from \$3.75 to \$5.50 — probably averaging \$4 an hour — and they get no fringe benefits.

Grove and Wellington's voted for the

union 42-29 in August after the regional NLRB determined the two work places made up a legal bargaining unit.

The company challenged the election, saying there were irregularities, and continued to insist the bargaining unit was improper. The vote should have included Boardwalk employees, Seaside said.

The NLRB in Washington, D.C., on a 2-1 vote, ruled against the company.

While the challenge was in the works, the company purchased the Casa Del Rey retirement hotel across Beach Street from the Boardwalk. Employees there voted pro-union in 1982 and had already signed contracts with the prior owner.

Seaside gave the hotel's workers a health package that the union says is worth \$261 a month union and on April 19 a decertification election was held and the union was voted out 16-13.

Company officials say, "It has always been the intent of the management to arrive at a just decision . . . (and) it is in the best interest of the all employees at the Seaside Company to commence negotiations rather than to enter into the lengthy judicial process."

It is estimated such a court case could take another year.